

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

December 19, 2014 – Vol. 19 No. 51

Executive Digest

Dec 11 2014

WINNIPEG - Manitoba has introduced legislation that would create a First Nations safety officer program to help prevent crime in remote communities while also enforcing band by-laws and specific provincial laws, Justice Minister James Al-lum announced recently.

Page 3

Dec 11 2014

TORONTO - A Second World War law used by police to make mass arrests during the G20 summit in Toronto in 2010 was officially scrapped Thursday and replaced with new legislation.

Page 5

Dec 17 2014

An RCMP officer says not enough was done to care for some members in the wake of the shooting deaths of three of their colleagues in Moncton, New Brunswick.

Page 9

Dec 18 2014

MONTREAL - The Montreal Police Department's plan to modernize its computer system touted a budget of \$1.65 million in 2001, but now it's forecast to reach \$28.4 million by the time it's completed in 2016, the city's latest capital works program shows.

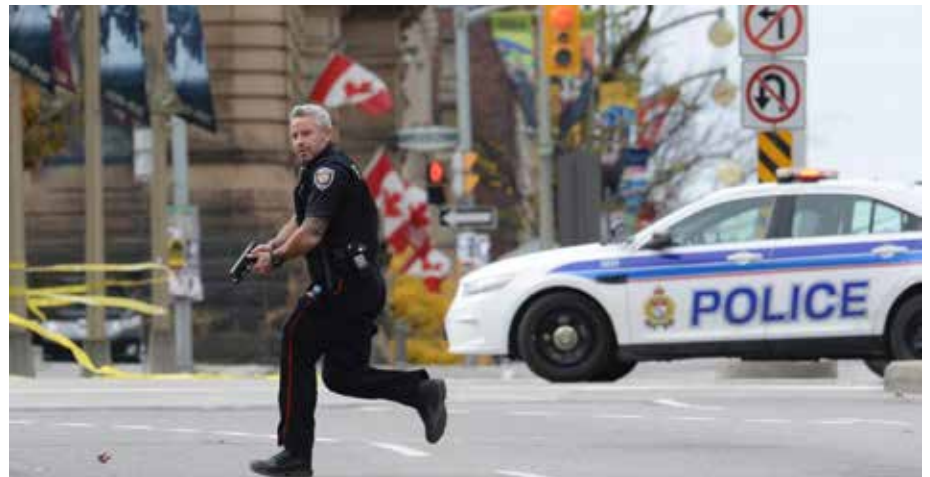
Page 10

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Researchers link psychological problems to 'lone wolf' attacks



Dec 15 2014

LONDON - A radical Muslim killed a soldier outside Canada's Parliament. A right-wing extremist opened fire on buildings in Texas' capital and tried to burn down the Mexican Consulate. An Al-Qaida-inspired assailant hacked an off-duty soldier to death in London.

Police said all three were terrorists and motivated by ideology. Authorities and family members said they may have been mentally ill. A growing body of research suggests they might well have been both.

New studies have challenged several decades of thinking that psychological problems are only a minor factor in the making of terrorists. The research has instead found a significant link between mental problems and

"lone wolf" terrorism.

Now academics and law enforcement officials are working to turn that research into tools to prevent deadly attacks.

"It's never an either-or in terms of ideology versus mental illness," said Ramon Spaaij, a sociologist at Australia's Victoria University who conducted a major study, funded by the U.S. Justice Department, of lone wolf extremists. "It's a dangerous cocktail."

The study preceded Tuesday's ending of a 16-hour siege involving a gunman who took hostages in a cafe in Sydney. The gunman, Iranian-born Man Haron Monis, was already facing charges including sexual assault and accessory to murder in separate cases, and his former lawyer said the standoff was "not a

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concerted terrorism event” but the work of “a damaged-goods individual.”

With groups like Islamic State spreading violence in Syria and Iraq - and bloodthirsty rhetoric on the Internet - authorities around the world have issued increasingly insistent warnings about the threat posed by lone wolf attackers.

They can be difficult to stop with a counterterrorism strategy geared toward intercepting communications and disrupting plots.

Solo terrorism “doesn’t take an awful lot of organizing. It doesn’t take too many people to conspire together. There’s no great complexity to it,” London Police Chief Bernard Hogan-Howe told the BBC recently. “So what that means is that we have a very short time to interdict, to actually intervene and make sure that these people don’t get away with it.”

Police forces and intelligence agencies are examining whether insights from research by Spaaij and others could help.

Spaaij said a number of law enforcement and intelligence agencies have shown interest in his work. In Britain, a police counterterrorism unit is using a major study of lone wolf terrorists to develop risk-assessment analysis.

A British security official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to talk on the record said many attackers display warning signs, but that recognizing them is easier in retrospect. He said British intelligence officials are studying the link between mental illness and lone-actor terrorism.

Most people with mental health problems are neither terrorists nor violent, and mental illness alone can’t explain lone wolf attackers. Some experts dispute whether there is a link at all.

After Michael Zehaf-Bibeau’s deadly attack on a soldier Oct. 22 in Ottawa, Jocelyn Belanger, a psychology professor at the University of Quebec at Montreal, told the Canadian Senate’s national security committee that “to believe that radicalized individuals are crazy or not playing with a full deck will be our first mistake in developing effective counterterrorism strategies.”

But the new research suggests that solo

terrorists are much more likely to have mental health problems than either members of the general public or participants in group terrorism.

Spaaij and Mark Hamm of Indiana State University studied 98 lone wolf attackers in the U.S. They found that 40 per cent had identifiable mental health problems, compared with 1.5 per cent in the general population.

Their conclusion? Mental illness is not the only factor that drives individuals to commit terrorist acts, but it is one of the factors.

Spaaij said mental illness can play a part “in shaping particular belief systems and in constructing the enemy, externalizing blame for one’s own failure or grievances onto this all-threatening enemy.”

A second study by Paul Gill and Emily Corner of University College London looked at 119 lone wolf attackers and a similar number of members of violent extremist groups in the U.S. and Europe. Almost a third of the lone wolves - nearly 32 per cent - had been diagnosed with a mental illness, while only 3.4 per cent of terrorist group members were mentally ill.

“Group-based terrorists are psychologically quite normal,” the researchers said. They said one reason may be that terrorist recruiters are likely to reject candidates who appear erratic or mentally ill.

Mental illness could make lone wolf attacks easier to foresee: Gill said 60 per cent of the attackers he studied leaked details of their plans, sometimes telling friends or family.

He and Corner are working with a British counterterrorism unit as police try to develop ways of distinguishing genuine threats from hot-headed talk. The unit declined to discuss the project, but recent cases suggest determining who really is a threat is fraught with difficulty.

More than a year before he hacked a soldier to death in London in 2013, Michael Adebowale’s online extremism drew the attention of Britain’s intelligence services.

Domestic intelligence agency MI5 told a parliamentary inquiry into the murder that it uses a range of factors to assess the threat from potential lone wolves, including an inability to cope with stress and anxiety, social isolation and mental health problems.

