

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

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Executive Digest

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OTTAWA - New legislation would criminalize the purchase of sexual services, crack down on those who benefit from prostitution and outlaw the sale of sex near schools and other places where children gather.

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BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Three officers killed in Moncton



Jun 05 2014

MONCTON, N.B. - Three RCMP officers were shot and killed and two officers injured in Moncton, N.B., on Wednesday as the Mounties conducted a manhunt through the night for a 24-year-old man who they tweeted a photo of wearing military camouflage and carrying two rifles.

The RCMP tweeted late Wednesday night that three of its officers were “mortally wounded” and police spokesman Paul Greene confirmed their deaths. Greene said the two officers who were taken to hospital suffered non life-threatening injuries.

The RCMP said they were looking for Justin Bourque of Moncton, but other than his age police released no other information about him.

Const. Damien Theriault urged people in the area where police were searching to stay inside their homes and lock their doors. Many roads in the city of about 70,000 people were blocked by police.

“We are professionals. We will ensure the security of the public. We are going to do that,” said Theriault, who later broke down in tears at a media briefing with the city’s mayor when he was asked how officers are balancing their grief and the difficult task of searching for the suspect in the dark.

Police responded to first incident involving the man at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, he said.

The RCMP say Bourque was spotted Thursday morning but they were unable to apprehend him.

Supt. Marlene Snowman said officers

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were continuing to search and that the suspect is carrying high-powered firearms.

Commanding Officer Roger Brown said the most recent sighting of the suspect was just after daylight Thursday and they were able to positively identify him.

Snowman said they were unable to confirm his identity on two other occasions when he might have been sighted.

Brown said police officers from across the country have been brought in to help arrest the suspect.

Daniel St. Louis, a commercial photographer in Moncton, was among the first on the scene Tuesday around 8:30 p.m. when he came across two police vehicles on different streets with blood visible inside.

He said no one was around, except for a few curious neighbours peeking through their front doors.

One of the vehicles, a marked police cruiser, was surrounded by shattered glass. The other, an unmarked SUV with its lights still on and the driver's side door left open, had several bullet holes through its front windshield.

St. Louis said he saw something shortly after that will always haunt him.

"I walked over and I saw two feet, facing the street, toes up," said St. Louis, 51. "I realized, 'Oh my God. There's somebody down.' As I got close, I realized it was an officer and this is not a good situation."

St. Louis said he doesn't know what to make of the tragedy unfolding in the city of about 69,000.

"Our quiet little city, what is going on here?" he said. "How is this happening to us? It always happens to somebody else."

Danny Leblanc, 42, said he saw the shooter in the distance Wednesday evening, wearing a camouflage outfit and standing in the middle of the street with a gun pointed at police cars.

The construction worker said he believed it

was an RCMP officer until he heard a burst of automatic gunfire coming from the man's gun.

"That guy was standing on the road afterwards and he was looking towards us," he said.

He said he quickly retreated into his home and remained there with his family and young children. At one point a neighbour posted on social media that their kitchen window was shattered by gunfire.

Leblanc said few people on his normally quiet street were sleeping as they awaited word at midnight on whether arrests had been made.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered his condolences to the families, colleagues and friends of those affected by the tragedy.

"We also offer our prayers for the speedy recovery of those injured," he said in a statement.

"This violent incident is a stark reminder that our men and women in law enforcement put their lives on the line in Canada every day to protect our citizens and communities.

"The sacrifice of these brave officers will be honoured and remembered."

George LeBlanc told a news conference it was his worst day as the city's mayor.

"I want to offer my most sincere condolence to the families of the police officers who have been killed in the line of duty and those who are injured. It is a terrible tragedy," he said.

"We as a city must pull together as a family to support those who have suffered losses."



KAMLOOPS, B.C. - A B.C. judge has rejected an argument that Mounties should have asked a driver for a medical-marijuana permit before searching his van and arresting him.

Cory Eld was stopped at the roadside in Barriere, about 60 kilometres north of Kamloops, in November 2012.

The RCMP officer who went to Eld's window to question him testified he smelled a strong odour of unburned pot and saw a tarp stretched over the entire length of the van's cargo area.

Mounties found 73 marijuana plants inside, and Eld was later charged with possession of marijuana.

Defence lawyer John Conroy argued the search was illegal and that his client's constitutional rights were breached.

He said the officer who smelled marijuana neglected to ask Eld if he had a licence to possess marijuana through Health Canada - something that may have explained the smell.

"It's not difficult for the officer to say, 'Do you have a permit?'" he said at a hearing in February.

"You don't have grounds to believe he's committing an offence until you know he doesn't have a permit."

However, provincial court Judge Chris Cleaveley ruled the arrest was legal.

"I do not believe that the police officers needed to determine whether Mr. Eld had

a marijuana licence before arresting him," Cleaveley said in his ruling.

He said Mounties' suspicion about pot under the tarp is "somewhat inconsistent with Mr. Eld being in lawful possession."

Cleaveley also cited a B.C. Supreme Court decision that police are not required to rule out other possible explanations for the smell of marijuana.

Eld is scheduled to be sentenced at a later date. (Kamloops This Week)

May 29 2014

HALIFAX - A Nova Scotia judge has ruled that a man wrongfully convicted of statutory rape in 1970 has failed to prove that the miscarriage of justice was the result of negligence.

Gerald Barton launched a lawsuit against the RCMP in Digby, N.S., for negligent investigation.

He testified that at the time he was charged he never gave a statement to the Mounties and did not plead guilty at a trial, even though that's what the record shows.

Barton, who now lives in Edmonton, was wrongfully convicted of raping a 14-year-old Nova Scotia girl in 1969.

In January 2011, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal admitted fresh DNA evidence that proved Barton was not the father of the child born to the girl, who has since died.

In his ruling today, Judge James Chipman of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court said he would have awarded Barton \$75,000 in general damages had he concluded that the wrongful conviction was the result of a negligent investigation.

May 29 2014 Italy's State Police will soon be tearing through the country's highways in a brand new Lamborghini.

The Huracán LP 610-4 Polizia - the civilian model of which would fetch about \$300,000 - will begin service by the end of this year and "sustain security on Italian roads by continuing accident and crime prevention."

Painted in "blue Polizia" with white stripes and lettering, the luxury supercar it has its own police uniform.

The flashing blue light has been "aerodynamically optimized" for traveling at high speeds and its 5.2 I V10 engine with 610 hp means it can reach speeds of over 202 mph.

