# BLUE LINE EEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY July 05, 2013 – Vol. 18 No. 27

## **Executive Digest**

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### Criminal networks exploiting Canada's medical marijuana program



by Jim Bronskill

Jul 03 2013

OTTAWA - The RCMP says organized criminal networks are taking advantage of Canada's medical marijuana program to produce the drug and supply it to the illicit market.

A newly released intelligence report by the national police force warns that criminals are using family members and associates with clean police records to get around program safeguards.

"Gaining access to or control of a medical marijuana grow operation is highly desirable for criminal networks due to the array of opportunities it would present for the illicit production and diversion of high-grade medical marijuana," says the report, which was completed in May 2012.

It also notes that screening an applicant through a criminal record check is insufficient to keep undesirable elements from infiltrating the program.

A heavily censored copy of the report was released to The Canadian Press under the Access to Information Act.

The findings follow numerous warnings and reports of illegal activity linked to Health Canada's Marijuana Medical Access Regula-

The department has announced a complete reworking of the medical marijuana system - in part due to concerns about the risk of criminal exploitation.

Under the existing program, to be phased out by April 1, 2014, individuals are issued



licences to grow marijuana for their personal use to help ease the symptoms of their medical conditions.

More than 30,000 people across the country are authorized to use the drug for medical purposes.

The Mounties have long advised that the illegal marijuana trade is a multibillion-dollar industry in Canada.

The RCMP report cites case studies that reveal criminal tactics for abusing the federal program, including:

- Producing marijuana in excess of the quantity allowed under a Health Canada permit in one instance almost 80 kilograms annually, with a street value of more than \$650,000;
- Circumventing federal safeguards by having a family member without a criminal conviction, such as a spouse, obtain a licence:
- Efforts by organized criminal groups to gain access to a licence through a complex web of associates.

"Criminal groups are currently exploiting Health Canada's MMAR program," says the report, adding "at least one high-level criminal organization - identified as a national level threat - is proactively seeking opportunities to exploit future MMAR guidelines currently being developed by Health Canada."

In 2010, the RCMP said a review concluded that 70 licence holders were violating the terms of their agreements. In 40 of the cases, holders were trafficking marijuana.

Last month, CBC-TV aired an interview with a man from Nelson, B.C., identified only as Jack, who said he made abut \$120,000 a year selling the marijuana he cultivated using his medical licence.

Under Health Canada's new medical marijuana program, individuals will no longer

marijuana for distribution to individuals whose health-care providers agree it is an appropriate treatment.

The government says the licensed producers will be subject to extensive security and quality-control requirements.

apply for licences to grow plants at home.

Instead, licensed producers will cultivate

quality-control requirements.

Those include security clearances for key personnel, alarm systems at growing facilities to detect intruders, and compliance and

enforcement measures, Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq said in an opinion piece published Wednesday by the Globe and Mail newspaper. In addition, dried marijuana will be shipped through a secure delivery service

shipped through a secure delivery service directly to the address the client specifies, Aglukkaq said.

"Taken together, these measures will reduce the risks of diversion of marijuana to illicit markets."

### THURSDAY JUNE 27, 2013

Jun 27 2013

HALIFAX - Halifax Regional Police say one of their officers shot a man armed with a knife during a foot chase Thursday in the city.

Staff Sgt. Bill Morris says the man was taken to hospital with what are believed to be non-life-threatening injuries.

Morris says the incident happened around 7 p.m. after two plainclothes officers confronted the man as part of an ongoing investigation.

He alleges the man pulled out a knife and took off on foot.

Other officers were called to the scene and a chase ensued in a wooded area and continued onto a ball field behind a junior high school in Dartmouth.

It was there that the man allegedly pulled out the knife again and refused to comply with police.

That's when Morris says the officer fired.

### FRIDAY JUNE 28, 2013

Jun 28 2013

## SASKATOON - A Saskatoon-area man accused of attempting to kill a retired RCMP officer has pleaded guilty to a charge of aggravated assault.

Ryan Dalton Kelly Bear, who is 23, entered the plea Thursday during closing arguments at his Saskatoon trial on a charge of attempted murder.

Bear's trial has heard that Robert Laidlaw was attacked on the side of a road near Out-

look, Sask., last May while helping the accused repair a flat tire.

