

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

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Executive Digest

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OTTAWA - The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear a case that involves the federal government's tougher sentencing laws.

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'Ethical' uniforms could be on the way



Feb 01, 2015

OTTAWA - Mounties, prison guards and park wardens could soon be sporting new duds made in an ethical way.

Public Works — the department in charge of buying uniforms and work wear for employees of the federal government — is giving serious thought to purchasing some of its clothing from suppliers who follow strict labour laws and have good working conditions, a new document shows.

The department, which each year buys about \$80 million worth of apparel, set up a special group to look into the possibility of buying more of its clothes from ethical clothing manufacturers.

"The task force was initiated as part of the strategy to address public concerns on the government of Canada's ethical sourcing of apparel and the disclosure of country of origin information," says a recent memo to a senior Public Works official.

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The Canadian Press obtained the memo under the Access to Information Act.

Governments and companies around the world faced heightened scrutiny after a deadly factory collapse in Bangladesh in April 2013. Since then, some Canadian companies and levels of government have done more to make sure that the clothing they buy doesn't come from sweatshops or other dodgy suppliers.

Last October, Public Works sought input from companies. A notice posted on a government contracts website says Ottawa is "very concerned about ethically responsible practices in the manufacturing of apparel."

But as recently as last spring, more than a dozen departments and agencies still had no clue where their clothing came from, according to the government's answers to written questions posed by NDP MP Matthew Kellway.

Others knew which countries made their clothes, but not the names of the manufacturers.

Since last April, Public Works has included the country of origin on all of its clothing contracts, which are posted on a government website.

The department also struck a task force to look at how other governments and companies make sure their apparel comes from ethical suppliers. Part of their job was to figure out what constitutes an "ethical" supplier.

Public Works says the task force has come up with options to buy clothing from ethical suppliers, and the department will begin consultations with companies early this year.

"Following the research work recently conducted by the task force on ethical sourcing, options will be recommended to enhance PWGSC's procurement practices with regard to ethical sourcing of apparel," department spokeswoman Annie Joannette wrote in an email.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 28, 2015

Jan 28 2015

Crime in Canada has dropped to its lowest point since 1969, Statistics Canada reports.

As part of its new Megatrends series, StatsCan crunched the numbers for its crime reports since 1962 and found a distinct pattern: From 1962 to 1991, the crime rate increased steadily. After that, it started to decline.

And in 2013, police-reported crime fell to a level not seen in a half-century.

Why? Several factors are strong candidates to explain the trend, StatsCan says: aging population, changing police practices and strategies, the rise of technology, the shift in unemployment, changing attitudes toward illegal and risky behaviour, a change in alcohol consumption.

All types of crime are down, StatsCan says. Property crime is still the most common in Canada, but in 2013 it plunged to a level nearly equal to other crimes.

Homicide rates in Canada peaked in 1975 and have been on a jagged-line decline since, to the point where it's at its lowest level since 1966. The attempted-murder rate is down to its lowest point since 1971.

The Megatrends analysis also charted what social factors affect which crimes.

Changes in the inflation rate most affect crime "that is financially motivated (robbery, break and enter, motor vehicle theft)," StatsCan says, quoting the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

The homicide rate correlates with changes in alcohol consumption and unemployment.

Demographics — changes in the population's age and gender — influence the rate of break-and-enter crimes.

Homicide in Canada in 2013 represented less than 1 per cent of all violent crime, StatsCan says: 505 killings, 38 fewer than in 2012. (Toronto Star)

Jan 28 2015

SASKATOON - The numbers are already solid. But Saskatoon Police say they could be better.

One in 10 police officers in the city is aboriginal. Chief Clive Weighill is proud of how the force reflects that element of the community.

Keeping that proportion growing is a priority he identified in his year-end interview with Saskatoon Morning.

"Certainly continuing hiring more First Nations — Métis on our service. We're up to about 12 per cent now, that's double in the last decade," he said.

One person who can speak first-hand about the possibilities of policing as a career is Ernie Louttit. He was the third First Nation person to be hired by the police service and just retired to pursue a career as an author.

"I was a policeman and I will always be a native man. The values of each man were

not incompatible at the end of the day," he told CBC.

The recruitment workshop runs from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. CST on Thursday. It's happening in the community room at the police station. More than 60 people are already registered.

(CBC News)

Jan 28 2015

A former vice-chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations is guilty of dangerous driving after aiming his Jeep and accelerating toward a police officer who had just testified against him at a traffic court trial.

The incident happened on Oct. 7, 2013, after Eugene Wesley Arcand was convicted of running a red light in March 2012. Arcand claimed at his traffic court trial that he didn't go through the red light and that the officer involved, Cst. Jay Keating, racially profiled him.

Keating was at the traffic court trial. He testified that after Arcand was convicted, Arcand stopped near him in the courtroom, "glared at him, huffed and then walked out," Judge Byron Wright summarized in his written decision on the dangerous driving trial in criminal court.

Keating testified that when he left the courthouse, he saw Arcand get into a Jeep Grand Cherokee parked nearby. When Keating reached the corner of 19th Street and Second Avenue, the pedestrian walk light was on and he started crossing Second Avenue.

He said he heard "the screeching of tires and the noise of an engine accelerating," Wright wrote. Keating said he looked over his shoulder and saw the Jeep turning right onto Second Avenue.

"The Jeep was approaching at such a speed that Cst. Keating had to jump out of the way to avoid being struck," Wright wrote. "He took a couple of quick steps and arced his body to avoid being hit by the vehicle."

Keating also said he could hear Arcand yelling something at him as he passed by, but couldn't make it out.

Arcand served as FSIN vice-chief in charge of the justice portfolio from 1991 to 1996. He also represented Saskatchewan on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and chaired the 2012 Saskatchewan First Nation Winter Games. He's been inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and was named Prince Albert Citizen of the Year in 1994.

Arcand hasn't yet been sentenced on the dangerous driving conviction. He is due back in court Feb. 12.

