

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY February 15, 2013 – Vol. 18 No. 7

Executive Digest

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RCMP watchdog calls for major changes to handling harassment complaints



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Feb 14 2013

OTTAWA - The RCMP must take "swift and effective action" on complaints of workplace harassment to restore the shaken confidence of both members and the public, says the watchdog that oversees the national police force.

In a new report, the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP recommends fundamental changes to the way in which internal grievances about bullying and harassment are handled by the Mounties.

It calls for a more independent process, strict timelines for responding to accusations, and force-wide training on the issue.

The commission says its investigation did not point to a systemic problem of sexual harassment within the police force, despite intense publicity about difficulties and grievances.

However, the report released Thursday says the simple perception of a pattern of poor treatment of employees is enough to rattle public confidence and tarnish the force's reputation.

The commission's investigation - which included a statistical review, interviews with members and public submissions - found the RCMP was "probably no better nor no worse than most other large organizations" on the issue of harassment, said Ian McPhail, interim

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chairman of the complaints body.

"The fact is, of course, that - as our national police force - it's got to be better," he said in an interview. "And harassment of any sort is just not acceptable."

Several female RCMP officers have come forward with complaints since Cpl. Catherine Galliford went public in 2011 with allegations of harassment within the force in British Columbia.

Men have also complained of abusive behaviour and intimidation.

The investigation found that from February 2005 through mid-November 2011, 718 harassment complaints were filed by employees, representing 2.5 per cent of all staff.

Ninety per cent of the complaints involved allegations of bullying, while four per cent concerned sexual harassment.

Just under half of complainants were male, 44 per cent female and seven per cent unknown.

But the report cautions that it was difficult to measure the scope of the issue and recommends the RCMP implement a national system of data collection to capture all incidences of workplace conflict, including harassment.

The complaints commission says harassment can have profound effects on the victimized employee, from feelings of fear and humiliation to mental breakdown and even post-traumatic stress.

"I felt completely alone and I felt like a failure," one unnamed RCMP officer told the complaints commission.

"I could not believe that my RCMP was treating me in such a callous and disrespectful manner when I had always worked so hard to do my duty and to better the organization."

Said another: "My launching a complaint against a commissioned officer of the RCMP has met with devastating results for me and my career in the RCMP."

McPhail said his "heart goes out" to RCMP members who pay such a heavy price. "People who join the RCMP by and large

do so out of a strong sense of idealism, and to do something for the country," he said. "And it's tragic when that's the result."

The commission found the complex system for dealing with complaints meant some took as long as four years to process.

"That's clearly unacceptable. No one can fairly be expected to have their lives and their careers on hold for up to four years while a complaint is resolved," McPhail said.

"People see that sort of thing happening and even if they have a legitimate complaint, they're not going to step forward."

Many told the commission the current process for handling harassment complaints within the RCMP lacked independence, with some charging that the final decision-maker displayed bias or a conflict of interest in that they were "protecting their own."

The commission recommends centralized monitoring and co-ordination of all RCMP decisions with respect to harassment to ensure consistency. It also says those responsible for dealing with harassment allegations should report directly to a senior executive - such as the RCMP's professional integrity officer - outside the force's divisional chain-of-command structures.

In addition, there should be "clearly defined" standards for those who investigate harassment complaints, appropriate training, and greater input from both the complainant and the respondent.

Finally, the commission recommends that an outside body hear appeals from dissatisfied complainants.

Legislation before Parliament would also give the RCMP commissioner authority to establish a process for the investigation and resolution of harassment complaints. It would also arm a revamped public complaints commission with powers to monitor how the force is dealing with harassment.

McPhail said the bill introduced by Public Safety Minister Vic Toews would allow the commissioner to adopt the blueprint outlined by the complaints commission.

"Legislation does not in and of itself solve problems," he said. "But it enables the people involved to solve those problems. And certainly the minister and the commissioner have made it quite clear that this is an important priority for both of them."

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 06, 2013

Feb 06 2013

For the trial last month of three men charged with having guns and ammunition in the car they were riding in, defense lawyers asked for photos taken by police when the arrests were made. Officers said they had none.

Turns out, they did. Snapshots including one showing a hiding place in a door panel for a gun and ammunition were posted on the Fresno Police Department Facebook page soon

after the August arrest.

