	<b>MEMORANDUM</b> – London Police Services Board		20-30
	<b>Towing – Service Delivery Model Review</b>		
	<b>TO:</b> Chair and Members, London Police Services Board		<b>FROM:</b> J. Foster, Administrator
	<b>DATE ISSUED:</b> May 14, 2020	<b>DATE EFFECTIVE:</b> May 14, 2020	<b>PAGE</b> 1 of 1

The report titled: Towing – Service Delivery Model Review was received by the Board at the April 16, 2020 LPSB meeting. This report, originally received in camera in April, is presented publically today for the community's information.



# LONDON POLICE SERVICES BOARD

"Deeds Not Words"

Report #: 20-47

---

**To:** Chair and Members of the London Police Services Board

**Date:** April 16, 2020

**Subject:** Towing – Service Delivery Model Review

---

**Board Action:**

- ☐ Update / Information Purposes Only
- ☐ Seeking Input
- ☒ Seeking Decision
- ☐ Evaluation

**Synopsis:**

Attached is a comparative report examining the towing service delivery models of various police services in Ontario that are currently operating in London. This report provides an overview of the current issues and takes into account concerns raised by both Ross' Towing and the various Independent Delegations who spoke publically to the Board.

**Background:**

The current tow contract between the LPSB and Ross' Towing and Transportation Services commenced on January 1, 2018 with a three-year term and an optional fourth year at the sole and absolute discretion of the LPSB. If the LPSB does not exercise this option, the towing contract will end December 31, 2020.

**Recommendation:**

That the Board exercise their option to extend the current tow contract with Ross' Towing one additional year before starting a new RFP process.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Trish McIntyre, Deputy Chief - Operations

**Attachment:** Towing Report



## Towing in London

---

### Service Delivery Model Review

**Prepared by:**  
**Sgt Robert Tubrett**

**March 11, 2020**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Purpose of the Review**

To examine the towing service delivery models of various police services in Ontario comparing their practises to the London Police Service model to ensure our current towing contract and proposed by-law best serves the needs of the community and our organization. The London Police Service Board has a contract with Ross' Towing that ends December 31, 2020 unless the Board exercises the option of a one year term extension. The City of London is examining a draft by-law to licence tow operators before the Community and Protective Services Committee. The towing contract and by-law would have interrelated effects on the towing industry in London.

The Ontario government made changes to the Consumer Protection Act and the Repairs and Storage Liens Act through Bill 15, Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act. The legislation was as a result of years of complaints of inflated and seemingly arbitrary towing and storage fees. Drivers felt pressured and unsure of their rights when at the scene of a collision. The changes were made to protect consumers. Municipalities also began to licence tow operators in an effort to protect consumers and to improve public safety. According to the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services there are sixteen municipalities in Ontario with by-laws that licence towing businesses.

The Ontario government also took measures to improve road safety by implementing the vehicle impoundment program for drivers caught with a suspended licence, blood alcohol over 80 mg or drivers found to be impaired by drugs. Vehicle impoundments range from 7 days up to 180 days for some repeat offenders. Police services recognized there was a fiduciary duty to the registered owner of the impounded vehicle. As a result, police services began contracting tow operators for these secure tows. Tow operators had to be vetted and approved. At the same time some police services began looking at non-secure tows from collision scenes. Some police services extended contracts to include non-secure tows. This guaranteed a certain level of service and protection to the public. Fees were set and response times guaranteed.

Police services also have unique needs with regards to other secure tows. Vehicles are often seized in a criminal investigation or as part of a traffic investigation into a fatal motor vehicle collision. Access to secure outside and inside storage facilities was required for the continuity of evidence. The contract with Ross' Towing meets the needs of the London Police Service and the citizens of London by providing a safe reliable service.

The current tow contract allows for the customer to elect a tow company of their choice. If no election is made the London Police Service utilizes the contracted tow company, Ross' Towing. Fees are fixed and the contracted tow company has been approved by our police service. If the customer elects to pick a tow company or the police were not on scene, the customer is entering into a civil agreement with the tow operator. Tow operators in London are not licenced and fees are not regulated.

Most of the major police services in Ontario utilize a combination of contracts and by-laws to regulate the code of conduct and fees of tow operators. The London Police Service and City of London have to

decide how best to service the public while allowing fair competition in the towing industry. A towing contract and a towing by-law are not mutually exclusive.