(Star Phoenix)

Jan 28 2015

HAMILTON - Hamilton's police chief says the service needs a new investigative services building to guarantee that evidence doesn't get contaminated, among other factors.

Chief Glenn De Caire told councillors on Wednesday that there have been no court

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cases lost over Hamilton Police Service not having enough forensics space. He also doesn't know of any cases where forensic evidence has been contaminated.

But in a presentation asking city council for a \$5-million contribution to the new building, police service staff called it a risk.

"There is a separation of drying areas so evidence is not contaminated," De Caire said during a city hall budget session. "There is a risk that presents itself if our forensics people do not handle these items in a particular way to protect against accusations of contamination."

The matter, he said, "could easily be raised in court."

Police say they need 53,500 square feet of new space, and hope to get it in a new \$15-million investigative services building downtown. The building will include three forensics labs – one for evidence from victims, one for the accused and one for the crime scene.

Police presented a budget that was a 2.95-per cent increase over 2014, the lowest increase in 16 years. The budget increased \$4.3 million to \$158.5 million.

(CBC News)

Jan 28 2015

EDMONTON - What was once a simple phone call to a telephone or Internet service provider has now turned into a frustrating five- to 10-hour process for Edmonton police trying to obtain basic information that could push an investigation forward.

A decision made by the Supreme Court last June dramatically changes the law when it comes to the sharing of private information between third parties and law enforcement, and it's causing Edmonton police concern.

Before the decision, police could make a law enforcement request to a telephone or Internet service provider for information about a subscriber, such as their name and address. In order to get that same information now, police must get a production order or search warrant, which can take an entire shift to obtain, if it happens at all.

Such basic initial information helps police build grounds. If there isn't enough information, Staff Sgt. Brian Andersen of the specialized support services section said the case either falls apart or becomes stagnant.

"It puts a lot more of an onus on the police to even start the initial stages of an investigation," said Andersen.

"With a lot of our investigations, that information itself allows us to take the next step, either by locating an individual or maybe having a name associated to a series of events in a particular crime. We don't know exactly what the involvement may be, but it helps us take the next step."

In 2007, Saskatoon resident Matthew Spencer was convicted of possession of child pornography after 441 still images and 112 videos of child abuse were discovered on his computer's shared folder. Investigators traced the file sharer to an IP address and under the Personal Information Protection and

Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), asked Shaw Communications for help in identifying the subscriber.

Spencer later argued police violated his constitutional rights when they tracked him down by asking his Internet provider for his name and address without a warrant. The Supreme Court dismissed his appeal, but ruled police must obtain a warrant to uncover such information.

Andersen understands the reasoning for the decision in the Spencer case, but doesn't understand why telecommunication providers have interpreted the decision as they no longer can respond to law enforcement requests without a warrant or production order, which is difficult to obtain for investigations in their infancy and requires reasonable grounds.

Information previously obtained without a warrant was used to eventually add to the grounds to obtain a future search warrant or other judicial authorization.

Andersen said police seeking information for an IP address isn't nearly as common as requests made to phone companies for basic information such as a name or address. Now telecom providers won't even tell police what company services the phone number of interest.

"It's just another huge roadblock. As far as the public's concerned, we may not be able to help them in certain cases or proceed with their investigation," said Andersen, who was surprised by the new law.

City police are already making only a small number of requests by way of a production order, losing valuable opportunities to proceed with an investigation.

"It really doesn't delve into the biographical core of an individual's privacy."

(Edmonton Sun)



CORNWALL - Police in an Ontario town chipped in this week to help an elderly man recover his wedding ring, which he'd been forced to sell in order to buy groceries for him and his wife.

Officers were called to a home in Cornwall, Ont. for what they thought was a domestic dispute. Instead, they discovered that the woman at the home was suffering from dementia, and her husband had pawned his wedding band.

Heartbroken by the scene, the officers who had taken the call came up with a plan to help the man get his ring back.

"We put money together, and found out where he did sell his wedding band, and we bought it back," said Sgt. George Knezevic. Police also collected food for the couple.

The elderly man had sold his wedding band, which he'd worn for more than 50 years, in downtown Cornwall. He had been trying to raise enough money to pay for food.

Later that week, police delivered a load of groceries – and the ring.

"They have an inscription on the wedding band that says 'together forever,' so when we got the wedding band back, I don't think there was a dry eye in the station at all," said Knezevic.

The couple has since been in touch with the Alzheimer Society of Canada, which provides support to people living with the disease.

(CTV News)

Jan 29 2015

ST. THOMAS - A constable with the St. Thomas Police Service has been charged with fraud under \$5,000 following an investigation.

Cst. Aaron Fraser, 38, of St. Thomas was charged Thursday in relation to alleged fraudulent health claims.

Fraser, who has been suspended from active duty since Oct. 2014, allegedly made the fraudulent claims for health insurance benefits from early 2013 to early 2014.

The investigation was conducted by the London police's Criminal Investigations Branch at the request of St. Thomas police Chief Darryl Pinnell.

Fraser is scheduled to appear in a Woodstock court on Feb. 17.

In a statement, Pinnell says disciplinary charges under the Police Services Act are pending.

Fraser has been an officer with the St. Thomas Police Service since 2008.

(CTV London)

Jan 29 2015

TORONTO - A YouTube video, which appears to show a clash between a civilian and an officer, may have been a case of "police baiting," according to the president of the Toronto Police Association (TPA).

The 45-second video, which was published on Monday, shows the man approaching a police cruiser and demanding his vehicle papers.

The officer sitting in the driver's seat, A. Keown, tells the man not to lean on his car and as the man continues to question Keown, they appear to get into a struggle.

It appears Keown says, "Do not reach inside a f-ing police vehicle," as the man calls loudly and repeatedly for help.

"There's no context to this video," said TPA president Mike McCormack. "It's a small snippet of a larger interaction."

"There may be a potential here of officer baiting ... I would say to the public, 'Let us do our jobs. Do not be putting your hands in a police vehicle or interfering with police while they are doing their jobs.'"

McCormack said police baiting is more prevalent than it's ever been and the man's actions could have compromised officer safety.