MI5 agents suggested that Adebowale - who is now serving a life sentence in a psychiatric hospital - be assessed by the agency’s Behavioral Science Unit, a team of psychologists and social scientists, but the assessment was never done. The lawmakers’ report called that a missed opportunity, and recommended that “MI5 should ensure that the unit’s advice is integrated more thoroughly into investigations.”

Signals also were misread in the case of Nicky Reilly, a 22-year-old convert to Islam who walked into a restaurant in the English town of Exeter in 2008 with a homemade bomb. The device went off in the restroom, injuring Reilly and no one else.

At his trial, jurors were told that Reilly had learning difficulties and had had many years of contact with mental health services. In 2003, he talked to a psychiatrist about making a bomb. The information was passed on to the police, who judged that Reilly wasn’t a serious threat.

American authorities, in contrast, have been accused of being too aggressive in pursuit of lone attackers. The FBI has foiled

several alleged attacks through sting operations in which agents posed as terror supporters, supplying advice and equipment. Critics say the strategy can amount to entrapment of mentally vulnerable people who wouldn’t have the wherewithal to act alone.

Meanwhile, the fundamental question of whether there is a link between mental health problems and terrorism remains controversial.

The most lethal lone-wolf attacker in recent years was anti-Muslim extremist Anders Behring Breivik, who killed 77 people in a bombing and gun rampage in Norway in 2011. Breivik was unrepentant. One psychiatric report found him to be insane, while a second concluded that he was sane - and judges agreed, sending him to prison indefinitely.

The killer was happy with the outcome. For Breivik, it was recognition that his views were legitimate and not those of a madman. (UK Daily Mail)

THURSDAY DECEMBER 11, 2014

Dec 11 2014

OTTAWA - Security officers who guard the House of Commons were given a rousing tribute in the chamber they are there to protect.

As part of the winding down of business before the Christmas holidays, Speaker Andrew Scheer threw open the doors on Thursday and allowed dozens of guards on the floor of the Commons while MPs cheered and applauded.

He says he wanted to acknowledge the courage and professionalism of the detail in light of the Oct. 23 attack.

Scheer says their quick response after a gunman stormed Centre Block “most certainly prevented an even more tragic conclusion to the day’s events.”

Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, the gunman, murdered Cpl. Nathan Cirillo at the foot of the national war memorial and then stormed Parliament Hill before being fatally shot by security staff outside the Parliamentary library.

Scheer acknowledged Samearn Son, a 10-year veteran and one of the unarmed guards who was injured trying to stop the gunman.

Dec 11 2014

WINNIPEG - The Manitoba Integrated Organized Crime Task Force has charged 14 people in a long-term investigation spanning five provinces.

The arrests, made on Wednesday, came after a 15-month investigation by more than 200 police officers in Manitoba, Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

As part of the operation dubbed Project Distress, officers also raided six residences in Manitoba, including five in Winnipeg.

Some of the items seized include six kilograms of cocaine, eight kilograms of methamphetamine and smaller quantities of other drugs.

Officers also seized 17 long-barrelled guns,

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK
A JOURNAL OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

ISSN 1704-3913
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Phone 1-800-893-5777 Info@accesscopyright.ca

Published weekly by Blue Line Magazine, Inc. as an executive news briefing service to Canada's top level law enforcement personnel.

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Group Publisher: Morley S. Lymburner
PUBLISHER: Kathryn M. Lymburner - Kathryn@BlueLine.ca
NEWS EDITOR: Mark Reesor - News@BlueLine.ca
Subscriptions: Blue Line Store at www.BlueLine.ca
ADVERTISING: 1-888-640-3048
12A-4981 Hwy. 7 East, Ste. 254, Markham ON L3R 1N1
Phone: 905 640-3048 eMail: news@blueline.ca

three handguns, ammunition and \$70,000.

Ten of the individuals charged were from Winnipeg, including Ray Ulasz, a city council candidate in the Transcona ward in the last civic election, who now faces two charges of firearms trafficking.

RCMP officials say the investigation targeted organized crime and drug trafficking and used wiretaps to record more than 80,000 conversations and communications.

(CJOB)

Dec 11 2014

MILTON - An OPP officer alleged by the Crown to have fabricated evidence to receive kickbacks from tow truck companies has been found not guilty of breach of trust.

Superior Court Justice Dale Fitzpatrick, on Thursday found OPP Sgt. Dennis Mahoney-Bruer not guilty of three counts of breach of trust and three counts of attempting to obstruct justice.

The hearing at a Milton courthouse lasted just over five minutes. Fitzpatrick said he will provide written reasons next week, but made a point of directly addressing Mahoney-Bruer.

"I do want you to consider yourself extremely fortunate that the evidence generally allowed you the benefit of the court's doubt," Fitzpatrick told Mahoney-Bruer.

He told the officer not to interpret the verdict as an "endorsement" of his actions and gave him "a very clear warning," that he might not receive the same benefit if he finds himself in court again.

"It will never happen, Your Honour," said Mahoney-Bruer, wearing a dark suit and purple tie.

"Good luck, sergeant," Fitzpatrick responded.

Sgt. Dennis Mahoney-Bruer was arrested in May 2009 after an investigation by the Ontario Provincial Police Professional Standards Bureau.

His charges stemmed from three incidents in May 2009. One involved a driver charged with speeding. The other two involved drivers charged with speeding 50 km/h over the limit, or "stunt" driving.

During Mahoney-Bruer's September 2013 trial, the Crown alleged he fabricated evidence so as to give tickets to drivers and was motivated by the kickbacks he received from towtruck drivers.

(Toronto Star)

Dec 11 2014

The final tally of policing for the three-month occupation of Oppenheimer Park in Vancouver last summer was \$200,000, the Vancouver police said this week.

The encampment ended when a court injunction was finally enforced and city workers dismantled the tents and other structures, with the assistance of police and firefighters.

Police arrested five people who allegedly refused to leave the park and attempted to interfere with city workers dismantling the tents, but they were later released without charge.

(Metro Vancouver)

Dec 11 2014

VANCOUVER - Two Vancouver police officers have been sent home from hospital after being struck by a car late Thursday afternoon.

Police said that shortly before 5 p.m., the two on-duty constables were crossing West Broadway when they were both struck in the crosswalk by a westbound car.

One of the officers underwent x-rays and a CT scan, but they showed no serious injuries or broken bones. The other officer is being treated for what are believed to be minor injuries. Both are now recovering at home, according to spokesman Const. Brian Montague.

The driver remained at the scene and is co-operating with police.

The Vancouver police department collision investigation unit will be looking into the cause of the collision.

(Vancouver Sun)

Dec 11 2014

WINNIPEG - Manitoba has introduced legislation that would create a First Nations safety officer program to help prevent crime in remote communities while also enforcing band bylaws and specific provincial laws, Justice Minister James Allum announced recently.



"The federal government unilaterally terminated the program and that will be effected March 31, 2015, so rather than sit idly by, we felt it was our obligation to step forward with a new bill establishing the First Nations safety officer program," said the minister. "Really, it's not just a replacement program, it's really designed to enhance the band constable program."

The federal government's Band Constables Act was created so that there were first responders in communities that might be too far away from an RCMP detachment. There are 31 communities currently served by the band constable program.