## **History**

The London Police Service historically used a four day rotational towing service delivery model for approximately thirty years. It ended in 2015 when the London Police Service Board entered into a towing contract with Ross' Towing. The model was developed in consultation with the local towing industry leaders of the time. One day was exclusively given to the two largest tow operators, Ross' Towing and Sturdy's Towing. The independent tow operators were given two days. The concept was the two large tow companies would each receive 25% of all tows while the independents would share the other 50%. Tow companies were dispatched through our Communication Sections off the list of tow companies for the day of service.

In 1995 the Province of Ontario implemented the vehicle impoundment program (VIP) for drivers convicted of a criminal code driving offence. Vehicles would be impounded for a minimum 45 days for first offence, escalating to 90 days and then 180 days for the third offence. Ross' Towing was awarded the provincial contract in the London area for VIP related secure tows.

In 2010 the Province of Ontario expanded the VIP program. Drivers caught operating a motor vehicle on the highway while their licence was under suspension by court order, family support payments, remedial reasons or racing/stunt driving would have their vehicle impounded for 7 days. Drivers charged criminally with blood alcohol concentration over 80 mg of alcohol in 100 ml blood would have their vehicles impounded for 7 days. These impoundments were done under the authority granted to police and were not reported to the Ministry of Transportation. The London Police Service was responsible for notifying the registered owners of the impoundment process.

On July 1, 2011 the Province of Ontario ended the government contracts with tow operators for the secure impounds. The London Police Service continued to use Ross' Towing for all secure impounds while a study was launched into developing a RFP process for towing in London.

On January 1, 2015 the London Police Services Board entered into a contract with Ross' Towing for all police requested tows. This included the secure tows and tows from collision scenes when the customer did not request a specific tow company. Ross' Towing was selected by the LPSB after a RFP process. Only four companies submitted a RFP bid. This ended the four day rotational service delivery model. The contract was for two years with a one year term extension option. The LPSB exercised their discretion and extended the contract to the end of 2017.

Some in the London towing industry believed the exclusive single source contract created a monopoly and immediately launched a lawsuit against the LPSB in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. The lawsuit was initiated by the eight members London Towing Association. In April of 2015 Justice Alissa Mitchell dismissed both an injunction request and application to have the contract reviewed. Justice Mitchell found there was not enough evidence to show the LPSB acted in bad faith and hadn't been fair. The judge also wrote she could not find that any applicants "have or will suffer irreparable harm" if the old four day rotational service delivery model wasn't brought back.

On January 1, 2018 the London Police Service Board entered into another contract with Ross' Towing for all police requested tows. The terms of the contract was for three years with the LPSB having the "sole and absolute discretion, to extend the Term for an additional one (1) year period upon the same terms and conditions (the "Option"), provided that the Board has given the Contractor at least thirty (30) calendar days' written notice prior to the expiry of this Agreement of its intention to exercise the Option."

On September 17, 2019 the Municipal Council resolved that the Civic Administration be directed to prepare an amendment to the Business Licencing By-Law to include a towing class of licence and hold public participation hearings. The motion was brought before council after a citizen had a personal experience with an aggressive tow operator at the scene of a collision in London and from concerns expressed by Ross' Towing and other citizens. The by-law was to address tow companies chasing customers at collision scenes and aggressive business practises.

On December 3, 2019 the members of the Community and Protective Services Committee voted unanimously to have City staff conduct more research into the proposed by-law after input from some tow companies and concerns over prohibiting any person from soliciting, offering or stopping within 200 metres of a motor vehicle collision scene unless authorized.

### **Current Tow Contract**

The Towing Services Agreement between the London Police Services Board and Ross' Towing and Transportation Services Inc. was effective the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2018. The term of the agreement was for three years with an optional fourth year at the sole and absolute discretion of the LPSB. If the LPSB does not exercise the option the towing contract will end December 31, 2020.

Highlights of the existing contract:

- A public liability insurance policy in the amount of not less than \$5,000,000.
- Employees bonded for a minimum amount of \$30,000.
- Tow fees are set by contract and posted online on the LPS website.
- Security clearance checks on all employees.
- Contractor must be in good standing with WSIB.
- Contractor must provide CVOR and MTO safety certificates.
- Code of conduct for employees; uniforms, zero blood alcohol level, respect towards public and police.
- Indemnification of the LPSB, LPS members and City.
- Disclosure of any direct or indirect financial interest in an auto body shop.
- Emergency services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a response time of 20 minutes.
- Large fleet of vehicles capable of heavy, light and medium tows.