Non-conventional gadgets include its "Proof Video Data System" which can determine the speed of the vehicle being pursued and transfer its image to the police station.

But it is also fitted with more traditional police gadgets such as gun holsters and radio equipment.

The sports car was presented to the head of the Italian police by the car maker's president and CEO, Stephan Winkelmann, at a ceremony in Rome last week.

The country's police forces have long used the Volkswagen-owned Italian automaker's sports cars.

"In the last 10 years, the Italian State Police used the car for prevention purposes and in order to enhance street security" said the Head of the Italian State Police, Prefect Alessandro

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Pansa in a statement.

The Huracán LP 610-4 Polizia will replace the Lamborghini Gallardo which had been donated to the Italian Police Force in 2008.

The Gallardo has clocked up 110,000 kilometers in the five years from 2009, on patrol duty across central and southern Italy's motorways, and on emergency medical transport detail. (CNBC)

May 29 2014

The tiny 12-square-block town of Mountain View, Colo., is relying so heavily on the revenue generated from nit-picky traffic tickets that an independent consultant recommended disbanding the police force over questions about its ethics.

Mountain View wrote more tickets for drivers with an "obstructed view" from windshield cracks and air fresheners hanging on the rearview mirror than Denver, Aurora and Boulder combined, according to an investigation by Denver's 9News.

The station also found that the town ignored a report two years ago recommending it disband the cops since they seem to do little but wait to pounce on motorists for the sake of raising money. The report's authors suggested the town contract with the Jefferson County Sheriff for law enforcement.

"We believe that lying in wait to write traffic citations to generate revenue is not serving the best ethical foundations of professional law enforcement," concluded KRW Associates, a consulting firm made up of former law enforcement officers.

Law enforcement activities, the report continued, should not be conducted as "a source of revenue to directly support the salaries of the issuing officers."

9News reported that the seven-person patrol squad is on pace to collect nearly \$600,000 in court fees this year, nearly double the amount the consultants reported two years ago. Nearly half of the town's revenue for 2014 is expected to come from court fees associated with traffic citations.

Some officers interviewed by KRW said they felt psychological pressure to write many tickets so that employees can be paid. A focus group of business owners "cited a concern over retaliation and/or threats of arrest when they interact with officers who are on calls or traffic stops."

Mountain View Police Chief Mark Toth said in a statement to the station that his department is doing nothing wrong.

"Citizens expect that we enforce traffic laws as well as municipal ordinances and state statutes," he wrote.

"No one likes to get a ticket but they do serve as a deterrent. It is the decision of our elected officials and citizens that we provide police services in our community 24/7. We employ the fewest officers possible to provide that coverage."

(Daily Caller)

May 29 2014

Tad Milmine's passion for empower-

ing children to rise up against intimidation resulted in the creation of the 'Bullying Ends Here' charity.

The former Mountie felt pressure from the RCMP to choose between his job and his passion, but a move to Calgary resulted in a job opportunity with an employer who embraced his crusade.

Milmine was badly abused and bullied while growing up in Cambridge, Ontario, but the tipping point for his foray into outreach work was sparked by the death of an openly gay Ontario teen, Jamie Hubley, who committed suicide in 2011 after years of bullying.

"He committed suicide because he believed that was the only way out," recalls Milmine.

Milmine began his presentations in British Columbia, on his days off from the force. The RCMP appreciated his anti-bullying talks and asked him to present as a representative of the RCMP on a full-time basis. The offer carried the caveat that Milmine change his personal approach to the talks, a condition he could not accept. Following his refusal to adapt, the RCMP demanded an end to the presentations including the talks which occurred on the officer's own time.

The RCMP's decision to stop the anti-bullying presentations prompted Milmine's resignation.

"There are days I still look back and I don't understand, but I can't look back with any kind of anger," said Milmine. "It opened another door."

On the other side of the Rockies, the Calgary Police Service, one of the most progressive law enforcement agencies in the country when it comes to youth and community services, hired Milmine immediately. The inspirational speaker was employed to teach kids from coast-to-coast, spreading a message of acceptance.

"The bully wants the reaction," said Milmine, while addressing a group of students during a Bullying Ends Here presentation. "They want the pain, the tears, the shame, the embarrassment."

"You realize you don't just stand around when (bullying) is happening, it can mean a lot to just say one word, talk to the kid, make a connection and it could lead to a friendship.

The aim of his presentations is to convince the children to be kinder and gentler in their interactions with each other.

In 12 months, Milmine has received 10,000 emails from kids and parents who've heard him speak. He responds to each and every message, the majority of which are thanking Milmine for opening their eyes.

(CTV News)

May 29 2014

Police and other first responders need to be more attuned to the emotional needs of witnesses to horrific crimes or mass-casualty incidents, says a leading Canadian disaster response expert.

In the chaotic moments after a mass shooting or other such event, police typically isolate

witnesses and instruct them not to talk to anyone until investigators can question them.

But this approach overlooks the fact that the witnesses may be suffering severe emotional trauma and may want desperately to reach out to family to let them know they're OK, says Laurie Pearce, research chair at the Justice Institute of B.C.

"When you are most upset and most want to talk, you can't," Pearce said. "Police won't let you."

Pearce and her research team are developing and testing a new protocol that encourages first responders or victim services workers to administer a bit of "psychological first aid" to witnesses before they are questioned by police.

Psychological first-aid follows three basic principles: reassure people that they're safe; listen to what they have to say; and connect them with social support. Instead of going up to a witness and asking them, "What did you see?," the first question might be, "How are you?"

Providing even just a few minutes of psychological first aid can help "ground" witnesses and give them the clarity of mind that'll ultimately help them in their interview, Pearce said. "Our theory is police will get better information and clearer information."

The theory will be tested at a mock exercise next month simulating a deadly gang shooting at a fitness centre. But Pearce said the technique can be applied in a variety of mass-casualty scenarios, such as train derailments, bus crashes, street riots and stabbings in nightclubs.

Const. Brian Montague, a spokesman for the Vancouver Police Department, which is participating in the exercise, said in an email that maintaining the integrity of an investigation is paramount. "That said, it is important to keep a witness calm and focused, so allowing supervised contact with family or victim services in some cases might make them a better witness, as long as it would not compromise an investigation."

It can be very easy sometimes for first responders to get caught up emotionally in a major incident, said Rene Bernklau, a veteran of the B.C. Ambulance Service and an emergency management specialist. "I wouldn't say there's panic, but there's louder voices, yelling," he said.