"It's extraordinarily important for First Nations to have this program," said Allum. "We're responding to the very needs identified by First Nations, not only around law enforcement, but also in terms of crime prevention and making sure that First Nations safety officers play an important role connecting law with social service agencies. It's more than just law enforcement, it's an enhanced program across the spectrum."

Allum said when the program was introduced, it was done so as framework legislation in order to use negotiations with First Nations in refining and developing it.

While the proposed amendments to the Police Services Act would enable the establishment of the safety officer program, specific enforcement powers, crime prevention goals, training and other aspects of on-reserve polic-

ing would be decided through consultations.

The provincial program will supersede the federal program in terms of administration and oversight, such as the training of officers, according to Allum.

"We envision a much more rigorous training program, which we'll design with each of the affected First Nations. We'll enhance the training and make sure that First Nations safety officers have the skills and training they need to not only do law enforcement, but crime prevention and connecting people with social service agencies," he said.

Allum stressed that this will not replace the RCMP, but build a partnership between the reserve and the federal police force.

Stone said having an officer who is a part of the reserve and knows and understands the people who live there, is a benefit.

"It'll help screen out all the problems that we're having right now," he said, noting the program is also a step towards greater autonomy for the 210 people that live at the reserve.

Once the current band constable program ends, the federal government is expected to contribute \$1.4 million to the province for the safety officer program. According to a provincial spokesperson, it's expected the province will invest a similar amount into the program, but the exact figure won't be known until details of the program are finalized.

(Sun Media)

Dec 11 2014

MONTREAL - A sergeant-detective with the Montreal police department is facing several charges, including uttering threats against Municipal Affairs Minister Pierre Moreau.

Police in Terrebonne confirm that a woman made a complaint against the officer Monday night, alleging assault and death threats.

The officer was arrested and appeared in court in St-Jerome, Que., on Tuesday.

He is expected back in court for a bail hearing on Friday.

The officer faces charges of harassment, uttering threats and assaulting the woman who filed the complaint.

He is also accused of uttering threats against two minors, and assaulting one of the minors.

Finally, he faces two additional charges of uttering threats. One of the alleged victims on these charges is Moreau.

A spokesperson for Terrebonne police said the threat was not necessarily made directly to Moreau, but rather was mentioned by the woman who filed the complaint with police.

Labour Minister Sam Hamad commented Thursday on the alleged threat.

"That surprised me. It's not acceptable, and I hope that it's [isolated]," he said.

Montreal police say they're aware of the charges but will not comment for now.

(CBC News)

Dec 11 2014

CALGARY - A trafficking investigation by Calgary RCMP and the organized crime team has led to the seizure of a large quantity of drugs and cash.

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Police confiscated over a pound of crystal meth and approximately \$120,000 in cash in northeast Calgary on Dec. 9.

Three people were arrested and are facing charges of possession for the purpose of trafficking and possession of the proceeds of crime.

All three are scheduled to appear in Calgary provincial court on Dec. 12.

“Crystal methamphetamine is a highly addictive stimulant that is smoked by a user. It has become more popular in Alberta where it is the next most prevalent street drug behind marijuana and cocaine,” RCMP said in a statement.

According to police, the quantity of drugs seized was roughly 5,000 individual doses.

(CBC News)

Dec 11 2014

TORONTO - A Second World War law used by police to make mass arrests during the G20 summit in Toronto in 2010 was officially scrapped Thursday and replaced with new legislation.

The Public Works Protection Act was secretly revived by the Liberal government prior to the G20, and then used by police to “kettle” or detain large groups in the streets, and to arrest 1,100 people during the summit of world leaders.

Ombudsman Andre Marin concluded it was opportunistic and inappropriate to use a “war measure” to give police extra authority, and said police compounded matters by misrepresenting the reach of their new powers during the G20.

“Apart from insiders in the government of Ontario, only members of the Toronto Police Service knew that the rules of the game had changed, and they were the ones holding the ‘go directly to jail cards,’” Marin wrote in a special report.

The law designed to protect electrical generating facilities from Nazi saboteurs in the 1940s was replaced by a new bill, given final reading Thursday, that enhances security at courthouses, electrical generating stations and nuclear power plants.



Dec 12 2014

MONCTON, N.B. - RCMP say a 73-year-old Saint John, N.B., man has pleaded guilty to three charges in connection with shale gas protests in the fall of 2013.

The Mounties say Gregory Morton Cook appeared in court in Moncton on Wednesday and pleaded guilty to assaulting a peace officer, obstructing three police officers and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle.

The charges were laid following an incident in September 2013 near Rexton.

The Mounties say Cook ignored directions from police and drove through a roadblock towards a second roadblock of police vehicles, coming to a stop near the cruisers.

The police say Cook was sentenced to an

18-month conditional discharge with conditions to stay at least one kilometre away from shale gas exploration activities and protests.

The RCMP say he is also to have no contact with the RCMP officers named in the charges and must complete 30 hours of community service.

Dec 12 2014

RICHMOND, B.C. - Fourteen people who were rescued from a boat that hit a rock wall in the Fraser River in Richmond, B.C., were in training to save others in a similar situation.

John Horton, captain of the search and rescue vessel that belongs to the Canadian Lifeboat Institution, says high winds and heavy rain swept the boat sideways and slammed it onto the rocks on Thursday night.

Horton says five people were rescued by another boat that belongs to the group while nine others were plucked to safety by members of the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue and the Canadian Coast Guard.

He says everyone was taken off the Steveston Lifeboat about 45 minutes after it hit the wall but the vessel was not in jeopardy of sinking though half of it is now sitting underwater.

Horton says the volunteers have taken part in 36 rescues this year.

Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue spokesman Rob Duffus says the trainees were shaken up but not hurt.

Dec 12 2014

MONTREAL - The Crown will use a streamlined process to deal with an assault charge against a Montreal police officer who gained notoriety during Quebec's student protests.

Const Stefanie Trudeau earned the moniker “Officer 728,” after videos surfaced on the Internet of her allegedly roughing up student demonstrators during the spring of 2012.

Trudeau's badge number was 728.

Later that year, she was accused of hurting a bystander in an unrelated incident that started with her demanding ID from someone who was sipping beer by an apartment building doorway.

Allegations from that incident resulted in a charge of assault in February 2013.

The Crown indicated Friday it would prosecute Trudeau by way of the summary conviction process rather than as an indictable case.

The summary process means the case is dealt with more quickly because there is no hearing to determine if there is enough evidence to proceed to trial.

The maximum sentence is also lower on a summary conviction.

Trudeau returns to court Feb. 4, 2015.

Dec 12 2014

VANCOUVER - Two British Columbia gangsters have been sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 25 years for their roles in the execution-style murders of six people in a Surrey, B.C., highrise.

A BC Supreme Court judge delivered the automatic sentence to Cody Haevischer and Matthew Johnston seven years after the

deaths in the Vancouver suburb.

Justice Catherine Wedge also ruled Haevischer will serve 18 years and Johnston 20 years to be served concurrently for a conspiracy conviction, but the time was cut to about one-third after time served.

Wedge says the planned murders were highly risky, callous and cruel and that public violence must be met with the sternest response from the courts.