Ross' Towing met the requirements of the London Police Service with regards to the safety and security of their facilities. The business has two large compounds with indoor and outdoor storage facilities within the City of London. Their property has video security and controlled electronic access. Ross' Towing provides two secure indoor storage facilities used for mechanical and forensic examinations. There are two licenced mechanics on staff capable of assisting officers with mechanical inspections for

court purposes. Ross' Towing provides a daily Excel spreadsheet to the London Police Service of all vehicles impounded, recovered stolen vehicles and vehicles towed from collision scenes.

The London Police Service does not receive any remuneration from the towing contract with Ross' Towing. The contract ensures members of the public are receiving service from a qualified reputable company. It also ensures the London Police Service meets its fiduciary responsibility with regards to the safe care and storage of vehicles and customer interactions with contracted employees. The London Police Service does not operate an impound facility or own any tow trucks. Drivers and passengers are often provided with a ride to the Police Reporting Centre or an auto body shop in the cab of the tow truck. A criminal background check on employees mitigates concerns with regards to fraudulent business practises and personal safety.

There are only two tow operators in London offering heavy duty towing for large vehicles, Ross' Towing and Sturdy's & Clarke's. Several companies offer large flatbed towing for heavy equipment. Only the specialized heavy duty tow trucks, 75 ton vehicles, have the lifting power for the larger transport truck wrecks.

Ross' Towing employs sixty-five people, forty-five tow drivers, two licenced mechanics and provides access to their facilities 24 hours a day. A dispatcher is always on duty in their office allowing customers or police to arrange access to vehicles anytime.

### **Draft By-Law**

A draft by-law based on industry consultation and discussions with first responders was constructed. A proposed amendment to the Business Licensing By-law to include tow operators as a class of business to address towing solicitation at collisions scenes. Chief Municipal Law Enforcement Officer Orest Katolyk made that recommendation to the Community and Protective Services Committee on September 10, 2019.

On December 3, 2019 a draft by-law was presented to the Community and Protective Services Committee. The by-law proposal was to address public health and safety and consumer protection at collision scenes by only allowing authorized tow operators near a collision scene, freeing the highway of obstructions for emergency vehicles and personnel.

The draft by-law was an amendment to the Business Licensing By-law L.-131-16, adding "Tow Truck Operator" to the Business Licence By-law Fees and Schedule. The following prohibitions were suggested:

#### **2.1 PROHIBITIONS:**

1. No person shall solicit or make or convey an offer of business services or goods, while that person is within 200 metres of,
  - a) the scene of a motor vehicle accident or apparent accident or;
  - b) a vehicle involved in an accident, on a highway.

2. No person shall park, stop or stand a tow-truck on a highway within 200 metres of,
  - a) the scene of a motor vehicle accident.
3. Section 1 and 2 do not apply to a person who is at the scene of an accident at the direction of a Police Officer, a Firefighter, a person engaged in the carrying out of the provisions of the Highway Traffic Act, a person engaged in Highway maintenance or person involved in the accident.
4. No person shall operate a Motor Vehicle Towing Business without a current valid license issued under this By-law.

Tow operators at the public meeting rejected the notion of a 200 metres radius arguing it would create a monopoly for the contracted tow company. A councillor raised concerns about a member of the public at an accident with no emergency services present not being able to use the first tow truck on scene. A motion was unanimously accepted to put the matter back to city staff for further research.

## Analysis of Activities

### Towing Statistics in London

Ross' Towing has the exclusive contract for all secure tows by the London Police Service. A secure tow occurs when a police officer takes possession of a motor vehicle. Most vehicle seizures are a result of the provincial Vehicle Impoundment Program under the Highway Traffic Act. Police officers are directed to seize the motor vehicle of suspended drivers, drivers racing or performing stunts, drivers with more than 0.08 mg of alcohol or drivers found to be impaired by drugs. Police also seize vehicles for criminal investigations and vehicles involved in fatal motor vehicle collisions. When an officer locates a recovered stolen motor vehicle, if the owner is unable to attend, can't be contacted or the vehicle is not driveable, police take possession of the vehicle and it's towed to Ross' compound for safe storage.

Ross' Towing	Impounded or Seized	Recovered Stolen Vehicle	Total
2015	536	138	674
2016	419	181	600
2017	518	369	887
2018	482	442	924
2019	560	449	1009

The police do not get involved in tows from private property. Any vehicle being towed from private property (unless reported stolen) is an agreement between the private property owner and the tow operator.



