

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

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Executive Digest

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TORONTO - The federal government says it now has the power to revoke the citizenship of some Canadians convicted of terrorism, treason or espionage.

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RCMP officers who raced to a New Brunswick neighbourhood under siege by Justin Bourque say the force has failed to supply them with recommended guns and training, months after a report urged the organization to do just that.

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VANCOUVER - A lawyer arguing for a class-action lawsuit against the RCMP says the cases of hundreds of female employees alleging the force discriminated against them must be considered together

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VANCOUVER - RCMP members may be individually answerable for complaints of mistreatment alleged by hundreds of the forces' female employees, but government as a whole bares no responsibility, a Crown lawyer has argued.

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MONCTON, N.B. - The widows of three fallen Mounties are thanking the public for their support one year after their husbands were gunned down in Moncton, N.B.

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OTTAWA - An Ottawa police officer is in serious condition following a T-bone collision Thursday morning.

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Canada ill prepared to prevent terror attacks on Parliament, says OPP report



Jun 03 2015

OTTAWA - As Michael Zehaf Bibeau ran towards the Centre Block last Oct. 22, the RCMP had more than one chance to stop him.

An officer in a cruiser could have blocked Zehaf Bibeau's path to the Centre Block but for a woman pushing a stroller who tried to jump into the car for safety.

A radio alert that a gunman was on Parliament Hill was so garbled that no one understood it.

And the majority of security forces are stationed inside the Parliament Buildings,

not outside.

None of the officers stationed on the grounds stopped the gunman before he got through the doors, the result, the RCMP say, of systemic security issues, not human error.

"There is nobody from our perspective that is to blame for this," said RCMP assistant commissioner Gilles Michaud. He added no one has been disciplined for their actions on Oct. 22.

Yet the events from last October remain a "grim reminder that Canada is ill-prepared" to stop terrorist attacks, with the RCMP suffering



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a lack of "planning, training and resources" to protect the Parliament buildings, a long-awaited Ontario Provincial Police report says.

The report, one among several released Wednesday, says the RCMP's ability to protect Parliament Hill has been stretched by resource issues stemming from budget cuts imposed in 2012 by the Conservative government.

"Fortunately," the report says, "the attacker was unorganized."

Had Michael Zehaf Bibeau been better prepared, "the end results could have been much worse with the likelihood of many more casualties" and "devastating results."

The details in the OPP report provide a graphic account of Zehaf Bibeau's attacks, the death of Cpl. Nathan Cirillo and the dramatic takedown inside the Centre Block that ended with the sergeant-at-arms in a sitting position emptying his gun's magazine as Zehaf Bibeau crumpled to the floor.

Zehaf Bibeau fired one shot into Cirillo's back from about three metres away as Cirillo stood guard at the National War Memorial, just off Parliament Hill. Cirillo fell on his hands and knees and crawled away. Zehaf Bibeau then fired another shot into Cirillo's back.

Cirillo got to the east side of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier where he lay prone on his stomach. "Zehaf Bibeau moved towards the fallen soldier and fired a third and final shot into the back of Cpl. Cirillo," the report says.

Zehaf Bibeau turned towards the Langevin Block, which houses the Prime Minister's Office, and yelled "Iraq." He then ran towards Parliament Hill as bystanders struggled unsuccessfully to save Cirillo's life.

A tourist pushing a stroller saw Zehaf Bibeau run onto the Hill and warned a Mountie sitting in a cruiser near the East Block. The woman tried to get into the back seat of the cruiser and delayed the officer long enough

that Zehaf Bibeau drove by in a commandeered vehicle.

Michaud said that Zehaf Bibeau wouldn't have made it to the Centre Block without that car.

Michaud said the officer tried to radio others about the gunman's presence, but her message couldn't be understood.

Inside the Centre Block, Zehaf Bibeau was shot 31 times, with the first bullets hitting him seven seconds after he burst through the front door.

Two of those shots would have been fatal: One through the back of his neck perforated his brain, the other went through his back and pierced his heart. The OPP report says there is evidence Zehaf Bibeau's heart was still beating after both shots.

The report includes 66 recommendations for increasing security around Parliament Hill, including a references to long guns for the RCMP, and identifies ongoing security issues such as unfettered public access to the lawn of Parliament Hill and ongoing construction to the Parliament buildings that requires numerous construction workers and commercial vehicles to move around Parliament Hill daily.

"Parliament Hill is a symbol of Canadian democracy," the report says.

"If Canada is to remain vigilant and proactive in dealing with threats directed to this country, there has to be a willingness to implement changes to protect this area."

THURSDAY MAY 28, 2015

May 28 2015

SURREY, B.C. - RCMP in Surrey, B.C., haven't been toying around with auto crime during its Project Hot Wheels.

The force says officers arrested 33 people, 15 of whom were found to be breaching court or bail orders, and recovered more than 75 stolen vehicles during the project.

The month-long campaign saw the Crown lay 117 Criminal Code charges, some of which involved drugs, weapons, mail and identity theft.

Police say 14 charges were laid under the Motor Vehicle Act, and seven charges were against young offenders.

