

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

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Executive Digest

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OTTAWA - A new study warns there must be clear policies about the sort of personal information flying drones are allowed to collect before Canadian police and others begin using them on a large scale.

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TORONTO - At least 386 children have been rescued from sexual exploitation and hundreds of suspects arrested in a sweeping child pornography investigation that began with a Toronto man, police revealed Thursday.

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BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Two dozen security threats disrupted last year



Nov 13 2013

OTTAWA - The Mounties made arrests or otherwise disrupted 25 suspected terrorist and other national security threats last year.

An RCMP performance report for fiscal 2012-13 offers no additional details other than that the "disruptions" involved suspected "terrorist criminal activity, or other criminal activity, that may pose a threat to national security in Canada and abroad."

One of the cases is likely that of former Navy Sub-Lt. Jeffrey Delisle, caught in January 2012 with selling allied military secrets to the Russians.

Another probable case is Mouna Diab, 26, of Laval, Que., charged in July 2012 with supporting terrorism after an RCMP investigation linked her to an alleged scheme to smuggle weapons to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Police disruption techniques typically

range from arrests and trials, to search-and-seizure raids and "intrusive surveillance" in which police make it obvious to suspects they are being watched.

Disruptions without charges or prosecutions is a controversial practice that some believe strips suspects of the legal right to due process. Critics believe it also is sometimes abused by government security intelligence officers who do not have sufficient evidence to request that police mount criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Police say prosecutions are the preferred path but aren't always feasible, especially cases based exclusively on intelligence that falls short of the evidentiary threshold required by criminal courts. Disruptions also are a way to evaluate the force's counter-terrorism effectiveness and to help justify the expenses of often lengthy and complex investigations, they say.

THE LEADERSHIP AWARD

The *Police Leadership Award* recognizes and encourages a standard of excellence that exemplifies "Leadership as an Activity Not a Position," and pride in service to the public. Its goal is to increase effectiveness, influence, and quality of police situational leadership from both an organizational and community perspective.

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A case is considered disrupted when police remove an individual or group's known capability to operate within Canada, either through arrest or other measures.

Disruptions typically fall into three categories:

- Operational disruptions, which almost always involve arrests and charges, target the instruments or processes behind a suspect terrorist group or individual.

- Personnel disruptions target individuals in a group or acting alone and can involve laying criminal charges not directly related to terrorism. It also could, for example, involve placing a person's name on Canada's no-fly list as a suspected threat to aviation security.

- Financial disruptions target the ability to fund an operation. For example, the RCMP launched raids in 2006 and 2008 against the property and bank accounts of the Toronto and Montreal offices of the World Tamil Movement, which the Mounties say is the Canadian financial and propaganda support wing of the outlawed Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

In a 2011 case, Revenue Canada revoked the charitable status of the World Islamic Call Society, which the RCMP suspected of transferring money from Libya's Moammar Gadhafi to terrorists' bank accounts.

(Ottawa Citizen)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2013

Nov 07 2013

REGINA - Mounties say they are investigating allegations of inappropriate workplace behaviour by officers in Regina.

Sgt. Craig Cleary says the code of conduct investigation has been going on for several months. The allegations involve the integrated drug unit, a squad made up of both RCMP

and Regina city police officers.

Cleary says it would be inappropriate to reveal further details of the investigation or the people involved.

He says the RCMP have also asked the Regina police to review whether the behaviour in question broke any laws.

Nov 07 2013

TORONTO - Frontline police officers in Toronto won't be adding Tasers to their arsenal.

Toronto's Police Services Board voted Thursday not to approve a request from Chief Bill Blair for \$320,000 for an additional 184 conducted energy weapons for frontline officers.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services announced in August that it was authorizing the expanded deployment of conducted energy weapons in Ontario. However, it said police forces would have to foot the bill if they want to arm their officers with Tasers, which cost about \$1,500 each.

Ontario police chiefs and associations had been pushing the government to expand the use of stun guns, and coroner's inquests had recommended expanding the use of stun guns since 2004.