The man who shot the video, Michael Duru, 19, said he was approached by police around 2 a.m. on Monday, while he was moving his cousin's rental car from the underground parking garage to the visitors' lot of his townhouse near Jane and Finch.

Police in 31 Division said there have seen

a series of crimes being committed by people who rent vehicles and then commit crimes in those vehicles. Duru said that was never mentioned to him during his interaction with officers.

After he reached into the cruiser to get a shot of Keown's name tag, the officer got out of the car and a scuffle ensued. Duru claimed he was grabbed and punched in the face.

Police said Duru has been charged with obstruct police and assault to resist arrest. (City News)

Jan 29 2015

MONTREAL - "It's time for us to go inside the restaurants, inside the shopping malls to say hello to everybody," said Montreal Police Commander Marc Cournoyer.

Coffee With A Cop is an initiative that first started in the United States back in 2011. It was brought over to Quebec just last year.

"We want to be near the population," explained Emilie Toubeix, a police officer who helped get the project off the ground.

"We want to be accessible to them too."

The idea is simple; residents can come sit and have coffee with Montreal police officers and discuss the issues that are important to them.

It's a one-year pilot project.

The SPVM says it's been pretty successful so far.

People who were just wandering through the McDonald's in Cote-Saint-Luc on their daily coffee run told Global News they were surprised to see all the police officers.

"It's nice to be able to talk to them firsthand," said Shawn Coulis.

Citizens admit it's great to see their men and women in uniform pounding the pavement in their neighbourhood.

"Having them in the community and being very visual is something that we all need," said Alexandria Coulis.

"The younger kids and the younger generation, they have to feel comfortable with it."

"It's for people to feel more comfortable with the cops around, not being afraid to approach them if they have a question or if they need a hand or help," added Elana Dickerman.

Coffee With A Cop is partnering with restaurants across the city to help spread their message.

"It makes our staff more secure and obviously with the community and stuff it's a great initiative so we were happy to obey and have an event like this take place in our restaurant," said Peter Stamatopoulos, the McDonald's Director of Operations.

This is far from the end.

Police departments across the province are gearing up for their own Coffee With A Cop event.

"Get out of the car, see citizens, say hello, say bonjour to the citizens to create a good relation," said Cournoyer.

(Global News)

Jan 29 2015

DELTA - Chief Jim Cessford shared a few insights into his 20 years at the helm of Delta's police department, along with some tidbits from his early days in Edmonton, at Tuesday's Ladner Rotary Club luncheon.



Cessford, who retires on Monday, Feb. 2 after 47 years in uniform, told the crowd of about 50 that police officers are always running into humbling experiences.

"You can go from hero to zero in just a couple minutes," he said.

Cessford shared a story from his days as a young police officer in the Alberta capital. He said he had just arrested a suspected car thief and put him in the back of his squad car, unhandcuffed. At that time, he said, police cars did not have a partition separating the front and back seats.

As he was speaking to the suspect, Cessford said he heard a call over the radio about a break and enter in progress at his location. As the call was coming in, he saw two men run out the back door of a business.

"They're hightailing it down the back lane," he said. "So I didn't even think, I just went."

As he was running full speed down the alley, he heard a noise behind him. Cessford said he turned to see the car thief driving his police car down the back lane.

"I just remember thinking, 'I hope he stops.'"

After more than 25 years with the Edmonton Police Department, which saw him rise through the ranks to become superintendent, Cessford left Edmonton for Delta in 1995 with his wife and three young children, who were 5, 7 and 9 at the time.

He said it was an emotional day when the family left Edmonton.

It was Dec. 27, 1994 and it was -27 degrees and snowing hard when the family left the city.

"It was just horrible and the kids and my wife cried all the way from Edmonton to Hope," he said. "And as we passed through Hope and got into the valley the sun was shining, the sky was blue and we've never looked back since."

The department has grown and now has more than 170 officers and a budget of \$32 million, almost three times what it was in 1995.

After more than four decades in policing, Cessford said he is looking forward to the next phase of his life. He's planning on completing his master's degree in leadership and communication, getting more active and wants to keep his hand in public safety.

He also said he will be involved with the committee that will choose his successor.

(Delta Optimist)

FRIDAY
JANUARY 30, 2015

Jan 30 2015

SPRINGHILL - The countdown toward Springhill's dissolution is on, but members of the police service are still in the dark about what happens when the clock strikes zero.

"It's before us, it's on the boards and we're out of here March 31," said Dean Ruddick, acting chief of the town police force.

Town council voted in March 2014 to dissolve the town and apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for absorption into the Cumberland County municipality. After debates and hearings, the board ruled earlier this month that the town of 3,600 should be dissolved and become part of the Cumberland municipality as of April 1.

Town council voted later in March 2014 to disband the police service, which had existed in some form since 1889. Contractually, the town had to give the police department 12 months notice before terminating services.

The RCMP will take over policing in Springhill as of April 1, with eight members and an administrative assistant occupying the same space in the town hall building that the 23 full- and part-time town police staff work out of.

The police department consists of eight full-time and four part-time officers, an administrative clerk, four full- and part-time dispatchers, three full- and part-time criminal record checks personnel and three part-time lockup attendants.

"We have nobody employed (past April 1) at the moment," Ruddick said.

Eight town police officers originally applied to go through the RCMP's lateral member applicant process, possibly leading to joining the force and working out of the Springhill office. That number of applicants has since dwindled to four, Ruddick said.

The province struck an agreement late last year with the town and the county to provide \$5.7 million over five years to help bring the town into the county fold. The money is to support infrastructure, operating and capital investments for roads, and transitional costs.

But it doesn't appear any of that money will be going to police personnel as severance.

"The province has refused to cover any severances of members who are covered by a collective agreement," said Reg Ridgley, the town's interim chief administrator.

"Where you have a collective agreement and the collective agreement does not have severance in it, then upon dissolution or transfer, nothing is triggered. It's a bargaining thing."

Ruddick said he could apply for his pension with the Atlantic Police Association, but younger members would be penalized to the tune of a pension cut of about four per cent for each year they are under the age of 60.