Pearce's research, he said, is an important reminder to first responders to think about their tone and inflection, and to be more empathetic to the needs of civilians.

Studies have shown that in the days and weeks following a critical incident, there may be a desire among survivors and witnesses to reconnect with one another. Another part of Pearce's research is trying to identify the best ways to facilitate such meetings.

Ten days after the deadly July 2005 bombings in London that targeted the city's public transportation system, a private reception was held for survivors. Later, police created a private online discussion forum for them.

A report for the British government later noted that "if the desire is there, individuals will

circumvent official channels and set up their own opportunities for networking through, increasingly, the Internet.”

This sort of group-support therapy is an attempt by witnesses and survivors “to make meaning of what has taken place and the need to regain control of one’s life,” Pearce said.

(Postmedia)

FRIDAY MAY 30, 2014

May 30 2014

A New Westminster police officer is in hospital after he was injured while making an arrest in Surrey on Thursday.

The officer, whose name will not be disclosed at this time, was on loan to the Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime Team (IMPACT) as an investigator.

According to New Westminster police, sometime on Thursday, the officer was in pursuit of a suspected car thief when his car collided with another vehicle. The officer managed to survive the crash unscathed but when he went to arrest the suspect he injured his leg.

“The New West member ended up injuring his leg while trying to arrest the suspect,” Sgt. Diana McDaniel told The Record. “I don’t know the exact nature of his injuries but he is in hospital – he’s at a local area hospital – and he’s going to be for the next few days.”

McDaniel said he is in stable condition at this time and is expected to make a full recovery.

“He’s going to be OK, it’s just he’s going to be in the hospital for the next few days still, before he’s released,” she added.

A 24-year-old man has been arrested and charges are pending.

(Royal City Record)

May 30 2014

VANCOUVER - Health Canada is studying a BC Supreme Court ruling that will allow a group of Vancouver addicts to continue to use prescription heroin.



The five addicts filed a lawsuit last fall, alleging the federal government had violated their charter rights by denying access to prescription heroin to treat their addictions.

The five received heroin during a clinical trial, and when they left the clinical trial, their doctors were allowed to continue prescribing the drug.

But Health Minister Rona Ambrose quickly introduced new regulations to stop such approvals.

A BC Supreme Court judge has issued an injunction exempting the patients from the updated regulations until the case goes to trial, likely next year.

Health Canada spokesman Sean Upton says in an email that dangerous drugs like heroin have a significant impact on families and their communities, and the department is studying the injunction.

The patients’ lawyer, Joseph Arvay, says the federal decision was not based on science that has shown prescription heroin is an effective treatment for patients suffering from severe addiction.

May 30 2014

ST. JOHN’S, N.L. - A small company in St. John’s, Newfoundland that’s already a global leader in financial security is set to grow in a big way.

Verafin says it will use a recent \$60-million investment to hire more staff and refine its main product.

It makes software that helps banks catch fraud and money laundering.

Verafin co-founder Brendan Brothers says the buy-in gives Boston-based Spectrum Equity a minority stake and will fund Verafin’s next growth spurt.

He says more than 1,100 financial institutions in North America now use his company’s software.

It creates and monitors customer profiles to catch suspicious transactions and alert banking authorities.

Verafin will also add to its workforce of about 210 people, most of them in St. John’s, with offices in Alabama and Toronto.

May 30 2014

WINDSOR, Ont. - An assault conviction against a Windsor police officer has been overturned.

Const. Kent Rice was found guilty in August 2013 after surveillance video showed him kicking a suspect twice in a stairwell during an incident in 2012.

The appeal judge ruled the trial judge made an error in principle and in law in convicting the 14-year veteran the assault charge.

The appeal judge found the force used was reasonable in order to make an arrest and the optics in the video were worse than reality.

Rice’s lawyer Andrew Bradie says the constable did not use excessive force and argued an officer is entitled to use reasonable force to ensure compliance with a lawful arrest.

Rice’s lawyer Andrew Bradie says the acquittal is a huge relief for his client.

(CKLW)

May 30 2014

LONDON, Ont. - A 10-year-old boy rescued in urine-soaked pyjamas from a squalid bedroom where he had been confined for up to two years expressed hope, authorities say, that he can now attend school.

After receiving an anonymous tip, authorities discovered the boy in horrific conditions, locked in a bedroom of his aunt and uncle’s

house in the southwestern Ontario city.

“There was a lot of garbage in the house,” London Police Insp. Kevin Heslop said at a news conference Friday.

“There was a lot of packaging from fast food outlets. In the bedroom specifically there was feces, urine, the bed was soaked in urine, as was the child’s pyjamas when the child was found and there was food waste throughout the house.”

The boy had been locked in the bedroom for at least 18 months, possibly as long as two years, Heslop said. He may have been out “for a brief period of time” in 2013, he said. The boy was typically fed twice a day, fast food that was left for him to eat, Heslop said.

“The master bedroom had an ensuite bathroom so the child had access to a toilet and shower, however the room - in fact the entire house - was in squalid condition,” Heslop said.

The boy’s aunt and uncle have been charged with failing to provide the necessities of life and forcible confinement. Their names are not being released to protect the boy’s identity.

The boy was underweight, malnourished, confused and pale, Heslop said. He had been living with his aunt and uncle since 2010, when the boy came to Canada. He speaks “some” English, Heslop said.

He would not say what country the boy came from, but his parents do not live in Canada and investigators have not yet been able to contact them, he said.

SATURDAY MAY 31, 2014

May 31 2014

THREE HILLS, Alta. - Mounties have arrested a suspect in a case where an officer was dragged by a pickup truck during a traffic stop east of Edmonton.

RCMP say the man was tracked to a rural property around Three Hills, Alta., on Friday night and was arrested outside a home without incident.

Police say the officer was dragged 100 metres on Friday afternoon when a driver sped away.

The suspect had a young child in the vehicle with him, but police say the child wasn’t with him when he was arrested and is safe with family.

Christopher Ferguson, 23, of Three Hills, Alberta faces charges that include dangerous driving causing bodily harm, criminal flight and impersonation.

The injured RCMP officer is doing well and is still in the hospital awaiting surgery.

SUNDAY JUNE 01, 2014

Jun 01 2014

OTTAWA - The RCMP says it will avoid cuts to vital police services - at least for now - due to revised funding agreements with the provinces, technological

advances and some internal streamlining.