Blair had asked for the funds to buy 200 Tasers, three cartridges for each weapon, and pay for training.

"The board has asked me not to do that, and, of course, I'll follow the direction of my board," Blair said after the board made its decision.

Ontario's interim chief coroner and many police groups support the government's decision.

Chief forensic pathologist Michael Pollanen has said it's "unusual and quite rare" for someone to die after being stunned by a Taser and there's no clear evidence that it's the primary cause of death.

Nov 07 2013

OTTAWA - The head of Canada's main spy watchdog says new rules - and possibly legislation - are needed to help keep an eye on federal intelligence agencies.

Chuck Strahl, chairman of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, says that as spy services work ever more closely together, there must be ways for watchdogs to do the same.

Strahl says he has no complaints about the review committee's ability to get information from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the agency he and fellow committee members monitor.

"The question though is, what about when it involves other government departments and agencies that we don't have access to?" Strahl said in a recent interview.

"Is the government satisfied that we can chase those threads when they disappear out of CSIS's hands?"

Strahl flagged the concern amid increasing calls for more comprehensive oversight of

Canada's spy community, particularly in light of allegations about Communications Security Establishment Canada, the national eavesdropping agency.

"We don't have the authority under the current system to chase those threads. All we can do is investigate CSIS," Strahl said.

"I hope the government is examining the legislative mandates of a review agency like SIRC, or like the office of the commissioner of CSEC, for example, and what it is that they are allowed to do and what you want them to do."

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2013

Nov 08 2013

WINNIPEG - Winnipeg's police chief says domestic violence and assault calls are responded to immediately when someone is in imminent danger.



Devon Clunis says a review funded by the Canadian Police Association is oversimplifying when it says there's an average 77-minute response time to Priority 3 calls in Winnipeg.

Clunis points out that Priority 3 calls cover a wide variety of crimes.

He says calls in which there is no longer a threat may not be responded to right away, but officers are sent immediately when someone is in danger.

The police force plans to analyze the data further and look at domestic violence response times in isolation.

The full review has not been made public. (CJOB)

Nov 08 2013

WINNIPEG - Electronic anklets used to monitor high-risk car thieves under house arrest in Manitoba will now be attached to the legs of some people convicted in domestic abuse cases.

The province says it expects only about six offenders will be outfitted with GPS-equipped anklets each year.

Justice Minister Andrew Swan says the devices are another tool to give more security to victims and possibly change the behaviour of offenders.

The expansion comes after electronic monitoring was introduced by the province in 2008 to deal with high auto-theft rates, but a 2012 report found anklets only played a small role in a big drop in thefts.

The Opposition Progressive Conservatives have said the anklets should be attached to

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high-risk sex offenders who have just been released from jail and are under strict court orders.

Swan says the province wants to first evaluate how the expansion of monitoring for certain domestic violence cases performs before looking at other type of offenders.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

Nov 08 2013

CALGARY - A man charged in the death of an Alberta peace officer faces another 30 days of psychiatric assessment to determine if he is fit to stand trial.

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

Lazenby died in hospital on Aug. 10, 2012, from injuries he received while responding to a dog-related call at Kloschinsky's home in Priddis, just south of Calgary.

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

Kloschinsky, who has been representing himself since he and his lawyer parted company in July, consented to further assessment when he appeared before a judge today.

He is scheduled to return to court Dec. 6.

Nov 08 2013

WINNIPEG - Winnipeg police have formed a new unit designed to crack down on the exploitation of sex trade workers.

The counter-exploitation unit will feature a two-person team that works in a non-enforcement capacity - meaning they won't make arrests.

Sgt. Gene Bowers says the officers will try to foster relationships with sex trade workers and try to get them on a better path.

He says arresting the workers does not address the issues of why they are out on the streets selling their bodies.

Bowers says police are now focused on the "johns" doing the exploiting.

He says police have nabbed 53 men soliciting prostitution since June.