Defence lawyer Darren Winegarden has argued that his client simply wanted to steal Laidlaw's vehicle, and that the former Mountie was inconsistent in his recollections of what Bear said to him.

The Crown has argued that Bear was trying to get away from home in his mother's stolen SUV, and decided to kill Laidlaw after he got suspicious.

The Crown has stayed a separate count of assault with a weapon against Bear, while Court of Queen's Bench Justice Murray Acton has reserved decision on the attempted murder charge until Oct. 2.

Jun 28 2013

OTTAWA - The Prime Minister's Office entered a dispute Friday between residents of flood-ravaged High River and the RCMP over the seizure of firearms from homes in the evacuated southern Alberta town.

The Mounties said Thursday they had seized guns from homes in the flood zone and put them in a safe place.

That angered High River residents, who have been anxious to return to their homes to assess flood damage.

An evacuation order for the town of about 13,000 residents was in its ninth day Friday.

The guns should be returned to their owners, said a spokesman for Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

"We expect that any firearms taken will be returned to their owners as soon as possible," said press secretary Carl Vallee, who added that the Mounties should be dealing with more pressing matters.

"We believe the RCMP should focus on more important tasks such as protecting lives and private property."

Critics were quick to complain that the Harper government should not be dictating how the Mounties should conduct their operations.

An RCMP official said any guns removed from homes were not properly stored. Police officers were inspecting several homes to look for flood victims, pets and anything that might pose a threat to returning residents.

RCMP spokeswoman Cst. Francine Hennelly said when officers entered homes to search for people, "if we identified any pets or hazards, we would respond accordingly."

"We seized any firearms that were noted that were in plain view," she said. "We seized what we saw that could potentially be a hazard.

"Anything properly stored in gun lockers was left."

In a statement released Friday, the RCMP said officers found that many gun owners had actually laid out their guns in plain view in order to move valuable possessions to higher ground in their homes.



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The weapons were tagged for return to their owners "as soon as is practically possible."

"The last thing any gun owner wants is to have their guns fall into the wrong hands. Residents of High River can be assured that firearms now in possession of the RCMP are in safe hands, and will be returned to them as soon as is practically possible," said assistant commissioner Marianne Ryan.

Jun 28 2013

## MONTREAL - These days, in the Montreal area, mayors don't last too long. Not even the replacement ones.

The interim mayor of suburban Laval has just quit his post.

Alexandre Duplessis has announced he's stepping down in a letter to the city clerk's office and says his departure takes effect immediately.

This is just six hours after Duplessis told reporters he would not resign after a controversy allegedly involving extortion and a prostitute.

A new interim mayor will be chosen from the remaining group of city councillor. That person will hold the post until municipal election on Nov. 3.

That process begins next week.

The resignation of Laval's interim mayor comes just a week after the interim mayor of Montreal resigned. Both Duplessis and Applebaum were replacing scandal-plagued elected mayors. Applebaum quit after he was slapped with fraud charges.

Jun 28 2013

# HALIFAX - A man shot by Halifax Regional Police during a pursuit will be charged with attempted murder for allegedly trying to stab an officer during the incident.

Police say the incident began when officers tried to arrest the man at his apartment in connection with a break-in at a home earlier this month.

Police allege the man pulled out a knife and tried to stab an officer before fleeing on foot.

He was eventually confronted by policeat a nearby school where he allegedly pulled out the knife again.

Police say that's when he was shot. No officers were hurt.

Cst. Pierre Bourdages says the man will also be charged with assaulting a police officer with a weapon, resisting arrest, uttering threats, escaping lawful custody, possession of a dangerous weapon and carrying a concealed weapon.

He will also face charges in connection with the June 14 break and enter, including break and enter and possession of stolen goods.

Jun 28 2013

VANCOUVER - The death of 16-yearold Asqa Parvez at the hands of her own family was top of mind for federal Status of Women Minister Rona Ambrose on Friday, as she announced funding for a program that will try to tap the perpetrators of so-called "honour" crimes for information on how to prevent them.

Ambrose said the Mississauga, Ont., teen sought help at a shelter, but was returned to the care of her parents.

It was a situation the shelter had not experienced before, she said.