An officer who testified in the trial — flanked by a member of the city attorney's office — said the photo was taken with a personal cellphone, not a work phone, and was later deleted.

The officer said he didn't take photos for evidence, but for the police department's public Facebook page. He described it as an effort at media transparency and disclosure of public information.

Ken Taniguchi, Fresno County's public defender whose office had a client in the case, described it as something else: Trying people in the court of public opinion.

"They were not giving us things that were available on their Facebook," Taniguchi said. "They said they didn't have photographs but posted photographs on their Facebook page."

All pictures, he said, should be in a court file where rules of evidence apply.

"Of course, the public defender is going to say this, that's what they do," said Chief Jerry Dyer, "send up smoke screens to get their clients off."

Still, the case has triggered a change in police procedures. Now, everything that is produced during an investigation — including those Facebook snapshots — will be in the officer's report, Dyer said.

"We are not going to make that judgment" about what should be entered as evidence, the chief said. "We will let the district attorney and public defender make that determination."

Now, the police department is examining all photos on Facebook to ensure that the pictures are in the department's "report writer" system before going to the district attorney, Dyer said.

(Fresno Bee)

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 07, 2013

Feb 07 2013

WINNIPEG - Two Manitoba sheriffs face more allegations that they drugged and sexually assaulted women while off-duty.

Last October, two people were arrested in Winnipeg after a 30-year-old woman complained that she was given a substance at a couple's home in April that made her unconscious.

She said when she woke up, she discovered that she had been sexually assaulted and contacted police.

Winnipeg police say three other women have come forward with similar allegations that go back as far as 2000.

"The three victims individually and on separate occasions had attended the accused's residence," police spokesman Const. Eric Hofley said Thursday.

"During these incidents, two were administered a stupefying substance and at least one of the victims was rendered unconscious. During these incidents all three of the victims were sexually assaulted."

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Richard Gordon, 45, and Jackie Burgoyne, 34, were arrested Wednesday and face multiple charges of sexual assault, forcible confinement and administering a stupefying substance to overcome resistance to sexual assault.

They have been released from custody and are to appear in court March 6.

In October, Gordon was charged with sexual assault and administering a noxious substance with intent to endanger life or cause bodily harm. Burgoyne was charged with sexual assault.

A Manitoba Justice official declined comment on their status.

Feb 07 2013

CALGARY - A man charged in the death of an Alberta peace officer will have a preliminary hearing this summer.

Trevor Kloschinsky is charged with first-degree murder in Rod Lazenby's death last year.

Lazenby died in hospital on Aug. 10 from injuries he got while responding to a dog-related call at Kloschinsky's home in Priddis, Alta., just south of Calgary.

Lazenby was an RCMP officer for 35 years, often working undercover in Vancouver.

He had retired in 2006 and was employed by the Municipal District of Foothills to enforce bylaws.

The preliminary hearing has been scheduled from Aug. 6-23.

Feb 07 2013

OTTAWA - About 100 RCMP members at headquarters in Ottawa are being relocated, reassigned or are retiring as part of a major effort to overhaul the force's federal policing structure and trim bureaucracy.

For more than a year, the force has been engaged in what it calls a "re-engineering" of federal policing to make it more agile and its units more integrated. Whereas in the past, groups of investigators might have worked within a specialty area and didn't communicate with each other, the force says it is attempting to break down those walls and pool investigators to go after the "highest priorities" and "emerging threats."

Part of the new strategy also involves cutting some of the fat at headquarters.

"The whole construct of our national headquarters and how it operates is completely changing," Deputy Commissioner Mike Cabana told the House of Commons public safety committee on Thursday at its ongoing hearings into the "economics of policing."

"We were able to reduce the federal footprint in our headquarters by approximately 100 regular members," Cabana said.

Asked to clarify what was happening to these 100 federal policing members, officials told Postmedia News that some are moving from headquarters to front-line policing jobs at various divisions across the country or taking up positions at "A" Division in Ottawa, which specializes in protective services and investigations into high-profile and sensitive federal cases. Others will be retiring.

The changes are "in line with the positioning of the Commissioner to return police officers to front-line policing," said RCMP spokesman Sgt. Greg Cox.

(Postmedia News)



Feb 08 2013

SEATTLE - Seattle's mayor on Thursday ordered the police department to abandon its plan to use drones after residents and privacy advocates protested.