(Herald News)

Jan 30 2015

GRANDORA, Sask. – RCMP have called for an independent investigation after a sudden death in Saskatchewan. The fatality happened near Grandora on Wednesday.

Warman and Delisle Mounties were executing a search warrant at a rural property as part of an ongoing investigation and noticed smoke coming from the residence.

When they entered the residence, a firearm was shot by the lone man inside.

Officials say the discharged firearm was not an RCMP firearm.

Mounties had to leave the residence due to excessive smoke. A 56-year-old man was later found dead.

Officials say the initial investigation changed once the firearm was shot and the matter was immediately reported to RCMP senior management.

RCMP have requested Saskatoon police conduct an independent review into the circumstances surrounding the search warrant and the death of the man.

The results of the investigation will be reported to the Ministry of Justice and the attorney general. The RCMP have also asked the Ministry of Justice to appoint an independent observer.

RCMP are not releasing any other details. (Global News)

Jan 30 2015

HALIFAX - The lawyer for a man accused of possessing dangerous chemicals that resulted in evacuations in Halifax and Ottawa believes he possessed them for legitimate reasons and they weren't intended for criminal purposes.

Defence lawyer Mike Taylor says he will seek bail for Christopher Burton Phillips, who faces charges of uttering threats and possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose, when his case returns to court next week.

Taylor says he recognizes police may have thought they were protecting public safety when they evacuated two Halifax communities and a Ottawa hotel where Phillips was arrested.

But Taylor says the response may prove to have been an overreaction.

During his brief court appearance, Phillips, a former US citizen, sat quietly with his head bowed as the case was adjourned until next Thursday.

Police have alleged in a sworn information that Phillips threatened a police officer and possessed osmium tetroxide, a toxic chemical, for the purpose of committing an offence.

Jan 30 2015

SURREY, B.C. - The Independent Investigations Office of BC is investigating a fatal police shooting on Thursday evening in Castlegar, B.C.

The RCMP says officers were responding to a driving complaint on Highway 3 in the city when a man was shot by officers during

an attempted traffic stop.

The man was rushed to hospital in the West Kootenay community, but he did not survive his injuries.

The IIO says a team of five investigators including a forensic specialist will travel to Castlegar on Friday morning.

The man's name and age have not yet been released.

Jan 30 2015

OTTAWA - A divided Supreme Court of Canada has raised the bar for Ottawa and the provinces in their dealings with public sector employees by affirming the right to strike as constitutionally protected.

By a 5-2 margin, it struck down a controversial Saskatchewan law that prevents public sector employees from striking, saying it was unconstitutional.

The high court granted an appeal Friday by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour of the province's essential services law that restricts who can strike.

The Supreme Court also gave Saskatchewan one year to enact new legislation, and made clear that any new law had to be fair to workers. The high court affirmed that same principle in a ruling two weeks ago that cleared the way for RCMP members to form unions or associations.

In both cases, the Supreme Court affirmed the principle that any labour relations scheme that gives management a final authoritative say over the conditions of its workers simply doesn't cut muster.

After winning power in 2007, the Saskatchewan Party introduced the new law, which says employers and unions must agree on which workers are deemed essential and cannot legally strike.

If the two sides can't agree, the government gets to decide who is an essential worker.

Writing for the majority, Justice Rosalie Abella said that unilateral power violated section 2(d) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects freedom of association

Jan 30 2015

FORT SASKATCHEWAN, Alta. - An RCMP officer from a detachment just outside Edmonton has been charged with assault.

Mounties say Cst. Brendon Plamondon of Fort Saskatchewan was on duty at the time of the alleged incident last April.

Plamondon is to make his first court appearance on Feb. 19.

He has been suspended with pay.

Jan 30 2015

OTTAWA - Newly tabled anti-terrorism legislation would give Canada's spy agency more power to thwart a suspected extremist's travel plans, disrupt bank transactions and covertly interfere with radical websites.

The plan to boost the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's ability to counter

terrorist threats flows from a review of fatal attacks on two Canadian soldiers last October - incidents the government believes were fuelled by Islamic extremism.

As expected, the bill would also make it easier for the RCMP to obtain a peace bond to restrict the movements of a suspect and it extends the period for preventative arrest and detention.

In addition, the legislation would expand the no-fly regime to cover those travelling by air to take part in terrorist activities, whereas currently there must be an immediate risk to the plane.

The bill proposes giving the RCMP power to seek a judge's order to remove terrorist propaganda from the Internet.

It would also create a new criminal offence of encouraging someone to carry out a terrorism attack.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper told a gathering in Richmond Hill, Ont., that his Conservative government is prepared to both condemn and confront terrorism.

"Jihadist terrorism is not a future possibility, it is a present reality," Harper said.

"It seeks to harm us here in Canada, in our cities and in our neighbourhoods through horrific acts."

Current anti-terrorism law allows police to arrest someone without a warrant and hold them for up to three days before a hearing. Under the bill, maximum period would be extended to seven days.

Other proposed measures would:

- Allow for more information-sharing when the material;
- Such as passport or immigration information;
- Is relevant to an agency's national security mandate;
- Give the government more power to object to disclosure of classified information in immigration proceedings.

Jan 30 2015

SYDNEY, N.S. - The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal has upheld a lower court decision quashing charges against eight individuals because the informations sworn to by a constable with the Cape Breton Regional Police Service weren't valid.

In writing the majority decision of the three-member court panel, Judge Duncan Beveridge says the police constable had neither personal knowledge nor reasonable grounds to believe that any of the appellants had committed any offence.

Beveridge says once this was demonstrated, the informations were no longer valid.

Sydney Mines defence lawyer Bill Burchell first recognized the discrepancy in the informations in June 2012 and challenged their validity before provincial court Judge Jean Whalen.

The Sydney office of the Public Prosecution Service appealed Whalen's decision to the Supreme Court after which Justice Frank Edwards overturned Whalen's decision.

Burchell then applied for leave to appeal

to the Court of Appeal which reinstated Whalen's decision.