The federal government will provide \$200,000 to MOSAIC, a multicultural and immigrant service organization, for a two-year project that will include consulting boys and men in multicultural communities to better understand the issues behind ethnic gender violence.

Ambrose said there have been 19 murders on record that are considered honour killings.

She said the Vancouver program is one of 600 the federal government has supported across the country with similar goals.

Jun 28 2013

# VICTORIA - A horrific child sexual abuse case thrown out of court after police and Crown officials bungled evidence has prompted the Criminal Justice Branch to amend its policy in handling sensitive prosecution cases.

The Criminal Justice Branch says it has changed its Child and Vulnerable Youth Policy to ensure senior justice officials review cases involving children where procedural or investigation barriers could affect a prosecution.

The branch and police also developed mutually-accepted guidelines to address issues of language translation requirements.

The changes arise after a 2012 report by B.C.'s representative for children, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, revealed that 13 sex abuse-related charges against a father were stayed in January 2010 even though family members reported the alleged incidents to authorities and were prepared to testify.

The case against the father, who faced assault, threatening and incest charges, was stayed when a judge ruled the man's rights were violated because it took too long to get the case to trial.

The Justice Ministry says it has enhanced its electronic case management system to highlight files involving child victims and witnesses in order to ensure special assignment and case management.

> SATURDAY JUNE 29, 2013

Jun 29 2013

MONTREAL-The coroner's inquest into the death of Fredy Villanueva

### has finished with the final report due this fall.

Villanueva was killed during a confrontation with police in August of 2008, and his death provoked rioting and an acknowledgement of racial tension in Montreal North.

Following a two-year delay caused by legal challenges from the Montreal police force, and witnesses being questioned about the safety of the holsters used by the department wrapped up on Friday.

Jean-Loup Lapointe, who shot Villanueva and two other men, has said that the reason he opened fire was because he was afraid that the gang of young men he was confronting would be able to take his firearm.

At the inquiry on Friday a weapons expert from the Montreal police force said it was very unlikely that an assailant would be able to quickly snatch a police weapon from its holster.

The witness said the holsters were the best on the market, were very safe, and designed in such a way that opening them is somewhat tricky, especially for the untrained.

No members of the Villanueva family have attended the public inquiry this week. They said years ago that they had become disillusioned by the inquest and did not expect to be satisfied with the results.

Jun 29 2013

(CTV News)

# B.C.'s police watchdog organization launched two new investigations Saturday in Vancouver and Nanaimo, the second weekend in a row they had multiple deployments.

A man was seriously injured early Saturday morning when he fell from a ledge in a Nanaimo parking area shortly after encountering a police officer.

The Independent Investigations Office is examining the incident while the man, who is in his 40s, recovers in hospital.

IIO spokesman Owen Court said a Nanaimo RCMP officer was conducting a foot patrol at 2 a.m. Saturday morning when he came across the man near the ledge. When the officer announced himself, the man fell nine metres to the ground below.

"All indications, thus far, are that this was an accidental fall," said Court.

The unit was called at 3:40 a.m., and investigators were deployed at 6:30 a.m.

Then at 11:30 a.m. Saturday morning, the IIO deployed investigators to Vancouver, where a man was recovering in hospital after spending the night in police custody.

Officers witnessed an altercation Friday night between two males. One man was taken into custody, after which "he experienced a significant medical event," according to an IIO release.

(The Province)

### SUNDAY JUNE 30, 2013

Jun 30 2013

OTTAWA - Deeper co-operation between Canada and the United States on cross-border law enforcement is being held up by the thorny question of which country's legal system would deal with a police officer accused of breaking the law, says the U.S. ambassador.



The ongoing efforts to iron out issues of officer accountability explain the one-year delay in launching two pilot projects for the so-called "next generation" policing program.

The initiative would see Canadian and U.S. officials work even more closely than they do now, building on joint border-policing efforts by creating integrated teams in areas such as intelligence and criminal investigations.

But it has proven to be one of the most challenging elements of the perimeter security pact between the two countries, David Jacobson, the U.S. ambassador to Canada, said in an interview.

"If an RCMP officer is in North Dakota, and they're chasing a criminal and they go to shoot somebody, well what are the laws that govern the appropriate use of force? Is it Canadian rules, is it American rules?" Jacobson said.