Mayor Mike McGinn said the department will not use two small drones it obtained through a federal grant. The unmanned aerial vehicles will be returned to the vendor, he said.

"Today I spoke with Seattle Police Chief John Diaz, and we agreed that it was time to end the unmanned aerial vehicle program, so that SPD can focus its resources on public safety and the community building work that is the department's priority," the mayor said in a brief statement.

The decision comes as the debate over drones heats up across the country. Lawmakers in at least 11 states are looking at plans to restrict the use of drones over their skies amid concerns the vehicles could be exploited to spy on Americans.

The Seattle Police Department previously said it would use drones to provide an overhead view of large crime scenes, serious accidents, disasters and search and rescue operations. It had conducted demonstrations of the drones to show the public their capabilities.

The program drew strong criticism from residents Wednesday at a meeting of the City Council, which was considering an ordinance giving police the authority to use drones.

The proposed measure would have allowed the use of drones for data collection but barred police from using them over "open-air assembly of people" or for general surveillance. The drones would have carried no weapons, but the proposal would have allowed police to use face-recognition software in them.

The police department had purchased two Draganflyer X6 vehicles, which have a width of 36 inches, length of 33.5 inches and stand just under a foot.

The department had not yet begun using the drones but had received approval from the Federal Aviation Administration.

(AP)

Feb 08 2013

SURREY - An inquest into the death of an 18-year old girl who lost her life in a 2011 police-involved accident concluded Thursday with a number of recommendations for the RCMP.

Three of the six recommendations written by the jury are directed toward how Mounties are trained, while two relate to equipment installed in police cruisers.

Ashley Christine Guiboche was killed on Jan. 31, 2011, as she was jaywalking across King George Boulevard at about 9: 40 p.m. She had just finished work and had exited the King George Sky Train Station in Surrey.

While Guiboche was crossing the road, she was struck and killed by a vehicle driven by Surrey RCMP Const. Albert Luk.

Luk was speeding in a marked cruiser going about 90 kilometres per hour without his lights or siren on in the hopes of finding a stolen vehicle.

The jury's first recommendation directed the City of Surrey, ICBC and Trans-Link to find a solution to the jaywalking hazard in the area by either constructing a Sky Train pedestrian overpass to the west side of King George or by installing a street-level, pedestrian-controlled crossing.

The jury also recommended the RCMP instil mandatory, in-person training for officers on the proper use of lights and sirens, the relevant rules in the Motor Vehicle Act and on emergency-vehicle operation. It also recommended that the RCMP increase the length of time senior officers ride along with new officers from three months to one year and that every Mountie in B.C.'s E Division receive a copy of the inquest proceedings.

Two other recommendations urged the RCMP to consider programming police-vehicle equipment to allow officers to communicate verbally and hands-free while driving. It was suggested each police car have a camera installed that would begin to record when lights and sirens are activated.

(The Province)

Feb 08 2013

HALIFAX - Nova Scotia is bringing in regulatory definitions for bullying that will be first in Canada to include bystanders as having a role in bullying behaviour.



The government's definition of bullying and cyberbullying is part of a response to a task force report on the issue which recommended a consistent definition of the terms be developed for the education system.

Bullying is defined in the rules as

“behaviour, typically repeated, that is intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other harm to another person’s body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property.”

The definition says bullying can be direct or indirect, and includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way.

The province says consistent reporting will provide better data to help determine appropriate responses and program needs.

Feb 08 2013

BURNABY, B.C. - Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced legislation Friday that places new restrictions on violent offenders deemed not criminally responsible for their actions, invoking a horrific case in British Columbia that saw a mentally ill father murder his three children.



timescolonist.com

Harper suggested current laws fail to protect the public and victims from violent, mentally ill offenders.

“When atrocious events do occur, and the state fails to act, fails to do all it can do to defend innocent citizens, it violates the inherent trust upon which its existence is justified,” Harper said in Burnaby, east of Vancouver.

“We’ve heard from Canadians loud and clear: Something here is very wrong.”

The proposed legislation would allow courts to designate people who are found not criminally responsible for violent crimes as “high risk.” Such offenders could be held longer without a formal review, would be ineligible to leave their forensic facility by themselves and would find it far more difficult to leave even with an escort.