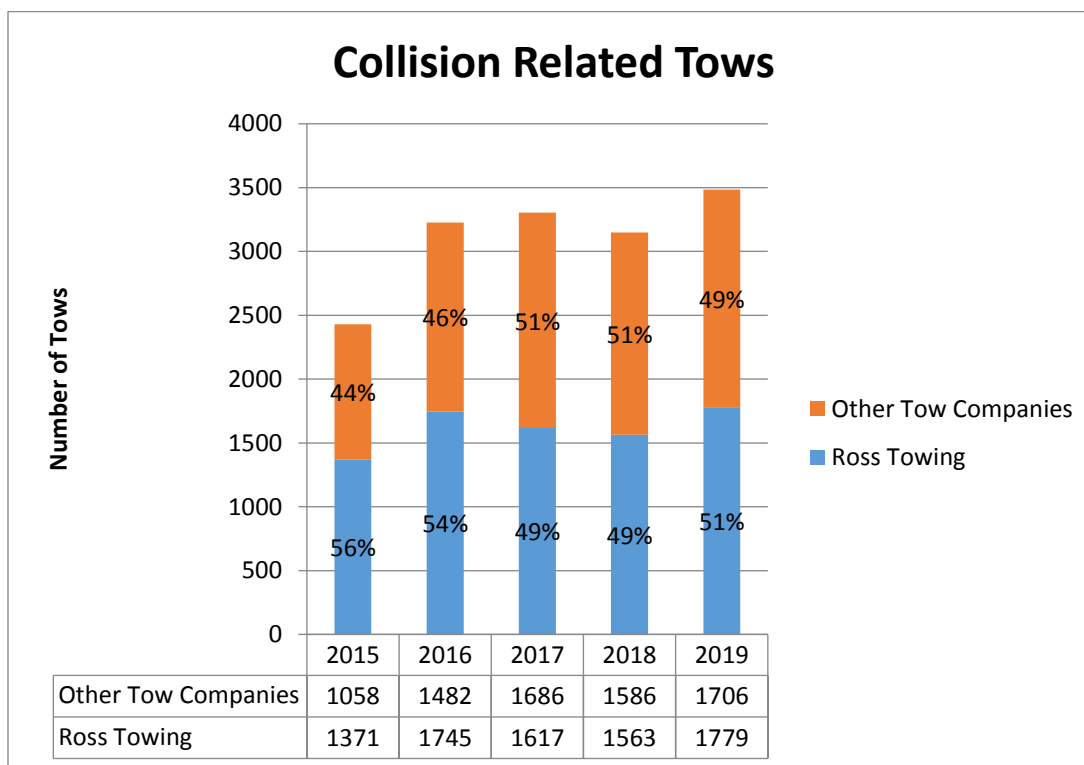
Most towed vehicles are as a result of a motor vehicle collision. The London Police Service, as do most police services in Ontario, utilizes a collision reporting centre for accident reporting. There were 12,842 collisions reported in the City of London in 2019. Of those collisions, 10,629 or 83% were reported at the Police Reporting Centre (PRC) at 1001 Brydges St, London.

When a driver calls 911 the dispatcher will ask if there are any injuries and if an ambulance is required. If there are no injuries or the injuries are minor a police officer will not be dispatched and the drivers will be directed to report to the Police Reporting Centre. A call for service is not created. A police officer may be dispatched to the collision if the nature of injuries are unknown, there are traffic control or safety issues or if criminality is suspected, such as an impaired driver. The police officer on scene will then make an assessment and either complete a collision investigation or direct the drivers to the PRC. Drivers in London and tow operators have also become accustomed to this reporting method and will often attend the Police Reporting Centre without any police contact. In other cases EMS or the London Fire Department might attend the collision scene and direct drivers to the PRC when injuries are minor.

The current contract with Ross' Towing states:

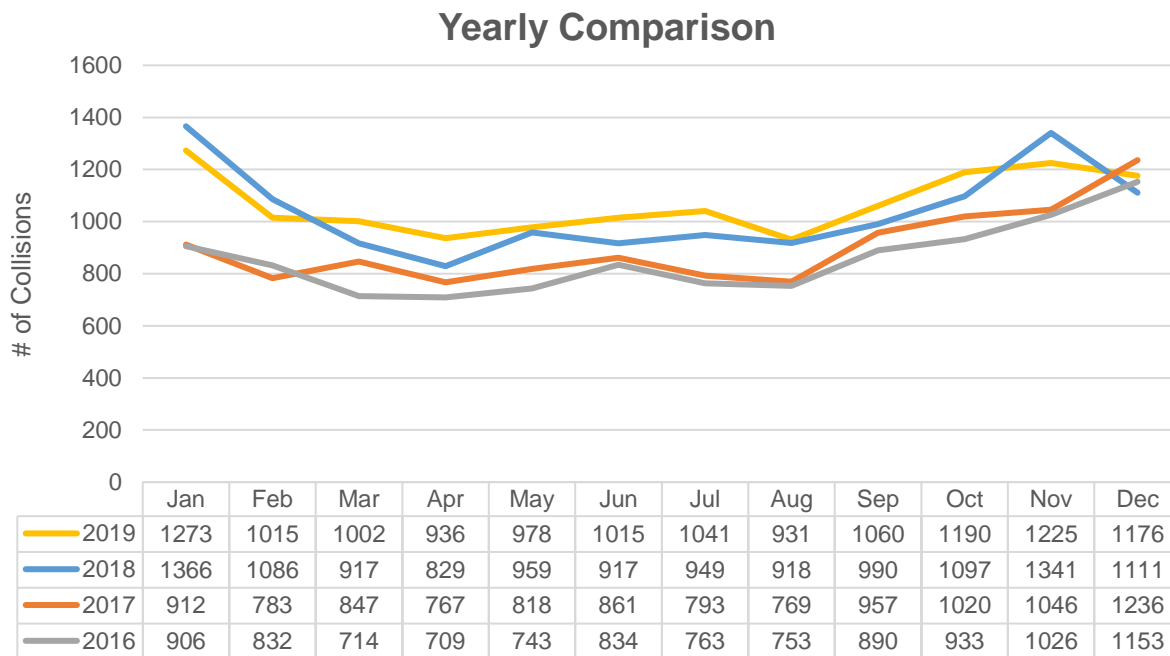
22.3 In the event LPS is not impounding a Vehicle and the Customer does not elect to utilize a tow company other than the Contractor, then Members shall utilize the Contractor to perform the Towing Service for such Customer.

Therefore, if a police officer attends the scene or the driver calls 911 requesting the assistance of a tow truck, Ross' Towing would be called if the driver has no preference.



Total No. of Tows: 2,429 (2015), 3,227 (2016), 3,303 (2017), 3,149 (2018), 3,485 (2019)

Since the implementation of a towing contract in 2015, Ross' Towing has averaged 51.8% of all collision related tows.<sup>1</sup> The number of collisions occurring in London has been trending upward. The same trend can be expected with regards to the number of tows.



### **Tow Companies Operating in London**

Tow trucks and drivers are not licenced in London. The draft by-law proposes adding towing to the business class of licences issued by the City. Thirty-eight different towing companies have towed vehicles involved in collisions in London in 2019. A web browse of the company names revealed:

- 11 had a website;
- 14 had a Facebook, Yellow Book or Google page;
- 13 did not have a web link;
- 17 did not have an address listed;
- 18 did not have hours of operation listed; and
- 1 listed tow prices.

Some tow companies are likely associated to auto body shops and therefore, don't have a separate web presence. The tow company's name, address and phone number should be readily available to the public. It appears some tow trucks are operated out of a residential address.

A lot of drivers have a roadside assistance program through the vehicle manufacturer, insurance company or an automobile association. These companies use several different tow operators and in most cases the tow is paid through the membership program.

<sup>1</sup> Tow data provided by Accident Support Services International Ltd

*Appendix A* contains the list of tow companies and web search results.

### **Other Police Services**

The largest police services in Ontario were contacted to help determine the best practises in balancing the needs of the public, the police and the tow industry. All the services contacted had towing contracts with the police service or the municipality. By-laws were in place in most of their jurisdictions. Some of the smaller municipalities within the regional services did not have a towing by-law. All the towing contracts contained similar equipment and staffing code of conduct and training criteria. Services had to be provided 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. Towing fees were set by contract or by-law. Drivers always had the option of requesting a tow operator of their choice.

All contracts contained some sort of service level agreement with regards to response time. Most contracts required tow operators to be able to respond within twenty minutes and to give priority service to the police agency. This ensures collisions scenes would be cleared promptly, minimizing obstructions for road safety and reducing the time officers would be required at the scene. The Peel Regional Police Service determined that a contracted tow company must have at least 21 drivers and at least 5 trucks available to operate 24 hours a day.

Tow operators were also required to disclose any interest in auto body shops. Some contracts even barred tow operators from bidding if they had a financial interest in an auto body shop. Police services were concerned about the conflict of interest and liens being placed on vehicles.