(CJOB)

Nov 08 2013

MONTREAL - A prominent group that consults on issues of impaired driving is recommending that police be permitted to conduct random breathalyzer tests on motorists in Quebec.

The Quebec Highway Safety Roundtable, chaired by math professor Jean-Marie De Koninck, issued 23 recommendations in a 60-page document Friday, all aimed at decreasing impaired driving.

De Koninck, who founded the Nez Rouge holiday lift service 1984, noted that many impaired drivers currently go unpunished.

In Quebec a police officer cannot order a driver to submit to an alcohol test unless he has reason to suspect that the driver has

diminished faculties.

Systematic random screening would allow police to test drivers at such police operations as speeding incidents or accident scenes.

The group believes that the practice would help catch impaired drivers and deter others from getting behind the wheel when not sober.

Some countries, such as Australia, have long allowed police officers to randomly test motorists for impairment.

(CTV Montreal)

Nov 08 2013

The RCMP has a new commanding officer in Alberta, a woman whose policing career spans three decades, the force announced Friday.



Assistant Commissioner Marianne Ryan takes over as commanding officer of "K Division" from Deputy Commissioner Dale McGowan.

RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson said Ryan, a 31-year veteran of the force, has won the respect of her staff and partners by focusing on results.

Ryan assumes the rank of deputy commissioner, taking responsibility for 112 RCMP detachments across the province.

Since 2011 Ryan has been the officer-in-charge of criminal operations in Alberta and her policing experience includes leadership roles in major investigations into organized crime, the RCMP said.

Her appointment takes effect immediately.

A formal change of command ceremony will take place at a later date, the RCMP said.

(CBC News)

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2013

Nov 09 2013

NEW YORK, Nov. 9 (UPI) - A New York police officer and other bikers have been indicted on charges involving the beating of a motorist during a mass motorcycle ride, court papers say.

Detective Wojciech Braszczyk, 32, a member of the intelligence division who worked undercover during Occupy Wall Street, and nine other defendants were charged with gang assault, the New York Daily News reported. An 11th man, Christopher Cruz, was charged with felony criminal mischief.

The News said it learned of the indictments from sources and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office would not comment. The defendants are to appear in court Nov. 20, the News said.

Alexian Lien, 29, was pursued by bikers, dragged from his Range Rover and beaten after he hit a motorcyclist, causing serious injury. Lien, who was with his wife and young child, said he feared for his life rear ending a motorcyclist who allegedly stopped short on purpose.

A video of the assault was posted on the Internet, attracting global attention. The motorcyclists were participating in an annual ride around the city.

Braszczyk was also charged in the indictment with assault, coercion, riot and criminal mischief and faces a lengthy prison sentence if he is convicted of the most serious charges. He was released on \$150,000 bail after his arrest in October.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 11, 2013

Nov 11 2013

MONTREAL - Although police officers are at a high risk of experiencing traumatic events in their work, they are no more likely than the general population to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), found a study by the Robert-Sauve Research Institute in health and occupational safety (IRSST) in Montreal.

This study also confirms that symptoms associated with the development of PTSD in police officers can be prevented with specific and adapted intervention. These symptoms include dissociative reactions, emotional and physical reactions, a state of acute stress, depressive symptoms and emotional coping responses to stress.

"Providing police officers with interventional support shortly after and in the weeks following a traumatic event improves the chances of preventing PTSD," said Andre Marchand, lead author of the study. "The strategies for adapting to trauma, such as developing a stress-resistant personality and obtaining social support, can be improved through prevention components of police officer training programs."

The descriptive analysis results show that police officers have different adaptation methods and strategies at their disposal in order to deal with a critical work-related event. The police officers stated that talking to their colleagues, obtaining peer support and taking part in leisure activities are particularly helpful after a traumatic event.

"The police officers involved in this study even advise their colleagues who experience this kind of event to consult a psychologist and are themselves open to the idea of receiving psychological support if need be," said Melissa Martin, co-author of the report.