Money shortfalls recently forced the Mounties to look at paring back some national services such as DNA analysis, fingerprinting operations and criminal intelligence.

The squeeze meant that \$32.5 million, almost one-fifth of what the national police force spends annually on the services - which many other players in the criminal justice system depend on - was being scrounged from elsewhere within the RCMP.

The Mounties "can no longer manage" the funding deficit and had identified "potential significant cuts" to the National Police Services, warned a 2013 briefing note to the public safety minister, released under the Access to Information Act.

At this point, no cuts have been made, said Sean Jorgensen, the RCMP's director of strategic policy for specialized policing services.

"We're very close to having addressed the gap we identified several years ago," Jorgensen said in an interview.

But he cautioned that the cutting-edge technologies the RCMP requires - from robotic DNA extractors to electron microscopes - means the money pressures will continue.

"You're never going to solve a financial problem in the National Police Services because they're constantly evolving."

The National Police Services administered by the RCMP can be traced to the creation of central bureaus for fingerprint identification in 1908 and criminal records in 1910.

Today they include forensic laboratory services, the Canadian Firearms Program, the Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, the National Sex Offenders Registry, the Canadian Police Information Centre - a records database police services across the country consult daily - the Canadian Police College and Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, among other operations.

Various reviews have pointed out that the mushrooming number of services have lacked coherent overall guidance and support - instead being managed essentially as separate activities.

Three years ago, the federal auditor general found the RCMP had not taken the necessary steps to improve police services by acting on recommendations in three previous audit reports dating from 2000.

The auditor said the federal government, working with provincial, territorial and municipal partners, must decide which police services the RCMP should provide, and how they should be delivered and paid for.

In 2012 a national advisory committee was created to make recommendations on the operations and direction of the National Police Services.

The RCMP and the committee have developed a proposed governing charter to spell out the vision, mandate and scope of the services.

To make the services more sustainable, the Mounties made changes - often taking advantage of new technologies - to save \$9 million a year.

Forensic services have been consolidated,

shrinking from six labs across Canada to three, in Vancouver, Edmonton and Ottawa. Staff there do biology casework and toxicology tests, examine trace evidence, identify fingerprints, and analyze firearms and ballistics samples.

The RCMP has also been negotiating updated cost-sharing agreements for DNA analysis done by the Mounties for all provinces and territories except Ontario and Quebec, which run their own labs.

British Columbia is the only one yet to agree in principle to a new arrangement.

The revised deals better reflect the actual cost of providing DNA analysis, instrumental in closing the funding gap, the RCMP says.

The RCMP says average turnaround time for analyzing blood or other bodily fluids on crime-scene evidence such as clothing has

dropped considerably - to just over 50 days last year from as high as 150 days.

Especially urgent cases can be done in three days.

The notes released under Access to Information say modifications to the national Sex Offender Registry to address travelling sex offenders and new proposals to provide police access to suspended criminal records are being added to National Police Services without additional funding.

In addition, funding for the new National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains will expire next year.

The RCMP says these issues are "under consideration" by the Conservative government.

A NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:
**A SWORN MEMBER'S
RISK
FOR SUICIDE**

Thursday, May 22 | Friday, May 23, 2014
Sheraton Suites Calgary Eau Claire, Calgary, Alberta


**Understanding and Preventing
Suicide in Municipal Police Services**

This 2-day symposium will address the risk for suicide and homicide-suicide among police.

Throughout the symposium, individual case studies and general forensic research will be explored - along with 'blue culture' barriers and how to overcome them to prevent tragedies.

The Symposium is on a first come first served basis registration. Registration and meals are free of charge, parking is available at a cost.

To register, contact Pat Mazan at: T: 403.428.8380 E: pat.mazan@calgarypolice.ca.


Sponsored by Calgary Police Service Psychological Services Division

Jun 02 2014

A Mountie in Chilliwack has forfeited 2 days pay after he hit another car while on duty and the driver died of his injuries.

Constable Jordan Braid was fined \$1500 dollars last spring after he pleaded guilty to driving without due care and attention.

He'd been responding to a domestic disturbance in Agassiz 2 years ago when he swerved into oncoming traffic and hit a Ford Mustang.

20-year-old Steven Genberg was killed.

The result of the RCMP's disciplinary hearing has only now been made available.

An adjudicator says he couldn't determine whether Braid's lack of attention caused the young man's death.

Braid said he'd been distracted by the on-board computer.

The Mountie, who'd been on the force barely a year at the time of the crash, was reprimanded and had to give up 2 days pay.

(CKNW)

Jun 02 2014

Sgt. Andrew Blackadar has taken on many different roles in his 25 years with the RCMP.

His most recent — a three-year post as media relations officer in Prince Edward Island — stands out for the manner in which the position has often isolated the sergeant from his colleagues.

While reporters were viewing Blackadar, 47, as the police, RCMP investigators saw him more as the media.

Often, the officers didn't even want to talk to Blackadar, who has just wrapped up his run as media relations officer and is set to move to Vancouver with his family to work with the RCMP as a performance officer for the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit.

During the past three years, the sergeant would be routinely left out of police briefings on one case or another.

"For the first time in my career, I felt like I was the elephant in the room that nobody wanted to talk about and they didn't want me there . . . but I understood where they were coming from having been an investigator but it still becomes very difficult if something is happening and I've got the media calling me and I haven't been briefed about it," he says.

"So I have to explain to the investigators the media know about it, they are going to print something."

The two murder cases during his three years as media relations officer were particularly challenging. He needed to be mindful of measuring what to report as well as when and how to provide the information to the media.

"And sometimes the media knows a lot of the information and they're asking me to confirm it and some things I can't confirm," he explains.

"And a lot of times we have to give fami-

lies time to grieve and reflect on maybe a tragedy, but they do understand that at the end of the day that we do have to report certain things and the family always wants us to get the story out there properly."

Blackadar never saw his role as a spin doctor or cheerleader for the RCMP. Rather, he simply worked to get stories out about police work, to inform the public on what was happening.

"I never saw my role as selling the RCMP," he says.

"It was about telling the public about what they deserve to hear and working with the media to get those stories out."

Now, Blackadar is excited about his upcoming transfer that will see him promoted to the rank of inspector. He will be part of a major unit comprised of 14 different police agencies working collectively to tackle gang related activity throughout British Columbia. His role is to balance the needs of all the forces.