The City of Toronto had a unique bidding process. The city was divided into five zones. Tow operators in each zone bid for the contract and fee rates. The lowest bidder, meeting all the other criteria, would be awarded the contract. This ensured a competitive price for consumers. High volume areas of the city received more bids, lowering the towing fees in that zone. A standard tow fee in Toronto ranges from \$150 to \$250 depending on the zone.

### **Legislation**

There is no specific regulatory body governing the tow industry. Several jurisdictions have towing associations consisting of tow companies working together to promote their businesses within a region. A few provincial statutes deal with specific towing services.

The *Highway Traffic Act* of Ontario Section states:

171 (1) No person shall make or convey an offer of services of a tow truck while that person is within 200 metres of,

- (a) the scene of an accident or apparent accident; or
- (b) a vehicle involved in an accident,

on the King's Highway. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 171 (1).

2) No person shall park or stop a tow truck on the King's Highway within 200 metres of,

- (a) the scene of an accident or apparent accident; or

(b) a vehicle involved in an accident,

if there is a sufficient number of tow trucks already at the scene to deal with all vehicles that apparently require the services of a tow truck. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 171 (2).

The act only applies to the King's Highway. Municipalities were left to regulate traffic within their own jurisdictions through by-laws.

The government of Ontario made several changes to the Consumer Protection Act, the Repair and Storage Liens Act and the Highway Traffic Act as a result of Bill 15, Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act. Most of the changes in relation to towing took effect on January 1, 2017. The changes were meant to improve safety in the towing industry and to protect consumers.

Tow trucks were added to the definition of commercial motor vehicle in the Highway Traffic Act. Tow truck operators are now required to obtain a Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR). The Ministry of Transportation now monitor tow operators for collisions, driving infractions and inspections. Only one CVOR is required for all vehicles in a fleet. There was no change to driver requirements.

The Highway Traffic Act does not require a specific type of licence for a tow truck driver. A standard Class G licence in Ontario allows a person to drive any small truck or combination of vehicle and towed vehicle up to 11,000 kilograms provided the vehicle towed is not over 4,600 kilograms. For medium and heavy tows, depending on the tow truck and vehicle being towed, a tow driver might require a Class D or Class A. Most standard cars and small trucks being towed would only require a Class G.

Improvements were made to the notification process under the Repair and Storage Liens Act. If a vehicle being stored is subject to a lien and the vehicle was received from someone other than its owner, then the storer must give written notice to the owner or other interested parties (leasing or financing company). Any vehicle registered in Ontario, the notice period was reduced from 60 days to within 15 days. A failure to follow the notification process would result in the lien amount being reduced. Vehicles towed and stored at a compound from collision scenes are subject to liens.

Changes to the Consumer Protection Act protect consumers by requiring tow operators to get informed consent. Failure by a tow operator to follow the law could result in the tow operator losing the lien on the vehicle. Some of the changes include:

- Receiving permission from the consumer before providing service.
- Recording the name and contact information of the consumer or the person giving authorization, along with the date and time of authorization.
- Publicly disclose rates and other information such as the provider's name and telephone number on the tow trucks as well as place of business.
- Provide in writing information about where the vehicle will be towed, along with the provider's business name and contact information.
- Accepting credit card or cash payment from consumers.

- Providing the consumer with access to the towed vehicle, at no charge, so that they may remove personal property between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on business days.
- Prohibit tow and storage providers from recommending repair and storage facilities, legal services or health care services, unless the consumer specifically asks for a recommendation.
- Disclose to the consumer any financial incentive for towing to a particular storage or repair shop.

The Consumer Protection Act did not provide police with any enforcement sections. A consumer may file a complaint with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services in Toronto. The government has three prosecutors for the entire province. The complaint may be resolved by mediation, education, administrative actions, issuing compliance orders, monitoring, conducting an investigation or referral to another organization or government office that is better suited to deal with the complaint.

### **Reasons for Towing Contract and By-law**

In 2012 the Ontario Ministry of Finance report from the Ontario Automobile Anti-Fraud Task Force completed a sixteen month study and accounting firm KPMG estimated insurance fraud in Ontario ranged from \$768 million to \$1.56 billion dollars in 2010.<sup>2</sup> Customers are most vulnerable and susceptible following a motor vehicle collision. The report raised several concerns about the towing industry:

- road safety from speeding to scenes and unsafe scene management;
- consumer protection with regards to fees and destination of their vehicle; and
- mechanical, operating and employee training concerns.