"What happens if there's a lawsuit in North Dakota? Does the Canadian RCMP officer want to be subject to litigation in the United States? We have slightly different rules," he said. "The question is: which rules are going to apply to which? It is a complicated question. It is not an insurmountable question but it's complicated."

Another issue that must be addressed, said a federal official familiar with the file, is where a citizen of one country might take allegations of ill-treatment at the hands of an officer from the other country.

For instance, if a U.S. officer were to "arrest you, put you in cuffs and dislocate your shoulder," would a Canadian have recourse to the watchdog that oversees the RCMP, asked the official, who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the policy deliberations.

"I know that the accountability writ large is an issue."

A December 2012 progress report on the

border deal was rather vague about the delay, saying only that officials were evaluating the "operational and legal requirements" involved in the law enforcement initiative.

Jacobson has previously said that legislation in both countries would be required in order to implement the new arrangements.

Public Safety Canada spokeswoman Josee Picard said "discussions are continuing on the legal and governance framework" for the program. "Once there is agreement on these elements, then the pilot can proceed. It would be inappropriate to report on the details of these discussions."

The perimeter security deal - being phased in over several years - aims to ensure the safe, speedy passage of goods and people across the 49th parallel while bolstering defences along the continental border.

The next-generation policing initiative, though land-based, is to be modelled on the Shiprider project, which involves specially-trained and designated Canadian and U.S. officers working on the water in dedicated teams.

The Canadian legislation paving the way for Shiprider outlines the procedure for making a public complaint against an officer from the U.S., allowing for the possibility of a joint investigation. However, it's unclear whether the procedure can be adopted for teams working on land.

Internal Public Safety briefing notes, prepared for the deputy minister, say increasing law enforcement co-operation at the border is important because police increasingly face criminal activity that extends beyond their respective national boundaries.

"This is especially true with organized crime," say the notes released under the Access to Information Act.

"Criminals, aware that Canadian and U.S. law enforcement personnel working at the shared border do not have authorities outside of their respective domestic jurisdictions, have taken advantage of this fact and have strategically organized criminal activities to avoid apprehension and prosecution."

### TUESDAY JULY 02, 2013

Jul 02 2013

KELOWNA, B.C. - Two men who RCMP say are Hells Angels gang associates have been acquitted of assault charges.

Pedro Amestica and Thomas Volker were accused of punching a Kelowna Mountie in the face.

The charges stem from a fight outside of a nightclub in downtown Kelowna in December of 2011.

The Kelowna judge acquitted the men last week after accepting their explanation that they didn't know the person they hit was a uniformed officer.

At the time, police said that two RCMP officers were trying to break up the fight when one was jumped from behind, put in a headlock, and punched several times.

Thirty-nine-year-old Amestica was charged with assaulting a police officer and resisting arrest, and 37-year-old Thomas Volker was charged with assaulting a police officer.
(CHBC, CKFR)

Jul 02 2013

CALGARY - Calgary officials say it will cost at least \$265.5 million to repair damage from the flooding that devastated parts of the city last month.

Structural damage to the Calgary Police Service's downtown administration building will cost more than \$31 million to fix, the committee heard.

The preliminary estimates were discussed by aldermen on the finance committee, which met Tuesday in a temporary space in the city's northeast because city hall in downtown Calgary is not yet fully open.

Damage to the city hall complex will cost \$26.5 million to repair, officials said. The historic sandstone building will not reopen until late July or even August.
(CBC News)

Jul 02 2013

KINGSTON, Jamaica - The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have lent a helping hand to an international police operation in the Caribbean and Central America that seized hundreds of millions of dollars of cocaine and other drugs.

The investigation was led by Interpol while the Caribbean council and the World Customs Organization also partnered in the anti-smuggling operation, which was supported by the French Coast Guard and the Mounties.

The operation seized roughly US\$822 million in drugs and led to 142 arrests, law enforcement authorities in Europe announced.

The Europol police agency supported the Interpol-led initiative dubbed "Operation Lionfish" targeting maritime drug and gun smugglers across the two regions. It involved some 34 countries and territories, including some 20 Caribbean nations including Cuba and Jamaica and Central American states like Nicaragua and Panama.