"It's going to be challenging to keep everybody on the same page and really satisfying everybody's needs," he says of a role that sounds rather familiar.

"But it's going to be more frontline policing for me," he adds.

Sgt. Leanne Butler assumed the role of media relations officer for P.E.I. in April.

Butler joined the RCMP in 1988 and was posted to her first detachment in Charlottetown. She has worked in the Charlottetown, Souris and Alberton detachments in general policing and frontline duties.

(The Guardian)

Jun 02 2014

WINNIPEG - A joint police squad tasked with solving cases of missing and murdered women in Manitoba has arrested a man in the slaying of a woman almost eight years ago.

The remains of Myrna Letandre were found in May 2013 in a Winnipeg home.

She was reported missing by her sister in October 2006.

Investigators with the RCMP and Winnipeg police arrested Traigo Andretti and have charged him with second-degree murder.

Police say the 38-year-old, who was convicted in the first-degree murder of his wife in British Columbia in April, was arrested in that province and is being brought back to Winnipeg.

The RCMP recently released a report estimating there have been almost 1,200 cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women since 1980.

Jun 02 2014

TORONTO - Giving suspended police officers full pay is an issue of widespread concern in Ontario - the only province where this is required by law.

Even though it costs taxpayers millions of dollars every year, none of the main party leaders is pledging to do anything about it.

Premier Kathleen Wynne says a campaign is not the time to talk about the problem.

PC Leader Tim Hudak called it a "good

issue" but will only consider discussing the matter if he's elected.

The NDP's Andrea Horwath says it's "frustrating" to many people who consider the situation unfair but she, too, will only commit to talking about making possible changes.

Other provinces grant police chiefs partial or complete discretion to suspend an officer without pay.

Jun 02 2014

HALIFAX - A unique Nova Scotia law aimed at squelching online harassment is being used for the first time to reach beyond Canada's borders to determine the identity of a cyberbully.

A spokesman for the province's CyberScan unit says a Nova Scotia Supreme Court judge has issued an order under the province's new Cyber-safety Act demanding information from Google, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat.

Roger Merrick, the province's director of public safety, says the order is seeking records that could identify an alleged cyberbully, including home addresses, email addresses, user names, given names, account names and IP addresses.

Merrick says the order is the first of its kind in Canada as Nova Scotia is the only province with cyberbullying legislation.

He says the case involves a young woman in Halifax who has allegedly received threatening and harassing messages from an unknown person or persons accused of hacking her social media accounts.

Merrick says he can't reveal more information because an investigation is underway and he's concerned the accused might start deleting data.

Jun 02 2014

WINNIPEG - Police officers in Manitoba are set to gain a little more anonymity in government documents.

A bill now before the legislature would prevent the names of police officers from being published in salary disclosure documents.

Currently, most public-sector workers who earn more than \$50,000 a year are named in annual reports, including police officers at the municipal level.

The proposed law would replace each officers' name with a number.

The government says the move is in response to concerns about the safety of police officers who may be identified and targeted by criminals.

Jun 02 2014

GRANDE CACHE, Alta. - Alberta investigators say two Mounties did nothing wrong when they shot a suspected impaired driver near Grande Cache last August who was a regular character on the reality TV show "Mantracker."

Curtis Hallock was shot in the leg and arm and required surgery for his wounds.

At the time RCMP said the two officers were trying to pull over a vehicle when they

got into a confrontation with the driver.

Alberta government investigators reviewed what happened and forwarded their findings to the Crown.

Cliff Purvis, executive director of the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team, says the actions of the Mounties were justified and they will not face criminal charges.

The show's website described Hallock as "the horse whisperer," a mountain guide in his mid-30s who has lived off the land near Grande Cache, on the northern edge of Jasper National Park, his whole life.

Jun 02 2014

VICTORIA - The top constable in Victoria, B.C., says an independent watchdog has found that his officers acted reasonably when they returned a firearm to a man who later used the same weapon to kill two people and wound a third.

Angus Mitchell died in a shootout with police in the Fraser Valley in May 2012, just days after investigators connected him to the shooting injuries of his former landlord and two murders in a Metro Vancouver sushi restaurant.

Victoria Chief Constable Frank Elsner says the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner has informed him that their probe into his department's handling of Mitchell's case has concluded.

Elsner says the office found his officers' actions in returning the weapon were reasonable in the circumstances, and hindsight can't be used to define the conduct of police officers in such a tragic event.

He says his department has already taken steps to improve the firearms-investigation training of its 243 sworn members.

A coroner's inquest heard last year that Mitchell was assessed at a Victoria hospital following a February 2012 incident at a doctor's clinic, and just months later he got his rifle back and headed to Vancouver where the shootings occurred.

Jun 02 2014

VANCOUVER - It is an unfortunate truth that in this wired world, understaffed and overworked police have struggled to combat child predators who proliferate online.

Images of child sex abuse can circle the globe more quickly than an airplane, and officers in Canada can spend countless months investigating a single image just to identify the country where a video or photo was taken. Until now.

"The problem is that it's very, very easy to set up websites and webpages to take this content and put it on. If police or a service provider shuts it down, then they create a new one and put it up again," said Richard Frank, an assistant professor at Simon Fraser University's School of Criminology.

"It's very easy to keep doing this."

So Frank, a computer programmer, and some of his colleagues at the International Cybercrime Research Centre at SFU developed a weBCrawling program that identifies and tracks images of child sexual exploitation through their networks in cyberspace.

Starting with a database of images and websites known to RCMP, the automated program has adapted common search engine techniques to follow links from one site to others, gathering information on content, keywords, images and videos that portray the sexual abuse of children.

"The general idea has been used by Google and Microsoft and other search engines to collect data they use for searches," Frank said. "The general idea is out there. Adapting it to child exploitation has been difficult."

The program - the Child Exploitation Network Extractor - is still in development. It hasn't yet been used in any active investigations.

But a \$47,000 grant from the Canadian Internet Registration Authority means development can continue.

Frank said the aim is to follow the virtual path to key websites on the child exploitation circuit.

"That will make law enforcement more efficient, so they're not going after the smaller offenders but they're going after the ones ... who host a lot of content and possibly - even better - the ones who are supplying the content so the police can get at the kids and rescue them," he said.

The program could one day spare police officers from traumatic hours of viewing photos and videos of child abuse content, Frank said.

The program has been in development for three years.