Ontario does not have licencing or training requirements specific to tow truck drivers. The report recommended a province wide licensing of the towing industry. Changes brought about by Bill 15, Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act, as previously noted in this report, addressed some of these concerns with regards disclosure of fees and consent. However, the province chose not to implement a province wide licencing system leaving municipalities to address this issue through business licencing.

Aggressive chasing and inflated tow bills have been in the news for several years. CBC Marketplace “Tow truck tricks: How not to get taken for a ride after an accident” aired December 4, 2015.<sup>3</sup> Tow trucks were followed in the Toronto and Ottawa area racing to collision scenes and towing vehicles to preferred body shops. Drivers were being handed bills for as much as \$8000 after two days in storage at a body shop. The story indicated tow drivers received \$200 to \$500 for a referral to a body shop. The report found that inflated tow bills and storage fees did not occur in the provinces with provincially run insurance companies and regulated pricing; British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In Ontario the cost is passed along to the insurance company which in turn leads to increase insurance rates for all Ontarians.

Inflated tow bills are due to upcharges to consumers. Consumers are told not to worry about it as the insurance company will cover the cost of the tow (if the insurance policy has collision coverage). Often

---

<sup>2</sup><https://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/autoinsurance/final-report.html>

<sup>3</sup> Based on a Marketplace investigation by Andreas Wesley, Tyana Grundig and Erica Johnson.

the driver never sees the actual tow bill as it's added to the body shop repair bill which is paid by the insurance company. Upcharges come from tow companies charging for cleanup, wait times, extra equipment, mileage and multiple tows to different locations. *Appendix B* contains an invoice from a local tow company in London which represents the upcharges. The total for the bill was for \$2791.

The London Free Press reporter, Megan Stacey, spoke to several tow operators in London on December 2, 2019, leading up to the public meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee hearing on the draft by-law proposal.<sup>4</sup> Tow operators admitted to chasing in order to obtain business.

From collision reports we know there are at least 38 tow companies currently operating in London. During an era when the rotational towing service delivery model was in use, there were 13 tow companies operating in London. The number of tow companies in London towing from collision scenes has more than doubled since the implementation of the towing contract with Ross' Towing in 2015. Small tow companies appear to have grown in numbers.

## **Recommendations**

The request for proposal process is an industry standard solicitation strategy used by governments and the private sector. It ensures the contractor can meet the needs of the London Police Service. Our process was unsuccessfully challenged in the court in 2015. The RFP process was deemed to be fair, open and did not cause any irreparable harm to the local towing industry.

The London Police Service has a fiduciary duty to safeguard the property we seize or take into our possession. Some police services operate their own tow trucks and impound facilities for secure tows, the London Police Service does not. We entrust our contractor to safe guard the vehicles on our behalf. In some cases vehicles are seized as part of a criminal investigation making the contractor's storage facilities a part of the evidentiary chain of custody for court. Therefore, the contractor must be properly vetted and the impound facilities must have a high level of security, including but not limited to, a fully fence compound, controlled access, alarm system and video security.

Ross' Towing has competently fulfilled all their contractual obligations without issues since the first contract took effect January 1, 2015. I would recommend the LPSB exercise their option to extend the current contract one additional year before starting a new RFP process. Secure tows should remain under contract with the LPSB. City council and administration are still studying the proposed towing by-law. The adoption and implementation of a towing by-law would likely take another year especially if the administration recommends changes which would likely lead to more public consultation.

The number of tow companies in London has increased in the past several years. Consumer protection and safety should be addressed through the City of London business licencing by-law. Presentations were presented from delegations representing Independent Operators and Ross's Towing. As a result of all information gathered, the following by-law licencing conditions should be considered:

- Drivers and owners licenced;
- Regulated tow fees in line with the police contracted rates;

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://lfpres.com/news/local-news/london-tow-drivers-vow-to-pack-city-meeting-to-fight-chasing-ban>

- Owner's licence non-transferable;
- Storage facilities located within the City of London;
- Tow equipment standards;
- Identification of tow trucks and use of by-law licence plates;
- Annual vehicle inspections;
- Criminal background checks for licensees;
- No financial incentive for referrals to related businesses;
- Code of conduct; and
- Penalties such as suspensions or termination of licences for violations.

Regulations and enforcement will require resources. By-laws, especially under the business licencing by-law should fall under the purview of the Municipal Law Enforcement for the City of London. The Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 545, licencing by-law contains most of the listed conditions.<sup>5</sup>

The most contentious issue would be adding a buffer to the by-law. Any radius keeping others from soliciting, parking or stopping within 200 metres of a collision scene, would be a slight disadvantage for tow operators not under contract because the police would default to the contracted company unless a driver had a preference. The proposed by-law as written states a tow truck driver can only attend the scene if directed by a police officer, a firefighter, a person engaged in highway maintenance or a person involved in the accident. However, police officers are not attending the majority of collision scenes leaving drivers to their own accord as is the current situation. Even the contracted tow company would not be permitted to attend the scene unless called.