Eighty-three policemen from the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) and other police forces who had experienced a traumatic event volunteered for this study.

Among the participants, 64 per cent had to draw their guns, 11 per cent fired their guns and 28 per cent used another weapon.

A feeling of powerlessness in relation to the traumatic event was reported by 80 per cent of the police officers, and 59 per cent felt a reaction of intense fear. More than one-half of the police officers said they experienced anger, 17 per cent felt guilt and two per cent felt shame when the traumatic event occurred. (Canadian Occupational Safety)

Nov 11 2013

VANCOUVER - In what is becoming a regular occurrence on the streets of Metro Vancouver, an unmarked van packed to the gunwales with black market gasoline burst into flames soon after a minor collision on Sunday.

The surprise inferno came slightly more than one month after a similar black market gas van exploded in a residential area of Vancouver, badly burning the van's 19 and 25-year-old occupants.

"There's a reason that people aren't allowed to transport large quantities of gasoline without special training or proper containers," Vancouver police Const. Brian Montague said on Monday.

Among Vancouver officials, the gas-toting vans have earned the moniker of "mobile molotov cocktails." Last month, Vancouver deputy fire chief Steve Laleune told CTV News that the vans were akin to "a bomb that's ready to go off."

Although it is difficult to estimate the size and scope of Vancouver's gasoline black market, the process itself is pretty simple: Thieves gather up large collections of stolen or illegally manufactured credit cards and then use the cards at Vancouver-area gas stations to pump up to seven bathtubs' worth of fuel into panel vans jury-rigged with plastic containers meant to serve as makeshift gas tanks.

Then, it is simply a matter of delivering the cut-rate fuel to a network of unscrupulous drivers and business owners.

On Sunday, it was just after sunset at a Surrey, B.C., intersection when a mysterious white panel van collided with a pickup truck before quickly speeding off.

The van made it only four blocks, however, before flames believed to have been ignited by the crash forced the driver to abandon the vehicle and flee on foot into the surrounding industrial area.

On Oct. 7, a van driving through a quiet south Vancouver neighbourhood suddenly became completely engulfed by fire. The flaming van crashed into an SUV before slamming into a concrete wall.

The two men operating the van slipped away as firefighters moved in to evacuate the surrounding area and extinguish the blazing vehicle, which emitted several explosions before it was finally brought under control. Nevertheless, the pair were quickly discovered when they checked into Eagle Ridge Hospital with "life-altering burns."

Under the right conditions, the vapour from one gallon (3.78 litres) of gasoline is commonly said to have the explosive power of more than 10 sticks of dynamite.

And, with black market gas carriers carting around up to 1,800 litres at a time in poorly ventilated vehicles, a single spark could conceivably scorch entire blocks worth of unsuspecting houses.

More alarming still: they could be anywhere.

"It's fairly easy to disguise; most of these vans are modified in a way that, by looking at them from the outside you'd never know that it's been modified to carry large quantities of gasoline," said Const. Montague.

In late October, the spectre of exploding vans made Vancouverites extra-suspicious to the sight of men filling their vans with inordinate amounts of gasoline. Twice in one week, vigilant bystanders tipped off police to men at Vancouver-area gas stations who were found to be holding collections of credit cards and driving vans stacked with plastic fuel tanks.



OTTAWA - A new study warns there must be clear policies about the sort of personal information flying drones are allowed to collect before Canadian police and others begin using them on a large scale.



The groundbreaking research report on drones - unmanned eyes in the sky - urges law enforcement agencies, governments and privacy commissioners to ensure civil liberties are respected as more of the miniature craft take to the air.

It says unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, can offer potentially significant cost savings

for police and could be useful for responding to emergencies or performing mundane chores.

However, the potential for intrusive surveillance means public discussion is needed to reassure Canadians they will not be arbitrarily spied upon.

A copy of the study, to be released next week, was made available to The Canadian Press by authors Christopher Parsons and Adam Molnar of Block G Privacy and Security Consulting.