Harper unveiled the changes at a news conference in the Vancouver area, not far from where Allan Schoenborn, who was deemed not criminally responsible for the deaths of his three children in 2008 in Merritt, B.C., is scheduled to attend a hearing next week. The hearing will determine whether Schoenborn, who is currently confined to a psychiatric hospital, should be given any access to the outside world.

Harper said the case exposed “glaring gaps” in the system.

“Currently, there is no obligation under law or regulation to warn the families of their victims that these violent people are returning to the community,” he said.

“Here is the biggest problem: Canadians have been shocked to learn that certain violent individuals who, while still in detention, have received unescorted day passes despite still

being a significant threat to public safety.”

Offenders deemed to be a high risk under the new law could not be released until a court agrees. They would never receive unescorted passes to leave their facility and could only receive escorted passes in “narrow circumstances,” the government said.

Currently, a review board - chaired by a judge and including mental health professionals - assesses such cases on an annual basis. Under the new law, high-risk offenders could be held for up to three years before their status is reviewed.

Feb 08 2013

WINNIPEG - A jury has found two Winnipeg police officers not guilty of shooting an unarmed man and then



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family for the last three weeks or so, they were also very emotional, very tense, not knowing what's going to happen to their loved ones."

Jurors heard the officers were looking for a suspect in a nearby robbery when they tried to arrest Fournier.

Fournier, who still has the bullet lodged in his buttocks, admitted in court that he was a drug-dealing car stealer and drove at excessive speeds through residential neighbourhoods high on methamphetamine.

Prosecutor Robert Tapper had argued the officers lied 16 times in their official report of the incident.

But Weinstein said the jury, which began its deliberations Wednesday evening, took its time to go over each of the charges the officers faced.

"...They found clearly there was a reasonable doubt and that's why they had to acquit."

Fournier's credibility was attacked by the defence lawyers for his extensive criminal past. But Fournier fought back, telling jurors he's a changed man, having obtained a full-time job, moved out of the city, and found a steady relationship.

He was taken into custody by sheriff's officers as he left the witness stand in January after the defence revealed in court that there was an outstanding warrant out for his arrest on new criminal charges.

(CJOB, The Canadian Press)

Feb 08 2013

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. - A man convicted of murdering four people almost three decades ago - including an RCMP officer in Richmond, B.C. - has been granted more freedom from prison.

The National Parole Board says 66-year-old Steven Leclair can have two, eight-hour unescorted passes from a B.C. prison each month to visit his wife.

The board made the decision despite concluding Leclair remains "a high risk to reoffend violently both generally and in intimate relationships."

"You do not have the support of your (case management team) and psychological opinion indicates that you still have deficits in emotional regulation."

But the board also found that Leclair has not been violent toward others in the thirty years since he was imprisoned and he hasn't had a drink in that time either.

"You have made gains through programming and although you struggle to express it, you do demonstrate some insight. . .

"The board concludes that your risk would not be undue on two eight-hour (unescorted temporary absences) per month to the home of your wife."

On Sept. 20, 1980, Leclair walked into the Palace Hotel tavern, on Hastings Street in Vancouver, with a .45-calibre handgun and opened fire, hitting four people. Three of them died - two employees and a customer.

He forced a driver to take him to the RCMP detachment in Richmond, where Const. Tom Agar was behind the desk.

Leclair shot Agar in the chest and Agar

died at the scene. The 26-year-old father of one and his wife were expecting another child.

Another officer, Const. Wayne Hannigan, then exchanged gunfire with Leclair. Hannigan was shot in the leg, but the exchange allowed another officer to arrest Leclair.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 09, 2013

Feb 09 2013

HALIFAX - A naval officer in Halifax who sold military secrets to Russia received a 20-year prison sentence yesterday in a case that exposed Canadian security weaknesses.

Sub-Lieutenant Jeffrey Paul Delisle's actions also raised questions about the country's place in the intelligence community.

In sentencing Delisle, Nova Scotia provincial court Judge Patrick Curran rejected Delisle's claim that he betrayed Canada because of heartbreak after he learned his wife cheated on him.

Delisle will serve 18 years and five months behind bars because of time he has already served.

Curran also ordered the 41-year-old father of four to pay a fine of nearly 112,000 - the amount he collected from his Russian bosses.