The murders took place when the men went to an apartment building to kill one rival drug trafficker, but they ended up killing five others to eliminate potential witnesses.

Dec 12 2014

DES MOINES - Iowa is looking to create the nation's first smartphone driver's license with an app that can co-exist with the traditional plastic card.

The director of the state's Department of Transportation gave Gov. Terry Branstad an update on the project Monday. Andrea Henry, a spokeswoman for the DOT, said the app is in currently development for iOS and Android phones and is expected to be free. Despite news reports about a 2015 release, the department isn't sure on timing in part because of “concerns about privacy” and security, she said.

One concern is how a police officer would interact with someone's smartphone. For instance, what would happen if someone who was pulled over received an incriminating text while the officer was checking the license on the app? Henry believes the app will work in a way so that “the phone never leaves your hands.” Users could hold up the phone so that police or Transportation Security Administration officers can scan the license electronically, rather than handling the phone.

Another issue Iowa is looking to address is finding a way to hide smartphone notifications so that an officer doesn't see them while checking a license. Iowa is also working on ways to prevent fakes. One feature might have the photo on the license move slightly so that it is distinguishable from a screenshot.

The new app will be another convenience for drivers in the same way that Department of Motor Vehicle websites have become, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators said. The trade association, which represents motor-vehicle officials, said “Iowa's innovative pilot will explore new opportunities,” but also noted the need for security.

The company building the app, MorphoTrust USA, formerly L-1 Identity Solutions, has worked on driver's-license technology for nearly a half-century. It counts among its achievements creating the first driver's license with a photo in 1958. Jenny Openshaw, a vice president with the Massachusetts-based company, said it is discussing smartphone driver's licenses with more than 20 other states.

(Wall Street Journal)

Dec 12 2014

B.C. police forces have undergone a “sea change” in the two years since a civilian-led unit was put in charge of investigating police-involved deaths and serious injuries, says the man in charge of the Independent Investigations Office.

But the road to a new system that is moving away from police investigating other police has not been smooth, former U.S. prosecutor Richard Rosenthal acknowledged in his report to a committee of B.C. MLAs Thursday.

The office started up in the fall of 2012 with 36 investigators, about half and half civilians and former police officers. Its mandate was to move to all-civilian investigations, and Rosenthal said progress has been made, with two thirds of staff in the two investigative teams being people who have never worked as police officers.

This year four former officers were fired from the IIO, and five more resigned, Rosenthal told the committee. Two civilian staff also quit this year after three civilians resigned in 2013. Another former officer was "separated from the organization" in 2012, Rosenthal said.

He cited three reasons for the high turnover: "cultural conflicts," the struggles of a new organization and evolution of jobs that causes people to look for something new.

A one-time Los Angeles deputy district attorney who worked on the 1999 Rampart case involving violence and drug dealing in the city's police force, Rosenthal set up independent police oversight in Portland and Denver before coming to B.C.

He was asked about a survey of his operation that referred to a lower-than expected case load. Rosenthal said that was done before the office dealt with four fatal officer-involved shootings in less than three months.

"I don't believe there is a single person in the office who would say that today," he said.

Rosenthal said video cameras for police dog handlers, general-duty officers and police Tasers would help in some cases, but that is a decision for police services due to cost and privacy concerns.

The B.C. government committed to a civilian-led agency after a string of incidents involving RCMP and city police forces. The office was recommended by inquiries into the 2007 deaths of Polish immigrant Robert Dziekanski at Vancouver airport, and Frank Paul, who was removed from the Vancouver Police drunk tank in 1998 and left unconscious in an alley.

The 2005 gunshot death of Ian Bush at the RCMP detachment in Houston, B.C. was another case that pushed the B.C. government to end the practice of police incidents being investigated by other police forces. The independent office also brought B.C. RCMP officers under civilian oversight.

The B.C. Police Complaints Commissioner is continuing to handle public complaints against police forces in the province. (Terrace Standard)

Dec 12 2014

EDMONTON - Tony Simioni has been voted out as head of Edmonton's police association, CBC News has learned.

"I've enjoyed my run, but yeah, I think this is it," he told reporters at a press conference before the vote.

Simioni, who has served two terms as the president of the association since being elected in 2009, lost in a close vote to Sgt. Maurice Brodeur, who works with the Whyte Avenue beat team.

Simioni ran unopposed in the last election. He has served as a police officer for 35 years.

In a press conference Friday where he criticized city council for lack of police funding, Simioni made multiple references to plans to retire.

"It's likely my last year as a police officer," he said. "And so, you know, I'm looking forward to newer challenges in the future and I'll likely be involved in some way."

(CBC News)



Dec 14 2014

NEWMARKET, Ont. - At least a couple of appeals are being planned in the case of a Toronto-area woman convicted of masterminding a phoney home invasion that left her mother dead and father severely wounded.

A lawyer for Jennifer Pan says his client intends to appeal her conviction on charges of first degree murder and attempted murder.

Pan wept yesterday as the jury convicted her and three co-accused, including her boyfriend, Daniel Wong, who has also signalled plans to appeal.

All four were convicted of first degree murder, which carries an automatic life sentence with no chance of parole for 25 years.

During the nine month trial, prosecutors contended that Pan hatched the plan after her parents forced her to choose between them and Wong.

Pan claimed during the trial that she hired someone to kill her - not her parents.

A fifth person charged in the case will be tried separately.

Dec 14 2014

Large cuts to police and other services will endanger public safety unless radical structural reforms to cut back-office costs, Britain's most senior police officer has warned.

Scotland Yard commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, writing in the Guardian, gives his sternest warning yet about the potential effects of forthcoming cuts, with police preparing to be told this week of even more to come.

The Metropolitan police commissioner says he expects further reductions in budgets whoever wins the 2015 general election. He argues for reforms including mergers of individual forces, which would rip up the historical landscape of policing, to lessen the potential damage.

"There's a bigger risk to public safety if we don't take radical action," Hogan-Howe writes, adding: "We've saved hundreds of millions already, but from 2016 onwards it will be much harder."

In a move that clashes with Conservative party policy, he calls for the culling of more than 30 forces in England and Wales, to create nine super-forces, based on the regional boundaries.

He warns that criminals are moving from

the "shotgun" robberies of the past to more sophisticated offences involving data and cybercrime, and says that police need to catch up.

Hogan-Howe's intervention comes amid real concern among the leadership of the Yard and London government about the level of cuts proposed, which could result in the capital losing in total one-third of its budget.

Police chiefs across the country fear the scale of the cuts to come could decimate neighbourhood policing, vital to preventing crime. Privately they fear a potential return to "1980s"-style policing, of responding to emergencies and little else. (The Guardian)



Dec 15 2014

OTTAWA - Ottawa police have laid more than 250 charges against 27 people after a months-long crack-down on gun and drug offences linked to alleged gang activity.

The arrests were made during two campaigns, called projects Karma and Calamity, that began in June.

Project Karma, which ran until the end of November and targeted street gangs and "brazen" firearms violence, resulted in 14 arrests, 137 charges laid and four firearms as well as and drugs and \$5,000 seized.