Cape Breton Regional police have since changed the practice to ensure that the officer now swearing court informations is able to verify that it is accurate and true.

The nine informations in question cover charges ranging from mischief to assault on impaired driving, with offences occurring between 2009 and 2012.

(Cape Breton Post)

Jan 30 2015

VANCOUVER - West Vancouver Police say an officer has been cleared of wrongdoing in a videotaped confrontation with longboarders that went viral last year.

The police service issued a statement Friday saying an investigation overseen by the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner has concluded that the constable's conduct was appropriate.

Police say the investigation found the officer's approach did not deviate from the objective standard of what a reasonable officer with similar training, skills and experience would have done.

A video was posted online last April that showed a group of longboarders heading down a steep hill before turning a corner, where they were met by a West Vancouver Police undercover cruiser with its lights flashing.

In the video, all of the longboarders fall to the ground in an apparent attempt to avoid the vehicle, prompting an argument between the officer and the longboarders.

West Vancouver Police say they received a complaint about the officer's actions and a full investigation under the independent oversight of the office was conducted and wrapped in December.

Jan 31 2015

SURREY, B.C. - New statistics show that violent crime rose overall in Surrey, B.C., last year - but the number of murders went down by more than 30 per cent.

Surrey RCMP released its fourth-quarter crime statistics this week, revealing that violent crime rose by 7 per cent in 2014 compared to the previous year.

Violent crimes include murders, sexual assaults and robberies, and there were 52 per cent more of such crimes in last year's fourth quarter compared to the same quarter in 2013.

But the Vancouver-area city - where reducing crime became a major focus of last fall's municipal election - saw 17 homicides in 2014, compared to 25 in 2013.

Mounties say they continue to target dangerous locations to help reduce homicides, and the majority of murders were domestic-related or involving those in high-risk lifestyles.

Property crime rose 22 per cent in Surrey last year, an increase that RCMP say is occurring across the Lower Mainland and is largely driven by motor vehicle crimes.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 01, 2015

Feb 01 2015

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. - A man whose driver's licence expired 37 years ago was among those nabbed by police at a traffic stop over the weekend.

A section of Hwy. 20 in Pelham, Ont., known for speeding drivers was the site of a police enforcement setup Saturday.

One driver was charged with driving under suspension. Police said his licence had expired 37 years ago and he had been driving under suspension for the past two decades.

(QMI Agency)

MONDAY FEBRUARY 02, 2015

Feb 02 2015

Police forces across Nova Scotia are getting new training in how to investigate internet-related crimes.

RCMP Cpl. Chris Hochold designed, and is teaching, the course. He's a senior forensic analyst with the RCMP's H Division Tech Crime Unit.

"When someone comes in to the front counter, we want police personnel to be able to handle any investigation that comes their way," Hochold said.

Part of the course is explaining to police what resources are available to them.

"Let them know what it is that the RCMP tech crime unit does," Hochold said.

"We also include members of the ICE [Internet Child Exploitation] unit, as well as our LAST or legal application support team to provide an overview of the authorizations that are required to obtain information to properly investigate a crime that involved the internet."

Hochold designed this course last month and has only been teaching it for the past couple of weeks.

(CBC News)

Feb 02 2015

VANCOUVER - The number of over-the-counter marijuana dispensaries in Vancouver has soared in the past year to an estimated 61 shops. But as for what's in store for 2015, the city's police, politicians and pot impresarios all say the future looks pretty hazy.

That tally means Vancouver has more dispensaries than the rest of Canada combined, according to the Canadian Association of Medical Cannabis Dispensaries. CAMCD, an Ontario-based industry organization, also estimates that more than 80 per cent of the country's dispensaries are in B.C.

The pot shops sprouting up and spreading like weeds throughout the city's neighbourhoods operate without business licences, largely unregulated in how they advertise,

and where they choose to open.

But Vancouver politicians and those in the weed dispensary business are calling on the federal government to regulate the industry.

"I'm frustrated," said Vancouver councillor Kerry Jang, "because there is a place for medical marijuana dispensaries in the City of Vancouver. But the growth that we've seen is likely, in my opinion, starting to get out of control."

To explain the city's position, Jang points to the new federal laws governing medical cannabis that came into effect April 1, 2014. Among other restrictions, the laws require medical marijuana to be obtained by mail from licensed producers.

The current situation, Jang said, places the City of Vancouver in a "conundrum."

On one hand, the city cannot create a business licence category for these shops because it would contravene federal law, he said. However, if the city shut down those retailers, Jang said, it would block access to medicine.

Last term, Vancouver council unanimously passed a motion, introduced by Jang, calling for the federal government to create a regulatory and tax structure for marijuana, similar to those in place for alcohol, tobacco, or prescription medicines.

"The federal government has shown no interest in doing that, to date," Jang said, pointing to Health Canada.

"They've created this regulatory nightmare."

A Health Canada spokesman wrote in an email: "Health Canada does not license organizations such as compassion clubs or dispensaries to possess, produce or distribute marijuana for medical purposes. These organizations were, and remain, illegal."

"This is an enforcement issue and falls under the jurisdiction of law enforcement agencies."

But Vancouver police have indicated no intention of cracking down on these shops in the near future. Instead, they've said they will prioritize and take action if and when an individual situation calls for it.

For now though, most dispensaries are not a high priority for police, who prefer to focus resources on violent criminals, said VPD spokesman Cst. Brian Montague.

(The Province)

Feb 02 2015

RED DEER, Alta. - RCMP in central Alberta are looking for a suspect who took a taxi to a home invasion and asked the driver to wait for him.

Red Deer Mounties say a man took a cab on Saturday night to a mobile home and knocked on the door.

When a resident opened the door, the man punched him several times before stealing cash, a cellphone and some cigarettes.

He then returned to the taxi which dropped him off downtown.

A police search of the area did not locate the suspect.

No word on whether the meter was running the whole time.

Feb 02 2015

REGINA - A pilot project launched in Regina last month is helping sexual assault victims file reports without giving their names.