He was given 20 years to pay it or face two more years in prison.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2013

Feb 10 2013

MONTREAL - Hockey's most storied franchise has had a regular shift at Quebec's corruption inquiry.

The probe has repeatedly heard how Montreal Canadiens tickets were a currency of choice when it came to corrupting public officials.

A half-dozen employees from the city's engineering department have testified and every single one of them has admitted to taking free hockey tickets whenever they could get them.

They were wined, dined and bribed by construction bosses. Some took gifts ranging from golf vacations to free home renovations.

Some accepted money, some said they refused it. One witness said he drew the line at prostitutes and declined to accept the paid company of young women.

But nobody said no to Habs games - the hottest ticket in a hockey-mad town.

MONDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2013

Feb 11 2013

WINNIPEG - A trial starting in a Winnipeg courtroom could determine if dealers can be held responsible for the death of someone using their drugs.

Curtis Haas, who is 51, has pleaded not guilty to manslaughter in the death of 20-year-old Wendy Henry.

Henry died in 2007 when she overdosed on morphine she was allegedly provided by Haas.

Haas is also charged with drug trafficking and criminal negligence causing death.

The Crown has indicated it will rely on expert witnesses and statements given to police by the accused.

Police have said a conviction could open the door for similar charges in the future.

(CJOB)

Feb 11 2013

OTTAWA - The Conservative government has abandoned its controversial and much-maligned Internet surveillance bill, legislation it once claimed was crucial to stopping child pornographers.

Less than a year ago support for Bill C-30, the so-called Protecting Children from Internet Predators Act, was presented to Canadians by the government as a binary choice.

"He can either stand with us or stand with the child pornographers," Public Safety Minister Vic Toews scolded a Liberal critic in the House of Commons last February.

The comment set off a public fire storm concerning the Internet and personal privacy - a nasty fight that resulted in unsavoury details of Toews' divorce being splashed across the web by a Liberal party operative.

Toews, who introduced the legislation, did not attend Monday's news conference where Justice Minister Rob Nicholson said Bill C-30 is dead.

After announcing changes to emergency warrantless wiretap laws, Nicholson let drop that C-30 was gone, in response to a reporter's question - an inquiry the minister was clearly expecting.

"We will not be proceeding with Bill C-30 and any attempts we will have to modernize the Criminal Code will not contain the measures in C-30 - including the warrantless mandatory disclosure of basic subscriber information, or the requirement for telecommunications service providers to build intercept capabilities within their systems," Nicholson said.

"Any modernization of the Criminal Code ... will not contain those."

The legislation would have forced Internet service providers to maintain systems that allowed police to intercept and track online communications.

It also would have given police, intelligence and Competition Bureau officers warrantless access to Internet subscriber information, including name, address, telephone number, email address and Internet protocol address.

Police said they needed these powers to track child pornographers, among others.

But the proposed legislation infuriated a wide cross-section of opponents, including privacy and civil liberties advocates and many conservative libertarians who opposed what they called Big Brother oversight in the legislation.

Feb 12 2013

KELOWNA, B.C. - The former commander of the RCMP detachment in Merritt, B.C., appeared in provincial court in Kelowna today, charged with the theft of drugs from a police evidence locker.

Online court lists show a guilty plea could be entered during the morning appearance of former staff sgt. Stuart Seib.

He was suspended as head of the Merritt detachment in January 2012, when charges of theft under \$5,000 and breach of trust were laid.

At the time, investigators said cocaine had been taken from a police evidence locker.

Seib, an 18-year veteran of the force, was transferred to Merritt in November 2011, after being stationed in Clearwater for seven years.

He resigned from the RCMP last year and won't face internal discipline.
(CHNL)

Feb 12 2013

TORONTO - Ontario's Special Investigations Unit is releasing more information about an incident at a Toronto nightclub on the weekend that left two men with gunshot wounds.

The agency says there was an altercation early Sunday in a parking lot outside the Muzik club at the Canadian National Exhibition grounds.

Police officers who heard gunshots went to the scene and saw a Honda Accord leaving the area.

The SIU says when the car failed to stop, the officers fired at it and the car came to a stop in a snowbank a short distance away.

An 18-year-old man inside the vehicle sustained a gunshot wound to the arm and a 19-year-old man sustained a gunshot wound to the arm and chest.