Project Calamity, which ran until August, targeted people in the drug trade who were suspected of having access to or using firearms to commit offences.

Police say 13 people were arrested, 117 counts of charges laid and three guns seized as a result of that campaign.

They also say they seized more than 400 rounds of ammunition, drugs and \$45,000 in Canadian and U.S. cash.

Dec 15 2014

NEWMARKET, Ont. - The investigation into the slaying of a Toronto-area woman and wounding of her husband continues even after their daughter and three accomplices were convicted of first-degree murder in the assassination plot this weekend.

Police are still seeking one of the three men who allegedly took part in the Nov. 8, 2010 attack that killed Jennifer Pan's mother and left her father on the brink of death from a bullet to the head.

A jury in Newmarket, north of Toronto, found Saturday that Pan, 28, was the mastermind behind the hit, which was disguised as a robbery. She was also convicted of attempted murder.

Pan's co-accused - Lenford Crawford, David Mylvaganam and her on-again, off-again boyfriend Daniel Wong - were found guilty of the same charges. All four face an automatic life sentence with no chance of parole for 25 years.

Prosecutors said during trial that neither

Wong nor Crawford were at the Pan home that night, but acted as middle-men for her and the men who carried out the killing.

Mylvaganam was alleged to be among the intruders, as was a fifth co-accused, Eric Carty, who will be tried separately after his lawyer fell ill.

Dec 15 2014

MONTREAL - Montreal's police and fire departments have temporarily pulled the plug on a new radio communication system.

Firefighters began using the system in September with first responders and said it worked flawlessly.

However a few days after the new system was put in use island-wide last week Montreal's fire department discovered an intermittent problem communicating with firefighters.

On Thursday night firefighters realized that messages from central dispatch were not being transmitted.

The police department came across similar problems on Friday, but at the moment only officers working in the eastern sections of the island were using the SERAM system.

"It was just one region," said Cmdr. Ian Lafreniere. "Only about 150 cars were deployed with that."

Both departments are saying that at no point was the public in any danger because there are backup systems in place, including cell phones.

The SERAM digital communication system was chosen in 2011 and was supposed to be in place by the end of 2013. The contract reportedly cost more than \$40 million.

One advantage of the system is the possibility of geo-locating users, so management can track exactly where people are.

(CTV Montreal)

Dec 15 2014

WINNIPEG - An HIV-positive Winnipeg man has been given just short of the maximum sentence for spitting in the face of a police officer.

Clifford Bear, who is 44, was convicted of attempted aggravated assault after a lengthy legal battle that spanned several years.

Queen's Bench Justice Deborah McCawley sentenced Bear to 6 1/2 years in prison - the maximum is seven years.

She called Bear's actions a premeditated ambush on a police officer.

Bear was arrested in August 2009 after stealing some computer discs, then he told the officer about having HIV and then spat directly at him.

The officer was hit in the eye with bloody saliva and had to undergo medical treatment; he has been given a clean bill of health.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

Dec 15 2014

VANCOUVER - The federal government has lost its latest attempt to prevent medical marijuana users from growing pot at home, with the Federal Court of Appeal upholding an injunction that

exempted patients from a massive overhaul of the system.

New rules were introduced earlier this year that prohibited home growing and instead shifted production to commercial operations, but a group of patients is challenging that regime in a case expected to be heard in the new year.

A Federal Court judge issued an injunction in the spring that allowed patients who were authorized to grow and possess marijuana under the old system to continue to do so until their case is resolved.

The government appealed, but the Appeal Court released a unanimous decision Monday upholding the injunction.

New regulations took effect this last spring that no longer allowed personal production and instead established a system of federally licensed commercial producers. There are now 15 such operations selling medical cannabis.

The plaintiffs filed a constitutional challenge arguing the updated regulations violate their right to access important medicine, because commercial prices are considerably more expensive under the new system. They also complained the commercial market wouldn't give them as much control over which strains of the drug they use.

The Federal Court trial is set to begin in February. The injunction preserves patients' right to grow their own marijuana at least until a decision is issued.

Two of the plaintiffs also filed a cross appeal, arguing the Federal Court injunction was too narrow and left out some patients because of the dates outlined in the injunction.

The Appeal Court ordered the lower court to reconsider the terms of the injunction to clear things up.

Dec 15 2014

LACOMBE, Alta. - A 20-year-old central Alberta man has been sentenced to four years in prison for running down a woman who was fleeing from police in a stolen vehicle.

William Cameron pleaded guilty to four charges including flight from police and impaired driving causing bodily harm.

Court was told Leah Cobetto, 22, was injured so badly she had to have one of her legs amputated.

Judge J.B. Mitchell called Cameron's previous criminal record "pathetic" for someone his age and said his flight from police on the night of Sept. 23 showed disrespect for people's lives.

He also said the only reason Cameron's chase ended was because the vehicle he had stolen earlier in the day seized up, but if it hadn't, other innocent people could have been affected.

Cameron will also face a seven-year driving prohibition and 10-year weapons ban once he is released.

(CJUV)

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 16, 2014

Dec 16 2014

KITCHENER, Ont. - A 12-year-old girl is facing several charges - including dangerous driving - after police say a vehicle with two girls inside crashed into a pole following a pursuit in Kitchener, Ont.

Police say the incident occurred around 3 a.m. Monday when officers saw a vehicle driving erratically without any lights on.

It's alleged police tried to stop the vehicle with lights and siren activated but the driver refused to stop.

When more cruisers arrived and tried to contain the vehicle, police say it side-swiped one of the cruisers and then went around it.

Another attempt was made and police say the suspect vehicle ended up going off the road and striking a pole.

The 12-year-old girl is charged with flight from police, dangerous driving, taking a motor vehicle without consent and driving a motor vehicle without a licence. Police say the other girl - who is 14 - was not charged.

Dec 16 2014

WHITBY, Ont. - Seven people are facing a total of 46 charges after police say they dismantled an auto theft ring in the Greater Toronto Area and recovered vehicles worth more than \$1 million.

Durham regional police say the investigation began in October 2013 after an increase in automobile thefts in the area.

They say detectives soon found a connection between two stolen vehicles from the area and a person of interest in a York Regional Police auto theft investigation.

A joint operation dubbed Project Lakeland was started in July to dismantle what police said was a criminal organization.

It's alleged the ring included thieves who stole the cars, a dealer who fraudulently obtained Ministry of Transportation documents, a person who changed Vehicle Identification Numbers and an exporter who shipped the stolen vehicles from Canada to be sold in Africa.

Investigators say the stolen vehicles would be sealed in steel sea containers in the GTA and shipped to Africa via the ports of Halifax and Montreal.

Police say on Dec. 8, seven search warrants were executed - five in Toronto and two in York Region - and seven people were arrested.

The charges include participating in a criminal organization, theft of motor vehicle, possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000 and conspiracy to commit an indictable offence.

Police say they have recovered 29 stolen vehicles and one motorcycle with a total value of about \$1.12 million.

They are still seeking several suspects who are alleged to have played secondary roles in support of the theft ring.

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. - Ontario's police watchdog has cleared four Toronto police officers in the shooting of an 18-year-old man at a busy downtown subway station that sent commuters scrambling.