During the weeks-long operation, authorities were able to share information and conduct speedy checks against the Interpol and Europol intelligence databases to cross-check suspicious vessels and cargo containers and then select them as targets to be tracked and boarded.

Patrols were conducted by land and sea. Regional police, customs, immigration and naval forces participated in the international effort to combat organized crime groups behind narcotics and illicit weapons smuggling in the Caribbean and Central America.

Besides confiscating caches of drugs and making arrests, Europol said the operation targeting maritime smuggling by criminal networks also resulted in the seizure of 15 vessels, 42 guns, US\$170,000 in cash and eight tons of chemical precursors used to manufacture cocaine.

Jul 02 2013

VANCOUVER - RCMP say they have foiled a domestic terror attack hatched by two Canadian citizens, driven by an "al-Qaida ideology" to blow up the British Columbia legislature during Canada Day celebrations.



The force was informed of the alleged plot in February by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and a five-month investigation culminated with the arrests of two people in Abbotsford, B.C., on Monday, RCMP announced on Tuesday.

"This self-radicalized behaviour was intended to cause maximum impact and harm to Canadian citizens at the B.C. legislature on a national holiday," Assistant Commissioner Wayne Rideout said at a news conference in Surrey, B.C.

"They took steps to educate themselves and produce explosive devices designed to cause injury and death.

"The suspects were committed to acts of violence and discussed a wide variety of targets and techniques."

John Stuart Nuttall, 38, and Amanda Marie Korody, born in 1983, appeared in court Tuesday morning in Surrey, and were charged with three counts each: knowingly facilitating a terrorist activity, making or possessing an explosive device, and conspiracy to place an explosive device with the intent to cause death or injury.

RCMP released photos of what they said were the home-made bombs contained in pressure cookers, that police say are similar to a pair of bombs that killed three people and injured more than 260 during the Boston Marathon two months ago. The RCMP categorically ruled out any links to the Boston bombings.

"Our investigation revealed that these individuals were inspired by al-Qaida ideology but there is no evidence to indicate that these individuals had the support or were acting at the direction of a terrorist group, per se," said Assistant Commissioner James Malizia.

The RCMP revealed little about the suspects and their background or what may have motivated the alleged conspiracy, other than repeatedly saying the plot was linked to an "al-Qaida ideology."

When asked whether the alleged plot had a religious motive or was instead driven by something else, Malizia was vague.

"In this case here, the ideology had to do with a criminal act, wanting to pursue criminal acts on behalf of an organization that they believed in, and that organization and the ideology behind that organization as you know it is the al-Qaida ideology," he said.

Federal Public Safety Minister Vic Toews applauded the work of the law enforcement agencies involved in the investigation.

"Yesterday's arrests demonstrate that terrorism continues to be a real threat to Canada," Toews said in a statement.

"The RCMP has assured me that at no time during the course of this investigation was there an imminent risk to the safety of Canadians.

Jul 02 2013

KELOWNA, B.C. - The former commander of the RCMP detachment in Merritt, B.C., known by community members as "a pillar of the community" received a conditional discharge Tuesday after pleading guilty to stealing and consuming cocaine evidence.

Provincial court Judge Jane Cartwright also placed former Staff Sgt. Stuart Seib on probation for one year and ordered him to perform 50 hours of community work service.

Seib, who's now 54 years old, pleaded guilty to breach of trust last year.

The court heard he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder when he decided to self-medicate. He used cocaine stolen from evidence lockers first when he was a sgt. at the Clearwater detachment, and then as the senior officer in Merritt.

Extensive interviews with RCMP members and staff revealed no one was aware of his mental health issues caused by traumatic events experienced as an RCMP member, or that he had become addicted to cocaine.

Cartwright said the unique circumstances of this case shows the terrible hold cocaine has on users and the impact that depression and post-traumatic stress disorder can have on a person with integrity such as Seib.

The breach of trust conviction also illustrates the occupational trauma of police work, she said, adding that the exceptional trauma suffered by Seib led to the loss of his career and "almost destroyed his life."

However, Cartwright rejected defence lawyer Neville McDougall's request for an absolute discharge, and accepted Crown counsel Sheryl Wagner's recommendation for the conditional discharge. She noted Seib was "well aware of the consequences of his criminal actions" and let down many people.