Both were taken to hospital for treatment.

Feb 12 2013

BELLEVILLE, Ont. - A 40-year-old man whose vehicle briefly dragged a police officer through a RIDE check near Trenton has been handed an 18-month jail sentence.

Tommy Church of Stockdale, just north of Trenton, was sentenced Monday in Belleville Provincial Court on charges of dangerous driving, flight from police and driving while disqualified.

Church pleaded guilty to the charges on Dec. 13.

Court heard the provincial highway safety officer was operating a RIDE check on a rural road northwest of Trenton on Nov. 8 when a car with an open container of alcohol rolled through.

The officer was pulled a short distance with his arm caught in the driver's seatbelt but

he managed to free himself, and a police pursuit down several country roads ended a short time later west of Stirling.

In addition to the jail sentence, Church will be on probation for 12 months and will be prohibited from driving for five years.
(CJOJ)

Feb 12 2013

OTTAWA - Lawyers who fought a clawback of military pensions all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada are in line for a nearly \$66-million payout when a judge later this week considers a settlement agreement involving thousands of disabled veterans and retired RCMP officers.

Justice Robert Barnes, of the Federal Court of Canada in Halifax, will review an \$887.8-million settlement negotiated between the Harper government and roughly 7,500 ex-soldiers who are part of a class-action lawsuit launched by former army veteran Dennis Manuge.

Part of that settlement involves a request to the court to pay the legal fees of the attorneys at McInnes-Cooper, who've carried the case since its inception in 2007.

The cash would come out of the \$424 million set aside for retroactive payments to veterans, who since 1976 have seen their long-term disability benefits reduced by the amount of their monthly Veterans Affairs disability pension.

Some of the veterans involved in the lawsuit are angry that fee is coming out of their pockets.



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Senior Investigator at MTS Allstream
Previous: Winnipeg Police Service, Manitoba Hydro

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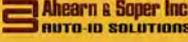
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Ward Branch, one of the attorneys, says the fee could have been much lower had the government chose not to drag out litigation.

Feb 12 2013

VERNON, B.C. - RCMP say two Mounties got into a dustup during a social event for a police hockey tournament in Vernon, B.C.

Spokesman Gord Molendyk says it happened Friday at a hotel where nine teams from police detachments around B.C. had been staying for the event.

He wouldn't say what caused the altercation, who was involved and if there were any injuries.

Molendyk says it's a very competitive tournament but fighting is not allowed.

The tournament is named in memory of Vernon RCMP Const. Jean Minguy, who drowned in a boating accident in Okanagan Lake while on duty in the summer of 2005. (CKIZ)

Feb 12 2013

TORONTO, Ont. - As part of the new Victim Witness Support Strategy, Toronto police are encouraging victims and witnesses of crime to take a survey to enhance response to the needs of those affected by crime.

Police also want to raise awareness of the resources available to victims and witnesses.

Sgt. Theresa Monaghan said the goal of the survey is "to connect the officers with all the services that we provide so that we can better assist victims and witnesses."

Monaghan said there are over 30,000 agencies available.

Police also want to know whether victims and witnesses accessed any resources at all.

"What other resources and agencies were you offered if you didn't want victim services; was there anything else that the officers could connect you with," Monaghan said.

The survey is anonymous.

(680 News)

Feb 12 2013

WINNIPEG - Police dogs protect communities as officers of the law but they were never protected until one Winnipeg couple saw a business opportunity.

K9 Storm makes body armour for elite police dogs and special forces canines around the world.

Jim and Glori Slater started K9 Storm in 1998 and now their vest can be found in 18 different countries around the world.

Their gear is used by the military for a wide variety of situations, ranging from sniffing out arenas at the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games to clearing the fields at the Super Bowl.

Jim Slater was a member of the Winnipeg Police Service for 20 years.

He says the idea for canine body armour came to him while he was with his canine partner, Olaf, searching the Headingley prison during the 1996 riot.

"I realized that the dog really needed to be protected because he was working out in front

of us in a very volatile situation," says Slater.

Police dogs can cost \$50,000 to train, an investment Slater said needs to be protected.

A fully loaded vest with an "Intruder" camera can cost \$30,000 but the payoff is priceless.

"The dog has full night vision capabilities," said Slater. "As the dog moves from a light to dark area of a building or structure, the handler or operator can view that image from the dog's point of view. They can see how the dog is doing, how the dog is reacting and what he sees or smells."