They sifted through academic articles, court rulings and revealing Access to Information documents, uncovering many unanswered questions about the new technology along the way.

The RCMP is eyeing creation of a national fleet of small helicopter-like drones with cameras to help investigate offences, reconstruct traffic accidents, and assist with search-and-rescue.

The Mounties have said they are not being used for general surveillance of people or vehicles.

The study notes keen interest from Canadian police forces, but says law enforcement agencies have not "sought feedback from the public on how UAVs should or should not be adopted as a tool to serve the public interest."

The authors also cite safety and security concerns, including the potential for crashes or even the hacking of a drone to intercept the data it is collecting or make it steer off course.

- Among the study's recommendations:
- Police should engage in "wholesome consultations" with the public on the privacy implications of drones;
 - Establishment of a provincial-federal working committee to develop drone policy for Canadian police;
 - Creation of policies that spell out the sort of information drones can gather, how long it kept, the way it may be shared and how people can learn whether they have been spied upon.

"The time for such well-balanced policy making is now," the study says.

In her recent annual report, federal privacy commissioner Jennifer Stoddart notes that National Defence uses drones "in field operations outside Canada" while the National

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Research Council has planned limited trials with the aim of improving navigation.

A late 2012 poll conducted by Stoddart's office found that four out of five people surveyed were comfortable with police use of drones for search-and-rescue missions. But only two of five approved of their use in monitoring public events or protests.

"Considering the capacity of UAVs for surreptitious operation, the potential for the technology to be used for general surveillance purposes, and their increasing prevalence - including for civilian purposes - our office will be closely following their expanded use," says the annual report.

"We will also continue to engage federal government institutions to ensure that any planned operation of UAVs is done in accordance with privacy requirements."

Nov 12 2013

MONTREAL - The Surete du Quebec has suspended an officer who may have helped feed information to the Hells Angels.

The officer whose credibility is being called into question has not been named, but he is a lieutenant.

The provincial police force said they came across the man's dubious trustworthiness while officers were investigating retired Sgt-Detective Benoit Roberge, who is currently in jail after being charged with selling police secrets to the Hells Angels.

The suspended officer may not have direct ties to Roberge, but was relieved of his badge and firearm within the past three days.

Roberge was a lead investigator for the Montreal police department during the biker wars but was arrested last month in the company of several gangsters.

He is facing charges of obstructing justice, breach of trust and gangsterism for allegedly selling police secrets to the criminal gang. Roberge is also linked to deceased Hells Angel Rene Charlebois, who escaped from prison in Laval earlier this year and committed suicide.

Roberge will be back in court on Nov. 21 in an attempt to be granted bail while awaiting trial.

(CTV Montreal)

Nov 12 2013

MONTREAL - One man is dead after a fight between police officers and residents of a rooming house in downtown Montreal.

Police showed up at the residence late Monday afternoon after receiving phone calls about a woman who was losing consciousness.

When two officers arrived at the scene a group of people in the rooming house became very aggressive, according to Montreal police Const. Simon Delorme.

Police say one man attacked them, and they responded with a Taser, pepper spray and their batons before finally dragging the man to the ground.

He was taken to hospital in serious condition and later died.

Witnesses said the man who attacked did not live in the rooming house, but had gone there to visit his girlfriend. By their accounts he was "very, very high" when police arrived.

The witnesses also told CTV Montreal that police did everything they could to subdue the man and were obviously trying to use every non-lethal means at their disposal.

"Police did everything they could, and there was nothing else they could do. They weren't going to make him submit by shooting bullets in a rooming house. The only way they were going to get him under control was a Taser gun," said one witness.

The Surete du Quebec is now investigating the death.

(CTV News)

Nov 12 2013

TORONTO - Mandatory minimum sentences for gun possession are "cruel and unusual punishment," Ontario's top court ruled Tuesday in striking down two planks of Ottawa's law-and-order agenda.

The sentencing laws, enacted as part of the Conservatives' 2008 omnibus bill, could see people sent to prison for three years for what would amount to a licence violation, the Court of Appeal for Ontario ruled.