The Special Investigations Unit says it has concluded there are no reasonable grounds to charge the four with any criminal offence in connection with injuries sustained by the man in the Dec. 13, 2013 incident.

The SIU says the incident began when a man boarded a subway train with a black pellet gun that bore a "strong resemblance" to a pistol and ordered the other passengers off the train at Queen Station downtown.

It says the man wanted to spark a confrontation where police would kill him, and that officers repeatedly urged him to drop his weapon but that he didn't comply.

The agency says he pointed his gun at police, who shot at him, then stepped onto the platform and again turned his gun toward an officer, resulting in more shots fired and the man falling wounded to the ground.

Director Tony Loparco says the use of lethal force was justified because the officers as well as civilian witnesses thought he had a real gun.

The SIU says the man was hit four times as the officers fired a total of 28 rounds.

He notes that officers tried pleading with him to drop the weapon and desist, and only opened fire when they had reason to believe lives were at risk.

So many shots were fired because the officers "believed that at least some of these shots were being fired by the complainant" though the pellet gun was not discharged, Loparco said in a release Tuesday.

He said the second round of gunshots was justified as the initial volley failed to incapacitate the man.

"Believing themselves under attack by the complainant, the officers, in my view, were reasonably entitled to continue shooting until they had tangible evidence that the complainant was no longer a threat."

Dec 16 2014

KAMLOOPS, B.C. - The British Columbia Mountie who was shot during an early-morning traffic stop almost two weeks ago is improving in hospital.

RCMP Cpl. Cheryl Bush says Cpl. Jean Rene Michaud has been moved out of the hospital's intensive care unit in Kamloops, B.C.

Bush says Michaud will continue his recovery in another hospital ward and they're hopeful he may be able to be released in time to spend Christmas with his family.

Michaud needed at least two surgeries after being shot Dec. 3 when he stopped a vehicle in a Kamloops suburb.

Police said another officer who had come as Michaud's backup returned fire and slightly wounded the suspect.

An intense 12-hour manhunt led to the arrest of 36-year-old Kenneth Knutson who faces four charges, including attempted murder, in connection to the shooting.

(CHNL, Canadian Press)

Dec 16 2014

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. - The province's police watchdog has charged an Ontario Provincial Police officer with dangerous driving in connection with a crash near Windsor, Ont., that seriously injured a 20-year-old man.



The Special Investigations Unit says the incident occurred on Oct. 24 when an OPP cruiser collided with a civilian vehicle at an intersection in St. Joachim.

The watchdog has now charged Const. Jamie Porto, with the force's Lakeshore detachment, with dangerous driving causing bodily harm.

An agency spokeswoman refused to say whether Porto was responding to a call at the time of the crash, saying the matter is now before the courts.

Porto is due in court Jan. 22.

The SIU is an arm's length agency that investigates reports involving police where there has been death, serious injury or allegations of sexual assault.

Dec 16 2014

RIVERTON, N.S. - The Serious Incident Response Team in Nova Scotia is investigating after a resident of a special care home died Tuesday as police attempted to arrest him.

The watchdog agency says in a news release that the RCMP responded to a call from the Valley View Villa in Riverton alleging an assault had occurred.

The release says an RCMP officer attempted to arrest a 49-year-old man under the provisions of the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act.

Ron MacDonald, director of the serious incident team, said in an interview that he couldn't comment if force was used during the arrest as that will be part of the investigation.

The agency says during the arrest the man showed signs of medical distress, paramedics were called and the man died at the scene.

The RCMP declined to identify the deceased man, saying they are still informing family members.

Dec 16 2014

MONTREAL - Fed up with quotas for parking tickets and other infractions, the Montreal Police Brotherhood has printed 50,000 pamphlets for officers to hand out asking the public to complain to the mayor.

"Are you against ticket quotas? Us too" reads the type on the pamphlets, which at first glance look like an official police ticket. It invites recipients to call, email or tweet Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre.

The police will be handing these tickets at almost every opportunity, but never for actual infractions like speeding, running red lights and failure to stop at a stop sign.

In a statement from the Brotherhood, president Yves Francoeur said Montreal has had ticket quotas for years that officers must meet and that the population is strongly behind the union's decision to stop the practice.

"Tickets are for public security, not to fill the coffers," said Francoeur.

"It's a union strategy," Coderre said of the new pressure tactic. "When we give a ticket, we know there is a public security element to that, we know there is an element with police presence ... the police have a job to do and the union knows that. And it's much more than just giving tickets."

He added that police might want to give a digital notice rather than using paper fake tickets "in order to protect our trees."

(Montreal Gazette)

Dec 16 2014

ORILLIA - A 48-year-old-grandmother who was acting as a "Good Samaritan" was karate-kicked, sucker-punched, beaten and left with "catastrophic injuries" by a police officer, a judge said Tuesday.

It has been two long years since Maria "Tonie" Farrell was charged with assaulting a police officer in an incident that has left her crippled from a shattered knee.

But in his ruling, Justice George Beatty exonerated - and validated - Farrell when he found that it was OPP Sgt. Russ Watson who attacked her while on duty April 2, 2013.

Outside of court, Farrell - still in pain - wept and embraced her lawyer.

"This is the best Christmas present ever," she said. "I've been going through hell ... but I knew the truth would prevail."

Her defence lawyer, Angela McLeod, wept with her. "The greatest injustice was righted today," McLeod said.

During the on-and-off trial that dragged out over a year, court heard Farrell, an employee at Tim Hortons, was still in her uniform after work when she heard a woman screaming.

She ran behind a Mac's convenience store in time to see a woman being punched in the face by a male who ran off. Farrell rushed to the woman's assistance and when Watson arrived alone on the scene she tried to point out the direction of the assailant.

But she said the officer was aggressive and told her to "shut the f--- up."

"Mrs. Farrell was acting as Good Samaritan who went to the assistance of a woman who was being assaulted," the judge said. "She had no criminal record and wanted to assist Sgt. Watson."

He described the officer as a "controlling," "large and powerfully built" man.

"Watson kicked her to the side, a karate-kick that snapped her leg," said the judge. Farrell screamed in agony as she tried to defend herself.

"Watson then jumped on her and punched her on the left side of her face. She turned face-down and Sgt. Watson kept kneeling her in the back," Beatty said.

With her leg dangling, crying out in pain, Farrell was then handcuffed and taken to the cruiser.

She had injuries to her neck and back, a crushed knee that required several operations, a knee replacement and lost a back tooth. She now lives with her elderly parents because she will never be able to work again and can't afford to pay rent.

During his testimony, Watson said he suspected Farrell had been drinking. He said she was disruptive and "took a poke" at him, then resisted arrest. But the judge didn't believe him.

"Sgt. Watson provided no explanation as to how Ms. Farrell's tibia was broken, or indeed, the reasons for the bruises on her legs and arms and the loss of a tooth," Beatty said. "His notes did not record the hammer strike to her left eye, which was basically a sucker punch ... he suffered no injury and her injuries were catastrophic."

The judge said even if Farrell's "excitement and zeal was distracting," her only intent was to help.