One of the hurdles is that the program didn't identify the geographical location of these sites. The CIRA grant will allow the team to add a geolocation feature and to look up registered website owners.

"I don't know to what level we can narrow down the location but we should be able to do it for a province, possibly a city," Frank said.

The SFU weBCrawler was one of 28 projects awarded more than \$1 million from the Canadian Internet Registration Authority, the organization that manages the .ca domain.

Jun 02 2014

ATLANTA - A Georgia family and lawmakers are demanding that federal authorities investigate the case of a toddler severely injured by a flash grenade during a drug raid.

Bounkham Phonesavanh - a 19-month-old nicknamed "Bou Bou" - remained in a medically induced coma on Tuesday. Habersham County District Attorney Brian Rickman said his office is investigating to determine whether any officers will face criminal charges.

Police have said officers were searching for a potentially armed drug suspect at the home and did not know children were inside when they rammed the door and dropped a flash grenade inside the door. The grenade landed in the sleeping boy's playpen, according to both authorities and the boy's family. The grenades create a bright flash and loud noise and are commonly used by law enforcement to distract or stun suspects.

Georgia state Sen. Vincent Fort, who has sponsored legislation in the past to limit "no-

knock" warrants that allow authorities to burst into a home without warning, said he plans to ask the U.S. Attorney to review the case.

"At this point when you look at these pictures, when you hear what was done, the public's confidence in the district attorney to conduct an objective investigation - the public's confidence in that is nil, it's gone, it's not there," Fort said.

The district attorney collected no evidence at the home, so the family has hired an investigator to do so, said their attorney, Mawuli Mel Davis.

Rickman said his office is still gathering statements, photographs and other evidence from agencies involved with the raid and would like to speak with the Phonesavanh family. The raid had not been cleared by either the district attorney or the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, despite Habersham County Sheriff Joey Terrell's earlier statements to the contrary, Rickman said. A call to Terrell's office on Monday was not returned.

"Anytime you look at pictures of a child injured like that, it's awful," Rickman said. "Everybody's heart goes out to the family. We've just got to do our job here."

The boy was scheduled to have surgery on Monday until he developed a fever that delayed the procedure, Alecia Phonesavanh said.

Police were looking for Wanis Thonetheva, 30, who they believed lived at the home based on a confidential informant who had recently bought drugs there. Thonetheva was not in the home when police raided it early Wednesday morning. He was arrested later and charged with distribution of methamphetamine.

The Phonesavanh family was staying with family after their Wisconsin home was damaged in a fire.

Jun 02 2014

As part of a major crackdown in a dozen countries against Russian cybercriminals, the RCMP has shut down two computer servers in Montreal that were part of a network that extorted millions of dollars from businesses and consumers.

The operation disrupted malicious software called Gameover Zeus (GOZ), which has infected up to a million computers around the world and caused losses of more than \$100-million (U.S.).

Also known as GOZeus, the malware steals banking credentials, impersonates legitimate websites and infects computers with CryptoLocker, a ransomware that blackmails victims by locking down their hard drive until a payment is made.

On Friday, the RCMP seized two servers in Montreal in co-ordination with a two-and-a-half-year operation initiated by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to an FBI affidavit filed in Pittsburgh, key servers in the CryptoLocker infrastructure were located in Canada, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

More than 5,000 users were victims in Canada, with potential losses close to

\$1.5-million, the RCMP said.

The Canadian probe started about three months ago following a tip from the FBI, said Constable Philippe Gravel, a spokesman for the Mounties' integrated technological crime unit in Quebec.

He said the Montreal seizures were done under the auspices of a search warrant invoking the "mischief to data" provision of the Criminal Code.

Constable Gravel said the two Montreal servers were purchased with the aim of using them specifically for the botnet, a network of compromised machines that were remote-controlled without the knowledge of the victims.

According to U.S. court documents, the ring is led by a 30-year-old Russian national, Evgeniy Mikhaylovich Bogachev.

The FBI says he is last known to be living in the Black Sea resort of Anapa. "He is known to enjoy boating and may travel to locations along the Black Sea in his boat," his FBI Wanted poster says.

No charges have been laid by Canadian authorities, but police are looking for a foreign person who had rented the server space in Montreal, Constable Gravel said.

(Globe and Mail)

TUESDAY
JUNE 03, 2014

Jun 03 2014

OTTAWA - The federal nominee for privacy commissioner says the government's cyberbullying bill should be split in two to allow greater scrutiny of measures that would expand online surveillance.



Justice Department lawyer Daniel Therrien told a House of Commons committee Tuesday there needs to be more transparency on the bill, which has raised the ire of many privacy advocates.

Civil libertarians say the cyberbullying bill will erode Internet privacy and make it easier for government to spy on the activities of law-abiding Canadians.

The legislation would make it illegal to distribute "intimate images" without consent and remove barriers to getting such pictures scrubbed from the Internet.

The bill also updates production orders and warrants to mesh with today's advanced communications world. In addition, it would give police new tools to track and trace telecommunications to determine their origin or destination.

The cyberbullying bill should be divided "and there should be independent review of privacy interests in the context of electronic investigations," Therrien told the Commons committee on access to information, privacy and ethics.

"Canadians want to know about why police and security agencies require information. They want to hear this in order to have an informed debate as to the viability and need for this type of legislation."

Jun 03 2014

VANCOUVER - Advocates for sex workers in B.C. are calling on the federal government to reconsider incoming prostitution laws after finding women in the trade in Vancouver are no safer under the proposed policing style.

A study published today in a global journal found even when Vancouver police limited arrests to their clients and pimps, sex workers in the city endured the same rates of physical and sexual violence.

The research comes within days of the Conservative government's plans to table legislation setting out a Made-in-Canada approach to dealing with the sale of sexual services.

Authors of the study, published in the British Medical Journal Open, say policymakers aren't willing to look at scientific evidence, are not listening to sex workers about safety and will repeat mistakes of the past.

Dr. Kate Shannon, with the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, says the research points to decriminalization of prostitution as the best approach to ensuring sex workers' safety.

The study found that sex workers in Vancouver remain unable to screen or negotiate with clients, were pushed to work in isolated spaces and were unable to access police protection.

Jun 03 2014

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. - Three southern Alberta police officers have been cleared in a shooting that injured a man.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team says officers from the Medicine Hat Police Force were justified in their actions and no charges will be laid.

Police were responding to a gun call at a home last September when a man came out and officers fired shots during an altercation.

The man was immediately treated and taken to hospital.