In that scenario, there is a "cavernous disconnect" between the severity of such an offence and the severity of the sentence, the court ruled.



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The law as written could capture anyone from a person keeping an unloaded restricted gun, with ammunition accessible, in their cottage when their licence requires it to be in their home, to a person standing on a street corner with a loaded gun in his back pocket “which he intends to use as he sees fit,” the court said.

“No system of criminal justice that would resort to punishments that ‘outrage standards of decency’ in the name of furthering the goals of deterrence and denunciation could ever hope to maintain the respect and support of its citizenry,” the court ruled.

“Similarly, no system of criminal justice that would make exposure to a draconian mandatory minimum penalty, the cost an accused must pay to go to trial on the merits of the charge, could pretend to have any fidelity to the search for the truth in the criminal justice system.”

The Appeal Court heard six appeals together because each involved a constitutional challenge to a mandatory minimum sentence for various firearm offences. In a decision released Tuesday, the court struck down both the three-year mandatory minimum for a first offence of possessing a loaded prohibited gun and for five years on the second offence.

The ruling has no significant impact on sentences for people engaged in criminal conduct or who pose a danger to others, the court said, adding they should continue to receive sentences to emphasize deterrence and denunciation.

Since the three-year mandatory minimum sentence was found to be disproportionate on a first offence, it “defies logic and principle” to leave the five-year mandatory minimum intact simply because of a prior offence, the court found.

Federal government lawyers had argued in support of the law, raising a spate of shootings in 2005, which first prompted Ottawa to propose the stiffer penalties.

Nov 12 2013

BURNABY, B.C. - A British Columbia coroner's inquest has heard that Angus Mitchell was arrested under the Mental Health Act when he walked into a doctors office in 2012 with his rifle.

B.C.'s Chief Firearms Officer Terry Hamilton testified that two months later his rifle was returned based on police advice, and a month after that he used the weapon to kill two people in Burnaby, B.C., and injure another man.

Hamilton told the inquest into the Mitchell's death that the man was granted a firearms licence despite a history of police encounters.

She testified that a background check showed police complaints had been lodged against Mitchell for uttering threats and arguing with a tenant, but her office approved the 2011 application for a rifle because the man was never charged.

Mitchell was surrounded and shot by

police in Maple Ridge, B.C., in May 2012 hours after police issued a public warning that the 26-year-old man was suspected in the three shootings.

After Mitchell's death, Mounties revealed that the man had a hit list that included two schools, a group home, a coffee house and a gym.

Nov 12 2013

VANCOUVER - Vancouver police have seized 54 kilograms of cocaine and hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash.

Police say the seizure happened Friday afternoon at an apartment not far from the Main Street SkyTrain station.

The apartment was linked to a 40-year-old man who police say was arrested a half-hour earlier in downtown Vancouver.

A news release says officers found several safes, which contained the money and drugs.

There was no one inside the apartment.

Police have yet to recommend charges, as they work to determine the occupant of the apartment.

Nov 12 2013

VANCOUVER - A proposal to equip Vancouver Police Department officers with body-worn cameras could restrict when they can turn them off, ensuring cameras will record all incidents involving "human interaction" regardless of how the force looks on video, Chief Jim Chu said on Tuesday.

The city's top cop told reporters a rule could be worded ensuring officers have video cameras on whenever they're in public, but allowing them to turn them off in private, such as when they're having lunch at the detachment.



V-Sec Body Cams-Winnipeg

He said the department's research has shown the proposed cameras — which are receiving criticism for their potential cost — could range between \$100 and \$500 for each camera and ongoing costs of \$30 to \$50 each month, per officer using them.

Chu said the main roadblock for implementing the cameras depends on when “cloud” storage systems are available in Canada, so the force can avoid paying for its own costly servers.

A pilot project to equip some officers with wearable cameras is being considered for 2014.