"Police officers are trained and experienced in handling people who may be intoxicated, drug addicted, mentally ill, armed or violent. They apply their psychological skills and use the minimum of force in maintaining the peace and protecting the public," Beatty said.

"That did not happen in this case."

The Special Investigation Unit investigated the case and found no reasonable grounds to charge Watson, although he refused to produce his notes.

"Our records show he came in for an interview but he would not provide his notes," SIU spokesman Jasbir Brar said. "That is within his legal rights."

The OPP did not respond to calls for comment Tuesday.

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 17, 2014

Dec 17 2014

An RCMP officer says not enough was done to care for some members in the wake of the shooting deaths of three of their colleagues in Moncton, New Brunswick.

The officer, who wanted to remain anonymous for fear of professional repercussions, was part of the mission to capture gunman Justin Bourque in June.

He says officers were offered a debriefing immediately after the incident.

But he says there was no personal mental health care in the days and weeks after the incident for officers called in from detachments outside Moncton.

Gilles Moreau, who heads up the force's mental health strategy, says they are trying to improve care for members.

Moreau says the force is educating members on mental health issues, resources available to help them and working to reduce the stigma around psychological disorders.

He says the care plan used in Moncton, which involved the deployment of psychologists and health services officers, is being promoted in a guidebook for RCMP divisions.

Dec 17 2014

AURORA, Ont. - York Regional Police say they have dismantled an organized crime group after an investigation that also involved RCMP and provincial police in the Greater Toronto Area.

Police say numerous warrants were executed across the GTA, leading to the arrests of members of the Ranieri organized crime group.

There were few other immediate details about the investigation, dubbed Project Forza.

But investigators say the group was considered a threat to public safety.

They say it has been "successfully dismantled."

The investigation was led by York Regional Police and managed through the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit, involving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Ontario Provincial Police.

"This is a highly successful example of how police agencies work together where matters of public safety go beyond the border of one city or region," said York Regional Police Chief Eric Jolliffe.

Dec 17 2014

NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C. - Mounties say they arrested a man who decided to take a nap after breaking into a North Vancouver apartment.

RCMP say the 24-year-old Surrey man broke into the home and helped himself to food and personal items.

Police say the man put some items in a backpack and fell asleep on the couch.

Cpl. Richard De Jong says the homeowner arrived to find a strange man snoozing away and wearing his T-shirt.

He says the man was "certainly surprised" to wake up and see police.

Dec 17 2014

MONTREAL - A Montreal police investigator found guilty of passing confidential police records onto sources has had his conviction overturned by the Quebec Court of Appeal.

Mario Lambert was convicted in May 2012 on three counts of fraudulently sharing police information.

The court reversed that verdict today, citing problems with the evidence put forward by the prosecution.

Such a decision technically orders a new trial, but that won't happen because the Crown says it doesn't have enough proof.

Lambert, a highly respected investigator, was suspended without pay after his indictment in 2009 and was let go by police at the end of his trial in 2012.

(CBC News)

Dec 17 2014

TORONTO - A jury has found a man accused in the 2012 shooting at Toronto's Eaton Centre mall guilty of second-degree murder.

Christopher Husbands had admitted to fatally shooting Nixon Nirmalendran and

Ahmed Hassan and wounding five others in June 2012, but had pleaded not guilty to all charges against him.

His defence lawyers had argued that Husbands should be found not criminally responsible by reason of a mental disorder.

They had said the post-traumatic stress disorder he developed after a vicious beating and stabbing months before the mall shooting triggered an intense emotional reaction when he saw two of his assailants in the Eaton Centre food court.

They had argued Husbands went into a "robotic" state as he fired off 14 shots and Husbands testified he saw only dark shadows and heard only "pins dropping" during the shooting.

The Crown, meanwhile, had argued that Husbands opened fire at the mall because he was determined to get revenge on the men who had attacked him months earlier.

Crown lawyers had argued that Husbands's PTSD was "far from disabling" and that he was in full control of his mental faculties during the shooting, as was demonstrated by video surveillance footage played at the trial.

The judge presiding over the case had instructed jurors to weigh all the evidence before them, including Husbands's testimony, the opinions of psychiatrists called by the defence and the Crown, and the video footage from the mall, which he called "the best witness" in the case.

Dec 17 2014

WINNIPEG - Mounties are investigating the construction of Winnipeg's new police headquarters.

Mayor Brian Bowman says he supports the RCMP's investigation and promises that any city employee identified in the investigation will be dealt with.

Bowman says the steps are necessary to restore public trust and he's directing the city's legal department to see what can be done as well.

RCMP say they are still reviewing an audit of the construction of Winnipeg's new fire paramedic stations.

Mounties say the Manitoba government forwarded three audits to it for review in mid-August.

It says investigators from the federal Serious and Organized Crime Unit have been conducting two separate reviews - one into the police headquarters, and the other into the fire paramedic stations.

"The RCMP have completed a review of the forensic audit regarding the construction of the Winnipeg Police Service Headquarters and this is now considered a full investigation," RCMP said in a news release.

Mounties also said a search warrant executed Wednesday at Caspian Construction is in relation to the investigation.

Police say they couldn't say anymore at this time.

(CJOB, The Canadian Press)

The provincial government has announced the name of the person who will head its new police investigations bureau.

Madeleine Giauque, a veteran lawyer who has been prosecuting members of the Hells Angels for more than a decade, was named to the position on Wednesday and will formally begin her duties on Jan. 12.

The office of independent investigations (Bureau des enquêtes indépendantes) will be in charge of conducting probes into incidents where police action results in the injury or death of a civilian. Currently, in cases where an officer is involved in these types of encounters, another police force takes over the file in order to maintain the appearance of impartiality. But many citizens' groups and victims rights organizations contend that this practice leads to anything but impartial judgements.

They have been calling for an independent investigative body for years, and in 2013, the provincial government passed new legislation to do just that.

Bill 12 "makes the carrying out of an independent investigation mandatory in every case where a person, other than an on-duty police officer, dies, sustains a serious injury or is injured by a firearm used by a police officer during a police intervention or while the person is in police custody."

Setting up the bureau has taken over a year, however, and even with Giauque's appointment it is unclear when it may actually begin taking cases. Government officials have said that the office is expected to be up and running by early 2016.

(Montreal Gazette)

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 18, 2014

Dec 18 2014

EDMONTON - Alberta's Law Enforcement Response Team says it has laid charges against four alleged members of the Mexican drug cartel La Familia.

Investigators say the cartel is attempting to gain control of drug distribution channels in several Alberta communities, including Edmonton, Red Deer, Fort McMurray, Drayton Valley and Lloydminster.

Jose Antonio Monterrey, who police allege is the president of La Familia, was arrested earlier this week while trying to board a flight from the Edmonton International Airport.

Cody Sterling Tremblett, 28, Peter Alan Griffon, 34, and Penny Sue Fleming, 34, were also arrested.

In total, 40 drug-related drugs and weapons charges have been laid.

Police say the charges follow searches at three Edmonton homes that uncovered a wide range of weapons, cash, drugs and body armour.

Officers says they seized around \$600,000 worth of drugs including five kilograms of cocaine and Oxycodone pills.