Additional harnesses allow dogs to be strapped to a handler for repelling or parachuting from helicopters and planes.

The company's future products remain a closely guarded secret.

(Global Winnipeg)

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2013

Feb 13 2013

TORONTO - A Toronto tow-truck driver is calling for the firing of a police officer he says threatened to assault him with a sex toy.

Const. Ludgero Cafe had been charged with uttering a threat to cause bodily harm after an investigation by the province's special investigations unit.

However, the man's lawyer says the Crown withdrew criminal charges against the provincial police officer.

Video taken inside the police station last March shows Cafe brandishing what appear to be sex toys at the driver, Jagdis Tirbany.

There is an exchange of words, and Tirbany is accused of having a big mouth and complete disregard for the law.

On the video, Cafe is seen briefly with what appears to be a sex toy in either hand, and saying "which one do you want to use."

Crown prosecutor Ian Bulmer was not immediately available to explain why he withdrew the charge in the case.

Tirbany said he expects to file a lawsuit against the police.

Feb 13 2013

OTTAWA - The RCMP says it wants to get to the bottom of abuse allegations against its officers in British Columbia, but the international rights watchdog that has publicized them isn't helping them investigate.

The force takes the allegations raised in the Human Rights Watch report released Wednesday very seriously, RCMP Chief Supt. Janice Armstrong said in a statement.

"The unimaginable loss and pain felt by families and loved ones of missing and murdered persons is also felt across our communities," Armstrong said.

"The RCMP looks forward to working with our government and non-government partners, as well the communities we serve, to provide

Canadians with the professional and accountable police service they expect and deserve."

The report by Human Rights Watch, an international human rights watchdog, accuses RCMP officers of abusing aboriginal women and girls in northern B.C., including one allegation of rape.

The alleged incidents were uncovered as part of a broader investigation into charges of systemic neglect of missing and murdered aboriginal women along B.C.'s Highway 16, nicknamed the "Highway of Tears."

None of the complainants, however, have come forward since the organization approached the Mounties about the allegations five months ago, so police haven't been able to investigate further, Armstrong said.

"These allegations must be brought forward for proper investigation," she said.

"Unfortunately, five months later and none of these allegations have been brought forward for investigation. It is impossible to deal with such public and serious complaints when we have no method to determine who the victims or the accused are."

None of the allegations has been proven in court.

Human Rights Watch undertook the investigation last year after a Vancouver-based agency approached it in 2011 complaining that authorities in Canada were not doing enough to address the problem.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper called on the group to share its information with police so the allegations can be investigated.

He also announced that the government has asked the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP to look into the allegations.

Feb 13 2013

VALEMONT, B.C. - The RCMP say one of their officers fired a shot after man approached the Mountie armed with a rifle near Valemont, B.C.

Police say no one was hurt and the man was wrestled to the ground and arrested.

They say the incident began Tuesday when an officer pulled over a vehicle on Highway 16 north of Valemont.

The driver stepped out of the vehicle, pulled out a rifle and approached the police officer.

That's when police fired a single shot before the man was arrested.

Const. Lesley Smith says the RCMP are investigating the incident.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2013

Feb 14 2013

LOS ANGELES - There was no question. The man standing before Rick Heltebrake on a rural mountain road was Christopher Dorner.

Clad in camouflage from head to toe and wearing a bulletproof vest packed with ammunition, the most wanted man in America was just a few feet away, having emerged from a

grove of trees holding a large assault-style rifle.

As teams of officers who had sought the fugitive ex-Los Angeles police officer for a week were closing in, Dorner pointed the gun at Heltebrake and ordered him out of his truck.

"I don't want to hurt you. Start walking and take your dog," Heltebrake recalled Dorner saying during the carjacking Tuesday.

The man, who wasn't lugging any gear, got into the truck and drove away. Heltebrake, with his 3-year-old Dalmatian Suni in tow, called police when he heard a volley of gunfire erupt soon after, and then hid behind a tree.

A short time later, police caught up with the man they believe was Dorner, surrounding a cabin where he'd taken refuge after crashing Heltebrake's truck in the San Bernardino Mountains 80 miles east of Los Angeles.