(24 Hours Vancouver)

Nov 12 2013

CALGARY - Calgary Police Services are telling the public not to be alarmed if

they see some American police cars patrolling our not-so-mean streets in the next six months. The cars are actually part of the Alberta-shot series, Fargo, which began production last week.

“As part of the filming, the production company will be using a variety of different marked police vehicles made to look as if they are from the City of Bemidji Police and Duluth Police,” the police said in a statement.

Fargo is based on the 1996 dark comedy of the same name by Ethan and Joel Coen (The Coen Brothers), who are executive producers for the series.

It stars Martin Freeman, Colin Hanks, Bob Odenkirk, Oliver Platt, Billy Bob Thornton and Kate Walsh and will be shot in and around Calgary for the next six months.

It will air on FX in 2014.

(Calgary Herald)

Nov 12 2013

TORONTO - The chair of the Toronto Police Services Board is recommending swift changes to carding — the controversial police practice of documenting personal details of citizens stopped in encounters that typically involve no arrest or charge.

The board is “obligated” to direct police Chief Bill Blair to make the changes, which build upon and toughen recommendations already brought forth by police, Alok Mukherjee wrote in a lengthy report made public Monday. The report is in advance of a special board meeting Nov. 18.

The board, wrote Mukherjee, “must now take action to deal with the continuing discriminatory impact” of carding. Repeated Star analyses of police data have shown the practice disproportionately affects black and “brown” people.

Mukherjee's report, which includes an overview of several decades' worth of reports and studies on racial profiling and tension over police stops in Toronto, makes 18 recommendations.

Among them, Mukherjee urges the board to direct police to:

- Immediately examine existing contact-card data and purge personal data that do not appear to have been collected for a “bona fide” investigative reason, and otherwise, purge the data after five years. (The police plan would do so after seven). Between 2008 and 2012, police filled out 1.8 million contact cards, documenting personal details of more than a million people.
- Only record personal details of encounters with citizens when there are clear investigative purposes for a stop, and keep only details that are “demonstrably relative” to “specific police investigations.” The Star found the most common reason cited by officers in contact card stops was “general investigation.”
- Stop using contact-card counts in officer performance reviews — something the Toronto Police Association also wants — but use the card data to look for possible patterns of racial bias among officers who do similar jobs.

- Immediately conduct an evaluation of the service's Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS) to see if its practices are in compliance with the Police Services Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the board's own policies.

The provincially funded unit was Blair's response to a spate of gun violence in 2005. It is deployed in neighbourhoods experiencing violent crime.

(Toronto Star)

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13, 2013

Nov 13 2013

VANCOUVER - A Vancouver police officer facing a two-day suspension for knocking a woman over on a Downtown Eastside sidewalk will now have to explain his actions to a former B.C. Court of Appeal Justice.

The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner has called a public hearing in the case involving Const. Taylor Robinson, who was caught on video tape apparently pushing Sandy Davidsen to the ground as the disabled woman tried to cut between three officers on the busy sidewalk.

Police Complaint Commissioner Stan Lowe has appointed former appeal court judge Wally Oppal to examine the case.

Lowe says not only did a Vancouver Police Department investigation of the incident take far too long, raising issues of fairness and accountability for both Robinson and Davidsen, but the discipline prescribed for Robinson could be considered inappropriate or inadequate.

A date for the OPCC public hearing has not yet been set.

Nov 13 2013

EDMONTON - A convicted killer has received a second life sentence for escaping while on a prison day pass and taking several people hostage in Alberta.

William Bicknell, who is 45, was first sentenced to life in prison in 2003 for the beating death of a British Columbia woman.

He was granted an escorted pass in 2011 from the minimum-security section of Drumheller Institution to visit his sister in Edmonton.

On the ride back, he pulled a knife on the lone guard who was driving and, over the next 10 days, held the guard and three other people hostage in their homes at various times.

Bicknell was taken back into custody after a dramatic car chase and shootout with RCMP during which he was shot twice in the head.