La Familia is allegedly connected to an El Salvador gang called Mara Salvatrucha, also known as MS-13.

(CHED)

Dec 18 2014

SASKATOON - Two Saskatoon police officers had to take a bone-chilling dip in the South Saskatchewan River in a brave bid to rescue a distraught woman from drowning.

Police say they got word late Wednesday evening about motorists and passersby trying to calm down a woman who was screaming and banging on a vehicle.

The 27-year-old Saskatoon resident made her way to the river in the downtown area where she eventually immersed herself and was swept away, despite attempts by officers to talk her out of the water.

The woman was screaming for help when one officer secured himself with a rope and tried to swim out to rescue her, but was forced back by the cold.

A second officer, also secured by a rope, managed to reach her and was pulled to shore by emergency personnel, along with the first officer who had re-entered the river to help.

The woman was taken to hospital, but neither of the officers needed treatment.

Dec 18 2014

MONTREAL - A woman who caused a fatal traffic accident after stopping her car to help ducks on a busy highway has been sentenced to 90 days in prison.

Emma Czornobaj will serve the time on weekends, probably beginning in January.

The sentence handed down in Montreal today also prohibits her from driving for 10 years and stipulates she must do 240 hours of community service.

After Czornobaj stopped her car in June 2010 to rescue ducklings on the side of the highway, a motorcycle carrying the victims -Andre Roy and his teenager daughter Jessie - slammed into her vehicle.

A jury convicted her of two counts of criminal negligence causing death and two counts of dangerous driving causing death.

The Crown was seeking nine months of detention and the 240 hours of community service, while the defence argued she should only get the community service.

Dec 18 2014

MONTREAL - The Montreal Police Department's plan to modernize its computer system touted a budget of \$1.65 million in 2001, but now it's forecast to reach \$28.4 million by the time it's completed in 2016, the city's latest capital works program shows.

The project to upgrade and integrate the police department's computer systems into a single system, known as M-IRIS, may be one of the slowest municipal projects ever to be implemented in Montreal, as well as one of its biggest cost overruns.

The former Montreal Urban Community, which was responsible for the police department before the 2002 municipal mergers, launched the police computer plan in 2001 with a budget of \$1.65 million "to complete the entire project" in three to five years.

What happened in the intervening years includes cancelled contracts and contract tenders, plus an additional \$10 million since 2012 alone because the police discovered the system that was developed over those years wasn't user-friendly.

The new three-year capital works program unveiled this fall by the administration

of Mayor Denis Coderre forecasts spending \$5.32 million from 2015 to 2016 to finish implementing M-IRIS. The document says \$21.02 million was already spent before 2015. The capital-works program lists another \$466,000 in 2015 to integrate older "optional" modules that are now obsolete with newer ones. On that front, \$1.6 million was already spent before 2015.

The total for M-IRIS in the capital-works program adds up to 2016 tallies \$28.4 million. The project is financed by the city and the island suburbs through the island council.

The police department says the project hit a snag when the computer system was tested by police officers in 2010.

"We weren't satisfied with the product," said Inspector Natalia Shuster, who has been in charge of the M-IRIS project for the Montreal Police since the beginning of 2014. Her two predecessors were each promoted to Chief Inspector.

The system was tested at two police stations and wasn't user-friendly, particularly on computers inside police vehicles, where officers are now supposed to file their incident reports directly into the M-IRIS system, she said.

The purpose of M-IRIS, which stands for Montréal — Inscription et recherche de l'information sur la sécurité, is to have a single system for police reports, analysis, warrants, mug shoots and finger printing. The old police computer systems didn't talk to each other.

"What we want is everyone to work in the system, from the minute you get the call to when the report or the accusations are (filed) in court," Shuster said.

Among the problems for the police who tested M-IRIS, she said: there were too many fields and duplicate fields to fill in when typing a report.

"In 2010, it's like we had to go back a little bit to the drawing board," Shuster said. "We don't want police officers to spend their time on the computer when they should be spending their time out on the road and serving the citizens."

M-IRIS had a budget of \$14 million as of 2010, and that's what was spent up to 2012, she said, citing figures she got from the city's information-technology department. The figures indicate that M-IRIS will cost \$24 million by the end of 2015, Shuster said.

The \$10-million difference is for "improvements to the system to make it more user friendly," she said.

The MUC's \$1.65-million budget for the project included a \$721,000 contract to Mobilair Integration to develop a software package to integrate the police computer systems over two years and manage the system for another five years after installation.

The Tremblay administration cancelled the contract in February 2004 after Mobilair Integration was placed under creditor protection and was having trouble meeting its project deadlines. The Montreal Police had also reassessed the proposed "architecture" of the project's second phase and concluded it no longer met its needs, a report to the city executive committee at the time said.

The city awarded a new \$10.97-million contract to Niche Technology Inc. of Winnipeg in 2007 to implement a software package over

three years and provide five years of maintenance. The project was evaluated at \$11 million, the Tremblay administration said in a news release announcing it as a new project.

A 2010 investigation by the Montreal Gazette found the project to that point had no dedicated budget, no timeline and no apparent deadline.

City auditor general Jacques Bergeron recently examined M-IRIS and said this year his report on it “brings to light significant and worrisome weaknesses.” But he issued his report on the project only to the Montreal police. The city refused an access-to-information request by the Montreal Gazette for a copy.

Shuster said Bergeron made 30 recommendations and that the Montreal Police have provided him a plan to implement them. A committee has been set up to follow up regularly, she added.

The cost overrun on M-IRIS, calculated from 2001, is 1,600 per cent.

Montreal’s 1976 Olympics suffered a cost overrun of 800 per cent or 1,200 per cent, depending on which estimates are used. The games cost \$1.47 billion.

M-IRIS “hasn’t gone well since it was put in place,” Montreal Police Brotherhood president Yves Francoeur said. Officers used to file incident reports by hand at the end of a call. The new system is long and requires officers to search for data that used to be added to the report by a clerk at the police station, he said.

“The perverse effect is that officers used to spend 30 minutes on a call from start to finish,” Francoeur said, “and now it’s 45 minutes.”

(Montreal Gazette)

Dec 18 2014

METRO VANCOUVER - A Delta police officer charged with second degree murder for his role in a fatal shooting in New Westminster two years ago is set to appear in court today.

Delta Police Const. Jordan MacWilliams was charged in October in the death of 48-year-old Mehrdad Bayrami following a five-hour police standoff outside Starlight Casino in November of 2012.

He made his first court appearance in October and was released on bail. He is scheduled to appear in court in New Westminster this afternoon.

MacWilliams was called out to the casino on Nov. 8, 2012 to deal with a man outside armed with a handgun. After a five-hour standoff, Bayrami was shot on a pathway near the casino. He died later in hospital.

The Independent Investigation Office reviewed the case and submitted a report to Crown counsel. The Crown requested additional information from investigators, which was provided earlier this year and led to the murder charge being approved, according to Crown spokesman Neil MacKenzie.

A murder charge for an on-duty emergency response team officer is rare in B.C.

MacWilliams was placed on administrative duty after the shooting. He is now on paid leave, according to Delta Police.

(Vancouver Sun)



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