All but one of the police services contacted, Windsor, had a buffer by-law in their jurisdiction. All the services admitted chasing still takes place. The buffer by-law offered another tool to use to clamp down on aggressive tow operators.

A single source service provider is the easiest way to manage tows, as is the current situation. To open business opportunities to other tow operators would require a rotational service delivery model. If tow operators become licenced by the City then a list could be provided to our Communications Section. Call takers would be able to make phone calls to tow companies on a list as long as there were guidelines put in place. The Communications Section already makes calls to Ross' Towing on behalf of drivers. Ross' Towing has a dispatcher working 24 hours a day. Guidelines would have to be setup ensuring quick response from the other tow companies. The Halton Regional Police Service requires tow operators or their answering service to respond to a page within five minutes or they move on to the next company on the list. Even if a rotational service delivery model is adopted I would recommend secure tows remain with the contracted company for the security reasons already discussed.

---

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184\\_545.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_545.pdf)

### **Appendix A**

Tow Company	Web Page	Hours of Operation
1 Stop Towing Service	<a href="http://www.1stoptowing.ca/">http://www.1stoptowing.ca/</a> tow prices listed	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
519Tow	no website, Facebook page	u/k
Ace Towing	no website	u/k
AK Towing or Bridges Auto Towing	no website, Facebook page	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
ANNEX TOWING	no website, Facebook page	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
ASD Towing	no website, Yellow Pages	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Auto Fusion Towing	<a href="https://autofusion-towingrecovery-service.business.site/">https://autofusion-towingrecovery-service.business.site/</a>	12:00 a.m. - 11:30 p.m., 7 days a week
Carstar Towing	Body shop	
Citi Towing	no website, Yellow Pages	u/k
Charterhouse Towing	<a href="https://www.charterhousetowing.com/">https://www.charterhousetowing.com/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
CITY WIDE TOWING	<a href="https://www.citywidetowing.ca/">https://www.citywidetowing.ca/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
CLARKE'S & SURDY'S TOWING SERVICES	<a href="http://towinglondon.com/">http://towinglondon.com/</a>	24 Hour Dispatch
Collver Towing	no website, Yellow Pages	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Dave's Towing	no website, linked to Automotive Solutions	u/k
Discount Towing	no website	u/k
Express Towing	<a href="https://expressroadside.ca/">https://expressroadside.ca/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
FIVE STAR TOWING	no website	u/k
Freeway Towing	CAA	
INS Roadside Towing	no website	u/k
James Patrick Towing	<a href="http://www.jamespatricktowing.ca/">http://www.jamespatricktowing.ca/</a>	24 hour emergency towing
JB Towing	no website	u/k
Ken's Towing	no website, Google page	u/k
London Towing	no website, Facebook page	24 hours a day, 7 days a week



Loveday's Towing	no website, Yellow Pages	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Low Price Towing	<a href="https://www.lowpricetowing.com/">https://www.lowpricetowing.com/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
M&M Towing	no website	u/k
Megacity Towing	no website	u/k
Moe's Tow	<a href="http://moestow.com/">http://moestow.com/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Quality Towing	no website	u/k
Quick Towing	no website, Facebook page	u/k
Ross' Towing	<a href="http://www.rossservices.com/">http://www.rossservices.com/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
SB Towing	no website, Google page	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Sam's Towing	no website	u/k
Silverbird Towing	<a href="https://www.silverbirdtowing.com/">https://www.silverbirdtowing.com/</a>	24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Thames Towing	no website, Facebook page	u/k
Tony's Towing	no website	u/k
Walt's Towing	no website, Facebook page	u/k
Whitworth Towing	no website, Facebook page	u/k

# Appendix B

[Redacted]		
NO. NAME ADDRESS		
1	Hook	350 /
2	Rollies	85 /
3	clean up	60 /
4	Winding	100 /
5	return	250 /
6	70 km at 3.50	245 /
7	Waiting Time 8 hours	600 /
8	return for car start	250 /
9	return to car start	250 /
10	return to Buswell	120 /
	Storage 2 days	120 /
NO. ENRG. TAXE		TVRPGT
TAX REG. NO: 800701074		321.10
27	12000	TOTAL 2191.0