A gunfight ensued in which one sheriff's deputy was killed and another wounded. After the firefight ended, a SWAT team using an armoured vehicle broke out the cabin's windows and began knocking down walls. A fire started, and later, charred remains believed to be Dorner's were found.

San Bernardino County Sheriff John McMahon said Wednesday the fire was not set on purpose.

"We did not intentionally burn down that cabin to get Mr. Dorner out," he said.

His deputies lobbed pyrotechnic tear gas into the cabin, and it erupted in flames, he said. McMahon did not say directly that the tear gas started the blaze, and the cause of the fire was under investigation.

The sheriff said authorities have not positively identified the remains. However, all evidence points to it being Dorner, he said, and the manhunt is considered over.

A wallet and personal items, including a California driver's license with the name Christopher Dorner were found in the cabin debris, an official briefed on the investigation told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of the ongoing probe.

Feb 14 2013

CHARLOTTETOWN - The government of Prince Edward Island held a one-day summit Wednesday to consider methods of reducing the number of impaired driving incidents on the province's roads.

Island police forces, transportation officials and addictions experts brainstormed on a variety of strategies to curb the problem.

Transportation Minister Robert Vessey says the province is looking at other provincial efforts, such as Newfoundland and Labrador's laws allowing drug recognition experts to examine motorists suspected of driving while impaired by narcotics.

Vessey also says the province is considering requiring repeat offenders to use a coloured licence plate.

Vessey said the province will be releasing a report based on what was discussed during the summit.

He also says changes are coming to the Highway Traffic Act in future legislative sessions. (Charlottetown Guardian)

Feb 14 2013

MONTREAL - There will be no zombie apocalypse in Quebec next week.

The provincial government has stepped in to cancel plans for a zombie-themed emergency training exercise.

Participants at an annual symposium on civil security had been planning to use a hypothetical zombie attack to test emergency preparedness.

Such a theme has been used elsewhere. The logic behind it is to use something that can never actually occur, as opposed to a flood or an ice storm, because that way emergency-preparedness officials might think of new problems and solutions.

News of the plan had elicited many guffaws this week, along with some complaints about wasteful government spending.

So now the provincial cabinet has stepped in. Public Security Minister Stephane Bergeron announced in a press release Thursday that he has ordered a change of plans.

The new scenario will simulate a flood.

"I thought ... the theme of the workshop had taken on a greater importance than its goal and that it was better to change it," Bergeron said in a statement.

He said he took the decision "so as not to undermine the real purpose of the activity, which is and remains a very important exercise for civil security."

The idea of a zombie apocalypse even made its way to the House of Commons on Wednesday, where the NDP asked the Conservatives about the country's level of zombie preparedness.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird assured that "Canada would never be a safe haven for zombies."

A civil servant with Quebec's civil security department had told The Canadian Press earlier this week that the zombie exercise, used in the United States and elsewhere in Canada in recent years, is designed to get officials to think outside the box.

A spokesman said that when officials discuss an issue they've already lived through, it's easy to get caught up in old habits.

Hypothetical zombie attacks are becoming a popular emergency preparedness teaching tool. Even the Centers for Disease Control in the United States has used the tactic.

Feb 14 2013

SPRUCE GROVE, Alta. - A Mountie is in hospital following a crash on an icy road west of Edmonton.

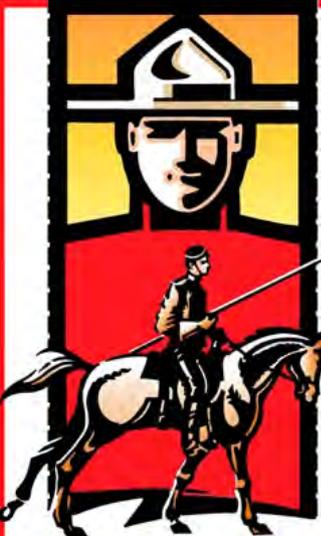
RCMP say the officer had just responded to an accident and was returning to the Stony Plain detachment when he was hit by a pickup truck.

The driver of the truck lost control on some ice and slid into the front of the police cruiser, about 10 kilometres south of Spruce Grove.

Firefighters used the Jaws of Life to free the Mountie, who was alert and talking.

He was air-lifted to hospital in Edmonton with serious injuries to his legs.

Two men in the truck were treated for minor injuries.



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