### WEDNESDAY JULY 03, 2013

Jul 03 2013

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. - A former Mountie who threw his wife from the 17th floor of a Toronto balcony in the early 1980s has lost his parole appeal and will stay in custody because he didn't tell supervisors about two girlfriends.

Patrick Kelly was convicted in 1983 of the first-degree murder of his wife Jeanette, who plunged to her death from the couple's luxury condominium on Toronto's waterfront.

He was granted full parole in 2010, but among the conditions was a requirement to report any relationship with women to his parole supervisor.

But the National Parole Board revoked Kelly's parole in November 2012 because he failed to report relationships he had with two women.

Kelly appealed, arguing the board was biased and the decision was unreasonable and based on erroneous and complete information.

But the appeal's division has sided with the board, saying its decision was not unreasonable because he breached a special condition to report relationships more than once.

Jul 03 2013

TROIS-RIVIERES, Que. - Two of four police officers who allegedly beat a robbery suspect last February in Trois Rvieres, Que., have been fired.

Council fired Marc-Andre Saint-Amant and Keven Deslauriers on Tuesday night.

The other officers, Barbara Provencher and Dominic Pronovost, remain suspended without pay until a disciplinary investigation is completed.

All four were charged after a video surfaced showing four officers punching and kicking a man in a parking lot after he dropped a weapon and lay face down on the ground.

The officers are charged with assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, negligent use of a firearm, fabricating police reports and obstruction of justice.

The suspect, Alexis Vadeboncoeur, is accused of armed robbery at a pharmacy.

Jul 03 2013

## MONTREAL - After being suspended for over three months, Opitciwan's aboriginal police force is coming back.

The First Nation community 600 kilometres north of Montreal disbanded its police department in April when local chiefs refused to sign a funding agreement that didn't increase the

number of officers patrolling the remote community.

But after unsuccessfully lobbying the provincial government for a larger budget, the aboriginal logging town will have to make do with its \$2.2 million, 17-officer police force. Officers from the Sûreté du Québec took over policing duties in the interim but struggled to maintain order in a community where most are native Atikamekw speakers.

News of the deal — signed in late June — comes after a federal audit found that the territory's police department isn't adequately funded to handle the volume of crime it faces. The 2012 audit also recommended a study to determine how many additional officers are needed in Opitciwan, which is only accessible by a gravel logging road that cuts deep into Quebec's boreal forest.

"We signed this deal under duress, our hands were tied," said Opitciwan Chief Christian Awashish. "The bottom line is we couldn't afford to keep holding out. The SQ did what they could, but they're not trained to deal with the reality of policing an aboriginal community."

The town of about 2,100 opens over 2,000 police files in a given year.

Most are for assault, armed assault, domestic abuse and other violent crimes, according to Chachai. The nearest courthouse is a three-hour drive away — meaning that when officers are called to testify in court, it sidelines them for a day.

Aboriginal police are expected to take over from the SQ later this summer. Before they signed the policing deal, Opitciwan had been the lone holdout in a \$60 million agreement that funded locally operated police in 26 Quebec First Nations. About 250 cops are affected by the agreement, with the cost split evenly between the federal and provincial government.

However, Chachai says nothing in the oneyear deal guarantees Quebec will do more than a cursory review of Opitciwan's needs. According to a source within the federal government, Ottawa has offered to increase Opitciwan's funding if Quebec matches the federal government's contribution. The province hasn't indicated they'd be willing to kick in more money for aboriginal policing.

"It's discouraging, but we have to try and do what we can with what we have," Chachai said. "We're in the middle of trying to get our department up and running ... we have officers to rehire and we've got to get back out there."

Before the Opitciwan police force was suspended, most of the reserve's 17 cops were born on the territory and understood the cultural implications of patrolling a First Nations community. Since the SQ took over, many have moved on to work in other aboriginal towns, making the task of reassembling Opitciwan's community more challenging. (Montreal Gazette)

Jul 03 2013

CALGARY - Flood waters have accomplished what no amount of lobbying from police and politicians was able to do: get Calgary's judges to allow prisoners to be housed in the city's courthouse.



The arrangement is strictly temporary, prompted by flood damage that has left police unable to use their holding cells nearby on 7th Avenue S.E.