He has since been charged and the matter is before the courts.

Jun 03 2014

VANCOUVER - Vancouver police are asking local drug users to use the services of a well-known, safe-injection site after a rash of suspected heroin overdoses.

Police say there were seven suspected overdoses Tuesday on the city's Downtown Eastside.

The department is now asking local drug users to be extremely cautious and use Insite.

Police say Insite is staffed by medical personnel who can help users when things go wrong.

They are also asking local residents to call 911 if they see somebody in medical distress and that drug users seek immediate medical help if they don't feel well.

Insite is the city's first legal safe injection site and has been credited by Vancouver's chief medical health officer Dr. Patricia Daly with saving lives and reducing the risk of infection from disease like HIV and hepatitis C.

Jun 03 2014

MILLBROOK - The Truro Police Service has adorned all nine of its marked vehicles with the Mi'kmaw eight-point star, which signifies unity and harmony.



"I was proud to see it," said Millbrook First Nation Chief Bob Gloade who had a hand in helping the Truro Police Service decide on a symbol to use. "It shows significance to First Nations people, it's easily identified and it shows the police are working for all people and with all people."

About six months ago, the Truro Police Service was discussing internally how it could incorporate something into its fleet.

"We want people to feel more at ease and know that we are committed to diversity," said police chief Dave MacNeil, adding the service approached Gloade for assistance.

"Within about 30 seconds, he said he had the perfect symbol, and that was the eight-point star."

The four colours within the star – white, black, red and yellow – represents all races and directions, and MacNeil said the circle also signifies inclusion. Both Gloade and MacNeil aren't aware of any other police force in the province to include such a symbol on their vehicles.

"While it is a Mi'kmaw symbol, it is more inclusive in all races," said MacNeil. "We didn't want to leave anyone out. We are here to serve all people and we think the star is a really good fit."

Gloade said the star was originally a seven-point star, representing the seven Mi'kmaw districts in the Atlantic Region. It's been used for more than 500 years. He said after the Treaty was signed in the 1700s with the British, the eighth point was added to represent the relationship with the British crown.

"The symbol is used in a variety of ways and cultural explainings," said Gloade. "In directions, white represents north, black represents south, west is yellow and east is red. The star is used quite a bit in a variety of different ways, so the colour (placements) is always changing in variations."

While Truro Police Service doesn't

actually police the community of Millbrook – that’s done by the RCMP – the chief said Millbrook is still a part of the Truro community.

“Millbrook is within the town’s limits, the youth in Millbrook attend schools in Truro... Millbrook is a part of our community and we want to recognize that. It’s a real win for us,” said MacNeil.

(Truro Daily News)

WEDNESDAY
JUNE 04, 2014

Jun 04 2014

HALIFAX - A report concludes Halifax police were justified in breaking into a 10th-floor apartment to respond to a man who later fell off a balcony and died.

Nova Scotia’s Serious Incident Response Team was called in to investigate the death of the 27-year-old man.

The man was away from a psychiatric facility without leave when he barricaded himself inside his apartment on Feb. 3.

The Serious Incident Response Team says Halifax police responded and officers tried to negotiate with him, telling him they were concerned for his safety.

The team’s report says that after officers did not hear any response, they forced their way inside and found the man sitting on the outside edge of the balcony.

The report says one officer tried to convince the man to come back inside but the man eventually fell.

The report says the police response was justified out of concern for the man’s safety.

Jun 04 2014

LOS ANGELES - The majority of shootings in most U.S. police departments involve animals, usually dogs, and experts say a new series of videos can help change often quick-trigger decisions fueled by fear.

“There will be times when police need to defend themselves because they are being attacked by a dog and don’t have a choice, but that is the minority of cases,” said Brian Kilcommons, a Southbury, Connecticut, dog behaviourist and trainer. He is featured in the five-part series that teaches officers to detect the warning signs of an aggressive dog and how to avoid using lethal force.

Efforts to change the way officers approach animals have emerged as dogs have become a central part of the American family and lawsuits have chipped away at the coffers of law enforcement agencies.

The free videos emerged from a 2011 study by a University of Illinois centre and nonprofits including the National Canine Research Council, which promotes a better understanding of relationships with dogs. The U.S. Department of Justice helped. The study found a majority of police shootings involved animals, but it’s unknown how many dogs are

shot nationwide every year.

Officers have a lot to process when they respond to something like a domestic violence report, but determining whether a dog is agitated shouldn’t be overwhelming, said Bill Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations.

In the videos, Kilcommons teaches officers to survey canine body language and not to approach a fearful dog that’s low to the ground with its tail tucked and ears flat to its head. He also says to watch for warning signs such as lunging, growling and exposed teeth.

There are ways for officers to avoid using guns, including putting an object like a trash can between them and the dog, carrying food that can be thrown as a distraction, blaring an air horn or using pepper spray, he says.

Officers “can’t change their behaviour unless they have the tools and understand what to do with them,” said Kilcommons, who has trained 40,000 dogs and written nine books.

Rich Roberts, spokesman for the International Union of Police Associations in Sarasota, Florida, said the videos provide on-the-job training that can stem problems. It helps that they are only 5 to 10 minutes each and can be viewed during daily briefings.

“In hostile situations, the more you know about a dog, the better off you will be,” he said.

Jun 04 2014

SAULT STE. MARIE - Robert Keetch spent many summers in Sault Ste. Marie, and remembers dipping his toes in the Lake Superior water.

“I didn’t know water could get that cold,” said the Sudbury police inspector, who was introduced as the new chief designate for the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service during a press conference Wednesday.

Keetch is not simply dipping his toes into his upcoming job, he is currently selling his Sudbury home and hopes to finish out his policing career as chief in the Sault.

Having grown up in North Bay and spending most of his life in Sudbury he feels an attachment to the north and notes that his mother was raised in Sault Ste. Marie.

Keetch will be sworn in as chief at a ceremony June 16; current Chief Bob Davies will retire on June 30.

“We will kind of have two chiefs, but he will be the officer in charge of this organization as of the sixteenth,” said Davies.

After serving as chief for 17 years, Davies, 58, is looking forward to retirement.

“I am pleased that I am turning over an organization that doesn’t need any fixing,” said Davies, who adds that he has a long to-do list of chores waiting for him at home once he retires.

(Soo Today)

Jun 04 2014

QUEBEC - It appears that nobody is safe from the province’s anti-corruption squad, not even their own bosses.