The program is part of services provided by the Regina Sexual Assault Centre.

Spokeswoman Pat Robinson says there are some restrictions on who can file an anonymous report.

A person has to be at least 18 and not be in a past or current relationship with the alleged attacker.

Nor can the report be anonymous if the suspect is a police officer.

Robinson says counsellors are provided to help a suspect file a complaint.

"They can come to one of the counsellors at the sexual assault centre (and) write a report. We would give it a number, with no name, and then file it with the Regina-region RCMP or Regina Police Service," she said.

The service doesn't preclude anyone from coming forward at a later date.

"If they've filed an anonymous report ... two months or three years later they can come forward and actually do a formal report as well."

Robinson says the project began on Jan. 1 and data is still being collected to see if it should be continued.

(CKRM)

Feb 02 2015

VANCOUVER - The Crown says two people on trial for terrorism charges built three pressure-cooker bombs and planted them on the grounds of the B.C. legislature on Canada Day.

John Nuttall and Amanda Korody were arrested in July 2013 and charged with four counts, including conspiring to commit murder and conspiring to place explosives on behalf of a terrorist group.

Crown counsel Peter Eccles has told a jury that Nuttall and Korody were the only members of a home-grown terrorist cell, whose goal was linked to the radical form of Islam they followed.

He says the pair planted bombs in two planters on the legislature lawn, with timers set to explode 15 minutes apart.

The bombs didn't have the ability to explode, but Eccles says if they did, they would have created a 150-metre blast capable of killing bystanders.

Nuttall and Korody have both pleaded not guilty, and their trial is expected to last about 18 months.

Feb 02 2015

KAMLOOPS, B.C. - An RCMP officer shot at a traffic stop in Kamloops, B.C., has been transferred back to a hospital in his hometown after treatment at a Vancouver facility.

Forty-one-year-old Cpl. Jean-Rene Michaud was gunned down at a traffic stop in early December, sparking a manhunt for the shooter.

Michaud's wife, Colleen, issued a statement last week saying her husband

has shown courage and strength through many surgeries, countless complications with setbacks, and faces a long road to recovery.

But she said the family was finally feeling confident that Michaud will overcome his substantial injuries.

Kenneth Knutson is behind bars awaiting trial on various charges, including attempted murder.

Mounties have said they are conducting an internal review parallel to the criminal investigation into the shooting. (CFJC)

Feb 02 2015

WINDSOR, Ont. - Across the street from a police station probably isn't the best place to conduct a little vandalism.

An officer at police headquarters in Windsor, Ont., spotted a man acting suspiciously on Saturday afternoon.

Police say the young man pulled a large marker out of his pocket, crouched down, and began writing on a mailbox directly across the street.

The officer then walked across the street and arrested the man without incident.

Police say an 18-year-old Windsor man is charged with mischief.

Feb 02 2015

VICTORIA - The administrator of a Vancouver Island municipality says controversial computer spyware that drew the ire of the mayor and attention of B.C.'s privacy watchdog has been disabled.

District of Saanich Mayor Richard Atwell first alleged computer spying at municipal hall last month, while also accusing police of harassment and apologizing to his wife for an extramarital affair.

Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham subsequently announced an investigation to determine if the Spector 360 software complies with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Saanich's interim chief administrative officer Andy Laidlaw says the employee-monitoring software has been disengaged from all workplace computers.

He says the district may revisit the issue after Denham's investigation has provided guidance.

Denham says her investigation will likely be finished by the end of March, and the results will be made public. (CFAX)



Feb 03 2015

BLACK LAKE, Sask. - A 21-year-old man who taunted police on Facebook after he escaped custody in northern Saskatchewan is back in jail.

RCMP in Stony Rapids say Solomon Toutsaint was arrested on Sunday at a

residence in Black Lake with full co-operation from the homeowner.

He is back behind bars in Stony Rapids.

Police say Toutsaint ran away after a court appearance in Black Lake on Jan. 21.

RCMP said that updates on his Facebook page started appearing after that which said: "Catch me if you can lol" and "Imma bad boy."

Toutsaint was facing two counts of break and enter before he escaped.

He was to appear in court Tuesday.

Feb 03 2015

TORONTO - Canada's largest securities regulator wants to pay whistleblowers as much as \$1.5 million for information on serious financial crimes.

The Ontario Securities Commission is proposing a new program that would award a whistleblower with a financial incentive for information that leads to sanctions.

The OSC says payments would only apply in cases involving monetary sanctions or settlement payments of more than \$1 million.

The commission says all efforts would be made to keep the identity of whistleblowers secret, adding it may also seek amendments to the Ontario Securities Act to prevent retaliatory action against whistleblowers whose identities are revealed.

If approved, the program would be the first of its kind among securities regulators in Canada.

In the meantime, the OSC says it's seeking feedback about the proposed program and will hold a public roundtable on the topic in the near future.

"We have proposed a realistic and concrete program that, in our view, needs to be put into action for the benefit of Ontario investors," said Howard Wetston, CEO and chair of the Ontario Securities Commission.

"We see a whistleblowing program as an important enforcement tool - one that will encourage individuals with high-quality information to come forward and report misconduct."

Feb 03 2015

OTTAWA - Three Ottawa men, including one who may have already been killed overseas while fighting alongside militants in the Middle East, are facing terror-related charges in Canada, police say.

John Maguire, 24, rose to prominence last year when he appeared in an extremist recruiting video that urged Muslims to launch attacks against Canadians.

Police have also arrested and charged Awso Peshdary, 25, and have charged Khadar Khalib, 23, who is also believed to be fighting abroad with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Police say all three are facing charges of conspiring to participate or to contribute in an activity of a terrorist group, while Peshdary has been charged with participation in the activity of a terrorist group and facilitating an activity for a terrorist group.

Khalib has been charged with leaving Canada to participate in the activities of a ter-

rorist group, and with counseling a person to participate in an activity of a terrorist group. Maguire is also charged with facilitating an activity for a terrorist group.

Police are acknowledging recent media reports indicating Maguire has been killed in Syria, but say they lack any “conclusive evidence confirming that he is deceased.”