"This is an emergency situation, and I have to thank the judges for making this accommodation," Justice Minister and Solicitor General Jonathan Denis said.

The Calgary Courts Centre at 601 5th Street S.W. has a cellblock in its basement capable of holding 300 people, but usually only occupied by a handful of prisoners brought daily from the Calgary Remand Centre for court appearances.

Officials once eyed the under-used court-house cells as a potential replacement for the 54-year-old police holding tank, but the city's judges opposed the plan.

Authorities have an agreement to use the courthouse cellblock in an emergency situation that would require mass arrests, such as a riot, but the judiciary said ordinarily there should be a separation between the courts' function and the police.

A feasibility study done by the province in 2011 ranks building a new arrest facility — at a cost to the city of \$37.9 million — as the best option, over renovating the existing space or repurposing two provincial buildings downtown. (Calgary Herald)

Jul 03 2013

HIGH RIVER, Alta. - Mounties have outlined the process for flood evacuees in a flooded southern Alberta town to get their seized firearms back.

The Mounties took the guns as officers searched homes in High River's flood zone to look for flood victims, pets and anything that might pose a threat to returning residents.

The RCMP say people must present a Possession Acquisition Licence to get their weapons.

If they don't have that with them, police say they can verify the licence through the Canadian Police Information Centre computer.

Mounties say if people never had the licence, the guns can be securely stored in the police detachment until the person applies for and gets the licence.

"Many gun owners whose weapons were secured have expressed appreciation to the RCMP for its assistance is protecting their possessions, some of which were worth tens of thousands of dollars," the RCMP said in a news release.

"Many others have voluntarily chosen to leave their weapons in safe storage at the RCMP where they know they do not have to worry about them while they deal with the more pressing issues of returning their homes to a livable state."

Jul 03 2013

OTTAWA - Ottawa police Chief Charles Bordeleau thinks it's high time that police officers charged with criminal offences while they were off duty stop receiving pay cheques while suspended.



Bordeleau Wednesday voiced concerns that the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police has had for some time: That the nature of serious criminal charges and their effect on police reputation and the ever-increasing cost of police salaries mean forces should have the discretion to suspend without pay any officers who have been criminally charged.

"Right now we're just forced to pay them and it's not right," Bordeleau told the Citizen.

The OACP would like to see changes to the Police Services Act to allow police in Ontario to do two things — allow the suspension without pay of an officer charged with a serious offence that is not related to the performance of his or her duty, and to do the same when an officer charged with a serious offence is held in custody or faces conditions where he or she can't perform job duties. Those changes can't come until the provincial government agrees to at least discuss the issue.

With the costs of policing rising in Ottawa and across Ontario and the bulk of that money going toward salaries, paying a charged officer a salary close to \$100,000 a year for several years while a criminal case is underway could save individual forces hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"It's their taxpayers' money that is going toward this and they don't see it as fair and I agree with them," Bordeleau said.

"It's an added pressure to our budgets."

Bordeleau said the savings in salaries won't solve the budget crunch since there are only a handful of situations where no-pay

suspensions would be used, but the point is preserving public trust in policing.

"The money's one thing, but it's the whole principle of having a member charged with a serious criminal offence that has nothing to do with their job and we still are forced to pay them."

President of the Ottawa police union Matt Skof, however, said it's the prejudicial principle behind no-pay suspensions that worries him. Docking pay suggests wrongdoing, he said.

"We're persecuted publicly before we're given any right to a trial and it's because we're police officers that that's happening," Skof said.

"That's the irony, it's our profession that's driving this move."

In response to union concerns, both Bordeleau and the OACP said the suspensions wouldn't interfere with the judicial process.

"I believe in the presumption of innocence," Bordeleau said, stressing the difference between on-duty and off-duty charges. In cases where officers are charged while they are doing their jobs, the OACP thinks pay should continue while the court process occurs.

OACP spokesman Joe Couto said some chiefs in Ontario, responding to the public's demand for accountability, have required criminally charged officers to check in at their detachments daily. Cst. Michael Janho, an OPP officer charged with luring a child, is required as part of his suspension with pay, to check in at the Kanata detachment Monday to Friday.