Investigators descended on the Public

Security Department today, the same department which oversees police forces including the anti-corruption unit known as UPAC.

The unit was interested in a warehouse in Quebec City that housed the department’s old office furniture and computer equipment.

A second seizure was also conducted at a Quebec City computer firm, which serves a number of government departments.

The Public Security Department confirmed the seizures in a statement and said it would co-operate with the unit’s investigation, which the department says began after a complaint was filed in 2013.

The unit did not wish to comment.

Jun 04 2014

OTTAWA - The RCMP has charged three foreign nationals following an investigation into allegations of bribery involving a contract with Air India.

Canada-wide warrants have been issued for Americans Robert Barra and Dario Berini and British national Shailesh Govindia, all of whom face charges under the Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act.

Govindia was also charged with one count of fraud.

Barra is a former chief executive officer of U.S.-based firm Cryptometrics, while Berini is former chief operating officer of the company. Govindia was an agent for the firm.

In 2006, Cryptometrics Canada tendered a contract with Air India for a biometric passenger security system valued at approximately US\$100 million.

The RCMP says evidence gathered and later presented at trial revealed an agreement by Nazir Karigar, an agent working for Cryptometrics, to pay millions of dollars in bribes to Indian public officials for the purpose of securing a contract with the airline.

Jun 04 2014

OTTAWA - New legislation would criminalize the purchase of sexual services, crack down on those who benefit from prostitution and outlaw the sale of sex near schools and other places where children gather.



Justice Minister Peter MacKay says the “made-in-Canada” model targets johns and pimps while protecting the vulnerable.

The new prostitution-related offences are intended to reduce demand for sexual services, shield those who sell themselves from exploitation, and safeguard children and communities.

The bill would create new offences for:

- The purchase of sexual services and communicating in any place for that purpose, with penalties ranging from a \$500 fine to five years in prison.
- Receiving a financial or material benefit from the prostitution of others, including through businesses that sell the sexual services of others online or from venues such as escort agencies, massage parlours or strip clubs.
- Advertising the sale of sexual services in print media or on the Internet.
- Communicating for the purpose of selling sexual services in public places where a child could reasonably be expected to be present.

In addition, the maximum penalty for purchasing sexual services from children would be increased to 10 years in prison from five.

MacKay made it clear Wednesday the Conservatives see the vast majority of those who sell their bodies as victims forced into the trade due to violence, addiction, extortion, intimidation, poverty or human trafficking.

The government is devoting \$20 million to helping them leave the business, and pledges to work with provinces and territories toward that goal.

“We’re attempting to thread the needle on a very complex social issue. If there was a black-and-white simple answer after thousands of years, I think it would have been discovered,” MacKay told a news conference.

“We’re attempting this in good faith. And we believe that this will be effective.”

The legislation is the government’s response to a Supreme Court of Canada decision in December that struck down key provisions of the country’s prostitution laws. The court was concerned the provisions unduly increased the risk to sex workers, violating their constitutional rights.

While the court ruled the laws were unconstitutional, it gave the government a year to replace them.

Under the old laws, prostitution itself was legal but almost all related activities - including communicating in a public place for the purposes of prostitution, pimping and running a brothel - were criminal offences.

“It is important to note that the purchase and sale of sex has never been illegal in Canada. That changes today,” MacKay said.

“We are targeting johns and pimps, those that treat sex services as a commodity.”

MacKay suggested the courts would ultimately interpret the circumstances under which someone could be charged for selling sex in the vicinity of children, adding the police would have discretion to decide whether to act on a case-by-case basis.

THURSDAY
JUNE 05, 2014

Jun 05 2014

BURNABY, B.C. - Independent investigators have taken over the case after a man died while being subdued by

RCMP officers in Burnaby, B.C.

The Independent Investigations Office, the civilian body that investigates all B.C. cases involving death or serious injury at the hands of police, says the unnamed man died Wednesday afternoon.

A release from the IIO says officers were responding to a report of a possibly unwanted person in an apartment suite and were confronted by an aggressive man.

Police report the man ignored their commands and a Taser-type weapon was used but the man appeared unaffected.

He struggled with officers but had been subdued and was being taken into custody when he collapsed and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Few other incidents of the case have been released.

Jun 05 2014

TROIS-RIVIERES, Que. - A woman accused of kidnapping a newborn baby from a Trois-Rivieres maternity ward has been declared fit to stand trial.

Valerie Poulin Collins will now head to a detention centre until her next court date on June 18.

A judge heard today that a doctor has declared the 21-year-old fit after observing her over several days at a Shawinigan hospital.

Police arrested Poulin Collins outside her home on May 26, about three hours after a woman posing as a nurse snatched a 16-hour-old infant from a local hospital.

The baby girl was returned to her parents unharmed.

Officers were able to find Poulin Collins with the help of locals who recognized the woman from a surveillance video still sent out with an Amber Alert.

Poulin Collins faces two charges: one of kidnapping and one of abducting a person under 14 years old.

The abduction charge carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison while kidnapping draws a sentence ranging from five years to life.

Her lawyer, Karine Bussiere, suggested to the court today that her client have access to mental-health specialists while detained.

Jun 05 2014

TORONTO - The Ontario privacy commissioner initiated legal action against the Toronto police Thursday regarding police disclosure of suicide data to authorities in the United States.

The information being released includes all incidents of attempted suicide and threats of suicide in the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database, according to the privacy commissioner’s affidavit.

“Such disclosure makes this information routinely available to other Canadian law enforcement agencies and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officials,” read a statement in an affidavit made by Ann Cavoukian, Ontario’s information and privacy commissioner.

Ms. Cavoukian’s affidavit says by automatically releasing this personal data, the Toronto police are not complying with sections of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). The relevant sections “prohibit the disclosure by institutions of personal information in their custody or under their control unless one of several enumerated exceptions apply.”

While some Ontario police forces exercise “discretion” when reporting suicide-related incidents on the CPIC database, the affidavit claims the Toronto Police Service “exercises no discretion.”

“[P]olice services in Ontario are not required or compelled to disclose this information in the CPIC database,” reads the affidavit.

The privacy commissioner made recommendations for the Toronto police to exercise greater discretion in releasing data on suicide attempts.

After months of phone conversations and written correspondence earlier this year with Toronto police Chief Bill Blair and the chair of the Toronto police board, Ms. Cavoukian said it is her view that Toronto police are refusing to comply with requests.

(National Post)

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