“These charges speak to our ability to tackle a threat that is multifaceted and constantly evolving,” assistant RCMP commissioner James Malizia said in a statement.

“Through collaborative efforts with our partners, we were able to disrupt an organized network associated with (ISIL). This network was involved in recruiting individuals for terrorism purposes and in sending them into Syria and Iraq for the benefit of this terrorist group.”

Feb 03 2015

VANCOUVER - A transit police officer and his former partner have been charged with assault after a confrontation at a SkyTrain station in Vancouver.

Transit Police spokeswoman Anne Drennan says Cst. Edgardo Diaz and then-Cst. Michael Hughes were involved in an alleged altercation with a man in August 2011.

Drennan says Diaz and Hughes have been charged with assault causing bodily harm and assault with a weapon.

The New Westminster Police Department investigated the allegations.

Drennan says Diaz has been working in an administrative role and Hughes left the service in 2012.



Feb 04 2015

MONTREAL - The RCMP busted a major organized crime ring in Montreal, dismantling a cocaine trafficking scheme that used sophisticated chemistry to conceal the drugs in asphalt.

Fifteen arrests were made Wednesday morning in the Montreal area, with some who were already in jail. In a press release, the RCMP said the arrests were the second phase of a larger investigation they began in 2010.

One of the cocaine seizures made during this investigation uncovered an unusual method to hide the drugs. The suspects used an advanced chemistry process called “molecular docking.” This method would chemically bind the drug with the asphalt in order to smuggle large quantities of cocaine into the country. A chemist would then extract the drug out of the asphalt.

RCMP spokesperson Sgt. Luc Thibault said they have never seen such a sophisticated method to smuggle in drugs.

Thibault added that the Canadian Border Services Agency was instrumental in uncovering the scheme when they made a seizure in September 2011 at the Trudeau airport.

Border officers were suspicious of an unusually large commercial shipment of asphalt. They seized the bags totaling 700 kg and took a closer look at the cargo. The bags contained a grainy black and white asphalt mixture, which they later discovered included cocaine.

The cocaine shipment came from Colombia and passed through Mexico, said Jacqueline Roby, a communications officer for the CBSA. The border officers used a special chemistry tool used to detect narcotics and explosives.

The RCMP said the network was trafficking drugs in the Montreal area, as well as in the Atlantic provinces.

Investigators were targeting the leaders and key players forming the Silvano cell.

This cell was linked to two major traditional organized crime cells, the Bastone and De Vito cells, that were dismantled in a round-up in June 2014.

The accused listed below face a number of charges, including gangsterism and drug importation, trafficking and possession. They will appear in court in Montreal Wednesday afternoon by videoconference.

(CTV Montreal)

Feb 04 2015

OTTAWA - A controversial proposal to give the Royal Canadian Mounted Police unprecedented powers to police Parliament Hill could hit the floor of the House of Commons as early as Friday, CBC News has learned.

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

This award is open to active Canadian police officers below the rank of senior officer who have demonstrated exemplary leadership and commitment to service through deeds resulting in a measurable benefit to their peers, service and community.

The 2015 award recipient will be recognized in the April 2015 issue of Blue Line Magazine and will receive the award at the Blue Line Awards Gala held in conjunction with the Blue Line EXPO, April 28, 2015.

Application forms available at: www.blueline.ca/leadership

Applications for 2015 must be submitted, by February 14, 2015, to Leadership@blueline.ca

A controversial proposal to give the Royal Canadian Mounted Police unprecedented powers to police Parliament Hill could hit the floor of the House of Commons as early as Friday, CBC News has learned.

Government whip John Duncan is set to introduce a motion that would, if passed, authorize House Speaker Andrew Scheer and his Senate counterpart to “invite, without delay,” the Mounties to “lead operational security throughout the parliamentary precinct and the grounds of Parliament Hill.”

The RCMP would be obliged to respect the privileges, immunities and powers of both the House and Senate, and ensure “the continued employment” of the current parliamentary security team.

A similar motion is expected to be tabled in the Senate as well. Both houses will have to sign off on the proposal before it can go forward.

On Wednesday, CBC News reported that the national police force will be the lead agency in charge of security on the Hill, overseeing both its own officers and Parliament Hill security guards until a final plan is approved.

The outstanding question is: To whom will RCMP and Hill security personnel ultimately report?

There are three possible options:

- The status quo, which has security forces on Parliament Hill reporting to the speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons. This option is seen as unlikely.
- The commissioner of the RCMP, Bob Paulson, or a designate of his choosing.
- A shared or duo responsibility between Parliament and the RCMP.

Security personnel on the Hill were being told they would keep their jobs under the new plan, but it is still unclear whether, or how, specific duties will be reassigned between RCMP and parliamentary guards. There are currently about 220 House of Commons guards and 100 Senate guards.

The motion expected to be put before MPs later this week would explicitly require the RCMP to ensure “the continued employment” of the current security team.

The Security Services Employees Association, which represents the guards on Parliament Hill, issued a press release Wednesday, saying “all great democracies,” including Canada’s provincial legislatures, are protected by independent experts who “take no orders from the police or any other part of government.”

“The RCMP taking operational control of the security within the House of Commons of Canada would threaten not only the perception that Parliament makes its laws without interference, but would also have such an effect in practice,” it continued, calling it “an indefensible and dangerous interference” with Parliament’s independence and a “solid breach into one of the foundational pillars of our democratic system: the principle of separation of powers.”

(CBC News)

Feb 04 2015

VANCOUVER - The RCMP’s highest ranking member in B.C. warned the provincial government last year that cutting its budget would hamper its ability to investigate missing and murdered women along the so-called Highway of Tears.



The force’s E-PANA task force, launched in 2006, was assigned 18 cases involving women who vanished or were found dead along the Highway 16 corridor in the province’s north.

The RCMP and the B.C. government confirmed last year that budget cuts would mean six officers would be removed from the E-PANA investigation, which had already seen previous budget reductions.