Other officers are assigned to administrative or equipment duties to show the public that the suspended officers aren't simply sitting at home collecting a pay cheque. When pay would resume and in what capacity are all subsequent conversations that would come once the government agrees to address the issue, Couto said.

Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services Madeleine Meilleur is interested in having the conversation, but her press secretary Craig MacBride said it's not likely to happen until after a report on the future of policing across the province is received by the ministry.

In an emailed statement to the Citizen, Meilleur's office said: "The Ministry and its policing partners have been working through the Future of Policing Advisory Committee (FPAC) to look at the sustainability of police service delivery in Ontario.

"The issue of suspension without pay will be considered by the Future of Policing Advisory Committee (FPAC), which the ministry launched last year," the statement continued. "Any changes to the Police Services Act would require consultations with all affected partners in the policing community and approval by the Legislature."

"It would take legislation," MacBride said. "It's not something that's a quick fix." (Ottawa Citizen)

### THURSDAY JULY 04, 2013

Jul 04 2013

## FORT QU'APPELLE, Sask. - His 19th drunk driving conviction has netted a Saskatchewan man a three-and-a-half-year prison term.

Kenneth Obey was sentenced last month in Fort Qu'Appelle provincial court after he was found to have a blood-alcohol reading of two and a half times the legal limit following a traffic stop last August.

The decision was recently published in an online legal database.

The 55-year-old man was described in court as a serial drunk driver.

Judge Barbara Tomkins noted that Obey had 18 convictions for impaired driving between 1981 and 2005 and that his record is - quote - "shocking."

She also found the courts had tended to show extreme leniency - in most cases handing down sentences of no more than three months in jail.

Court heard Obey became addicted to alcohol after suffering abuse at a residential school, but Tomkins said the accused has shown complete disregard for the well-being of himself and others.

Obey also faces a 15-year driving ban. (CBC, The Canadian Press, Online Out)

Jul 04 2013

### TORONTO - Border officials say they've seized more than 18 kilograms of cocaine stashed in a bathroom at Toronto's Pearson airport.

The Canada Border Services Agency made the announcement Thursday, weeks after the June 17 discovery.

The agency says its officers noticed suspicious packages in the men's bathroom in the Terminal 3 customs inspection hall and found 16 plastic-wrapped parcels above the stalls.

It says the packages weighed more than 18 kg in total and tested positive for co-

The CBSA says officers also found a cellphone, batteries, a charging cord and a battery charger.

The materials have been turned over to the RCMP, but there's no word of any arrests in the case.

Jul 04 2013

## MEDICINE HAT, Alta. - Three police officers from Medicine Hat in south-eastern Alberta have been charged with aggravated assault.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team, also known as ASIRT, says it was called in last summer to investigate their actions.

ASIRT says the officers were investigating an assault complaint Aug. 25 and arrested a 34-year old man.

The man was injured while being taken into custody and required hospitalization and surgery.

Constables Robert Angstadt, David Hrycyk and Mark Seiller have been released from custody.

They are to make their first provincial court appearance on July 30 in Medicine Hat.

Jul 04 2013

#### TORONTO - A carding system used by Toronto police to gather information can be "disenfranchising" but is also an effective policing tool, says a deputy chief.

Beginning this month, Toronto police have started issuing a receipt — also known as a Form 307 — to people they stop in public.

The police checks often lead to the gathering of information — such as a person's height, weight, hair and skin colour — and it's hoped the receipts will add an element of accountability to the police force.

"[Police checks] can disenfranchise young people, it can make people feel like they're being unfairly targeted if we're not clear in our explanation and transparent in our actions around what we do," said deputy chief Peter Sloly.

Last week, police held a closed community meeting in addition to a virtual town hall that included 21,000 people. During those meetings, police discussed why they believe carding is an essential tool.

Speaking with Metro Morning host Matt Galloway on Wednesday, Sloly defended the controversial practice, which many in the communities being targeted say is a form of racial profiling.

"There is a disproportionality in some types of investigations," said Sloly. "The key is, you can focus on the numbers to make sure there isn't an element of racism or bias because that exists in human nature and therefore it must exist in policing."

When asked by Galloway about what criteria police use when stopping someone, Sloly said a "constellation of facts should give rise to some suspicion," including anything from a person "doing something strange" to obvious drug use. (CBC News)

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