On Tuesday, he pleaded guilty to 14 charges, including unlawful confinement, escaping lawful custody, robbery and weapons offences.

Court heard that he didn't hurt his captives, but along the way collected an arsenal of guns and ammunition.

He is now being held in solitary

confinement in a Quebec prison.

His sister, Sandra Lynn Myshak, has been charged with aiding in her brother's escape. She has yet to go to trial.

(CFWC)

Nov 13 2013

TORONTO - The province's police watchdog has been called in after a standoff in Toronto turned deadly.

The incident began shortly after noon on Wednesday at a low-rise apartment in the city's downtown east-end where police believed a man was armed with a gun.

The Special Investigations Unit says officers spoke with the man, and shortly after that the police emergency task force was called in.

It says that just before 2 p.m. a gun was fired and the man fatally struck - but the circumstances of the fatal shot aren't clear.

The incident sent a nearby elementary school into lockdown as a precautionary measure, and the Toronto Catholic District School Board says the students were safe.

(The Canadian Press, CFRB)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2013



Detective constable Lisa Belanger speaks at a news conference about Project Spade, a three-year, worldwide child exploitation investigation involving child pornography, in Toronto on November 14, 2013. The investigation led to 386 children being rescued which include 24 Canadian children and 341 people arrested worldwide.

Michelle Siu - National Post

Nov 14 2013

TORONTO - At least 386 children have been rescued from sexual exploitation and hundreds of suspects arrested in a sweeping child pornography investigation that began with a Toronto man, police revealed Thursday.

"It's a first for the magnitude of the victims saved," said Insp Joanna Beaven-Desjardins, of the force's Sex Crimes Unit. "The amount of arrests internationally, also a first."

At least 348 people were arrested around the world as part of Project Spade, including 50 in Ontario and 58 from other parts of Canada.

School teachers, doctors, nurses, pastors and foster parents are among those facing charges in the wide-ranging operation that can be traced back to a business operating out of Toronto's west end, police said.

"Its success has been extraordinary," Beaven-Desjardins said of the investigation which spanned more than 50 countries.

"When we work together regardless of the borders that divide us, we can successfully track down those who not only prey on our most vulnerable but also those who profit from it."

The investigation was sparked in October 2010 when undercover officers made contact with a Toronto man on the Internet who was allegedly sharing child pornography online.

The probe revealed a far-reaching web of child pornography which involved some of the most shocking abuse investigators had seen.

Police allege Brian Way, 42, had been running an "exploitation movie, production and distribution company" called Azov Films since 2005, and had made more than \$4 million from the business.

Through his company, the man would allegedly contract people to create child porn videos involving kids, largely boys, between the ages of five and 12. Many of those videos were allegedly shot in Ukraine and Romania in apartments, dingy saunas and backyards.

Police allege the videos were then distributed from Toronto - through the mail and the Internet - to customers around the world.

Toronto authorities moved in to arrest Way in May 2011 and then, along with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, spent months re-creating a customer database.

That information was shared with the RCMP and Interpol, which led to arrests of customers around the world and to the apprehension of those who allegedly created the videos.

Way has been charged with 24 offences, including the instruction of a criminal organization, a charge which police said had been applied for the first time in Canada in relation to child pornography. Police are still looking for Way's mother, Susan Waslov.

Police say the sheer amount of images and videos seized in their investigation - 45 terabytes worth - was staggering.

"This is equivalent to a stack of paper as tall as 1,500 CN Towers," said Beaven-Desjardins.

"Officers located hundreds of thousands of images and videos detailing horrific sexual acts against very young children, some of the worst that they have ever viewed."

Gerald O'Farrell, acting deputy chief inspector of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, provided an unflinching snapshot of some of those arrested in the investigation.

They included a school employee who allegedly placed a hidden video camera in a student washroom, a youth baseball coach who pleaded guilty to making more than 500 child exploitation videos and a police officer, he said.

"The investigations involving these customers span across all segments of society," O'Farrell said. "The success of this investigation was identifying those who posed an immediate risk to children."