Documents released through a freedom-of-information request include a memo to the provincial government from RCMP Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens outlining the impact of the cuts.

The memo says the budget cuts would mean there would be no other investigations related to the Highway of Tears case “for the foreseeable future.”

In a one version marked “draft,” Callens warns negative media coverage related to the cuts could undermine public confidence in such investigations, though it’s not clear whether the passage made it into the final memo.

Feb 04 2015

MONTREAL - The city of Montreal says it will contribute an additional \$2 million to host the 2017 World Police & Fire Games because a smaller-than-expected contribution from the federal government has left the event’s organizing committee in the lurch.

The city, which has already put up about \$2.2 million in cash contributions and financing for equipment, is also blaming a labour conflict with its firefighters for the extra \$2-million injection.

The firefighters have withdrawn personnel who were helping to organize the games as their union and the city’s other unions battle the Quebec government’s pension-plan law in court on constitutional grounds.

The legislation, known as Law 15, was instigated by Mayor Denis Coderre and Quebec City Mayor Régis Labeaume.

The additional \$2-million contribution from the city could be adjusted according “to the organizing committee’s ability to decrease its expenses and increase its sponsorships and other revenue,” executive committee member

Jim Beis told the weekly meeting of the city executive committee on Wednesday, as it voted to approve the extra money.

The organizing committee’s initial business plan counted on a \$5-million contribution from the federal government. However, the government wound up offering \$1.3 million in October, Beis said.

The organizing committee has cut \$1.6 million from its budget, which now stands at \$20 million, but it needs the extra \$2 million as it looks for ways to increase revenue and reduce costs, he said.

The city says the games’ organizing committee has had to hire personnel to replace the firefighters. However, no figure was provided at the meeting for the additional cost.

The city was chosen in 2011 to host the games, which are to run from July 28 to Aug. 6, 2017. The games are held every two years and attract athletes from about 70 countries. This games are to be held in Fairfax, Va., this year.

The event is expected to draw 35,000 participants and supporters, and generate \$80 million in economic spinoffs, Beis said.

The games will coincide with Montreal’s 375th anniversary.

(Montreal Gazette)

Feb 04 2015

MONTREAL - A Montreal police officer best known by her badge number - No. 728 - won’t go to trial before June 2016 on an assault charge in connection with a highly publicized arrest caught on video.

Stefanie Trudeau is suspended with pay and facing a charge in connection with the October 2012 arrest that went viral.

Trudeau earned the nickname “Officer 728” after videos surfaced online of her allegedly roughing up student demonstrators during Quebec’s student unrest during the spring of 2012.

She was not in court Wednesday as her lawyer filed a motion asking for a stay of proceedings.

Jean-Pierre Rancourt is claiming the Crown acted in bad faith by dropping charges against the citizens she was trying to arrest so they could testify against her.

The defence is also asking for the stay because of what he says is an unreasonable delay of 18 months between the incident and the laying of charges.

Feb 04 2015

VANCOUVER - The B.C. Criminal Justice Branch says there will be no charges against a Metro Vancouver RCMP officer involved in a crash that injured a motorcyclist.

The branch says the officer from the Ridge Meadows detachment was attempting to pull over several motorcycles on Highway 7 near Deroche last May when a motorcyclist going in the other direction crashed his vehicle.

The branch says there was conflicting evidence concerning whether the officer’s vehicle was in her own lane or straddling the centre line and if oncoming traffic had slowed

prior to the crash.

The motorcyclist broke bones in his leg and shoulder and the female passenger on the back sustained minor injuries.

The branch says there were different accounts of the circumstances of the accident, and based on careful review it can't be proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the officer committed a crime.

Apart from the allegation that the officer's vehicle straddled the centre line, the branch says there's no evidence that concludes the officer's driving fell below the standards of the Motor Vehicle Act.

Feb 04 2015

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. - The Ministry of Transportation has identified the commercial-vehicle inspector who died during an accident just east of the B.C. and Alberta boundary.

Toni Kristinsson was a commercial vehicle and safety enforcement officer.

The ministry says he was driving home near the end of his shift on Sunday when his vehicle collided with a commercial transport truck on Highway 5 near Valemout.

Kristinsson worked for the government branch for a little more than three years and spent most of his time at an inspection station in the Robson Valley.

The ministry says government employees are saddened by the tragedy and send their condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

A memorial service has been scheduled for Saturday, and the ministry says the RCMP is continuing to investigate the accident.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 05, 2015

Feb 05 2015

HALIFAX - The Crown is reviewing charges against a man accused of possessing dangerous chemicals in Halifax.



Crown attorney Terri Lipton said today outside provincial court that prosecutors are looking at whether there is a realistic prospect of conviction against Christopher Burton Phillips.

The 42-year-old man is charged with uttering threats and possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose.

Phillips was in court today for a brief appearance and was remanded into custody after his lawyer Mike Taylor said he isn't applying

for bail due to complications involving his family and arranging a place to stay.

The judge scheduled a preliminary trial for May 26 but urged lawyers to try to find an earlier date.

Phillips was charged after police alleged that dozens of different chemicals were found in various states of degradation inside a cottage and shed in the Halifax community of Grand Desert.

Feb 05 2015

OTTAWA - The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear a case that involves the federal government's tougher sentencing laws.

At issue is part of the Truth in Sentencing Act - a provision that prohibits a trial judge from giving more than one-for-one pre-trial

credit if a justice of the peace denies bail to the person because of a previous conviction.

Hamidreza Safarzadeh-Markhali of Pickering, Ont., was arrested in November 2010 on drug and weapons charges.

At a bail hearing, the justice of the peace noted his previous convictions as the reason for his ongoing detention

Following Safarzadeh-Markhali's conviction in 2011, his lawyers called on the trial judge to strike down the provision the Conservative government enacted in 2009 that eliminated the court's discretion to give more than one day credit for each day spent in pre-trial custody.

Ontario Court of Justice Judge Michael Block agreed, and awarded Safarzadeh-Markhali 1.5 days credit for each day he spent in custody awaiting trial.

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