The RCMP says the helicopter known as Air 1 and the integrated municipal auto crimes team assisted local Mounties.

Staff Sgt. Darren Schneider says the project targeted chronic offenders, high-crime areas but also focused on prevention through education.

May 28 2015

TORONTO - Toronto police chief Mark Saunders is standing by the practice of carding, saying police rely on it to keep issues like gang violence in check in the city.

Critics have blasted the police technique,

calling it unfair and discriminatory. One MPP is even calling for a provincial strategy against it.

"It is legal. And it does enhance community safety," Saunders said in a sit-down interview with the CBC's Dwight Drummond.

Saunders said the intelligence helps police "see the bigger picture" when it comes to what's going on with the some 2,000 gang members in the city. But, he said, it doesn't give police officers a "green light" to treat people badly.

"This is a tool that is utilized for gaining better intelligence. But it has to be used properly," Saunders said.

"Our conduct has to be at a higher level than any member of the public. That's what we owe the community."

Saunders said police will no longer make random stops and said officers will be given more information and training surrounding carding.

(CBC News)

May 28 2015

A court has upheld the authority of the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal to hear allegations of police discrimination, even if a case has been investigated and dismissed by the province's civilian police watchdog.

A divisional court panel of three judges released the decision Wednesday, turning down an application by the OPP that would have forced the tribunal to stop hearing cases - as it has since 2013 - that are also being investigated by the Office of the Independent Police Review Director.

The decision notes the police complaint process can only result in discipline to the officer, whereas a human rights application could result in the tribunal ordering police to not only pay monetary damages, but to make systemic changes.

"The victims of discrimination, who are often from marginalized communities, may be forced to choose which route to take when they often do not have access to the information necessary to make this choice a meaningful one," wrote the judges.

"This decision recognizes that these two distinct streams don't offer an individual who has been the victim of alleged police misconduct the same remedy," said Roger Love, a lawyer with the African Canadian Legal Clinic, who was involved in the case as part of the Coalition of Legal Clinics.

Bruce Best, a lawyer with the Human Rights Legal Support Centre, says the decision should be binding for all police forces across the province and could have broad implications for other professional oversight bodies.

Gerry McNeilly, director of the OIPRD, said he recognized that the human rights tribunal and a complaint under the Police Services Act "can actually complement each other in trying to address discriminatory police conduct." And he said



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having to choose between the options could “undermine the integrity and public confidence of the public complaints system.”

The OPP can seek leave to appeal within a 15-day period. The force did not respond to a request for comment.

(Toronto Star)

May 28 2015

MONTREAL - Const. Marc-Antoine Goyette of Montreal police received two days' suspension after the police ethics commission found that he lied to a judge regarding the arrest of Mark Wiles-Simpson.

Wiles-Simpson was arrested in 2012 near Côte-Vertu Metro station after police wrongly identified him as a suspect thought to be stealing merchandise from a nearby liquor store.

A cellphone video of the arrest shows several police officers on top of the then-19-year-old Wiles-Simpson as he asks for an explanation as to why he is being arrested.

During the incident, the arresting officer told him he was being detained for theft.

“All I heard is to be still and stop resisting,” said Wiles-Simpson shortly after his arrest. “But all I did was yell in pain and in shock since I had no clue of what was going on.”

Authorities later admitted Wiles-Simpson was not the man they were looking for, but he was charged with resisting the arrest.

The police ethics commission, which met earlier in May, evaluated four charges made against Goyette in a formal complaint.

The commission found the officer lied in court about a suspect description and that he did not exercise proper discretion in arresting Wiles-Simpson.

Goyette was acquitted of obstructing justice and failing to presume the suspect was innocent.

Wiles-Simpson was acquitted of all charges in 2014.

(CBC News)

May 28 2015

Regulators are expanding Alberta's prescription monitoring system to include a wider range of drugs as authorities continue to grapple with the issue of otherwise legal medications - particularly fentanyl - being abused by addicts.



Beginning in the fall, painkillers containing codeine and two widely-used anti-anxiety drugs will be among a list of medications

added to the province's triplicate prescription program, which the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta uses to identify potential abuse or over-prescribing.

The monitoring program - which already tracks fentanyl use - is being expanded to include prescription painkillers that contain codeine, such as Tylenol 3s and 4s, as well as a class of drugs known as benzodiazepines, which includes anti-anxiety medications like Ativan and Valium.

“That will make it even more robust because there are a lot of drugs in those two categories that are open to abuse and misuse,” college spokeswoman Kelly Eby said.

Federal Health Minister Rona Ambrose, who was at Calgary police headquarters on Thursday to unveil a new series of public service announcements about prescription drug abuse, praised Alberta's triplicate prescription program and said medical colleges across the country have a role to play in combatting the problem through oversight and education.

“At the end of the day, these are legal drugs and someone is prescribing them,” said Ambrose.

Ambrose was speaking prior to a meeting between police, health officials and educators from both local school districts aimed at coming up with strategies to fight prescription drug abuse among students.

Although organizers didn't want to limit the talks to any one drug, they acknowledged the discussion was prompted in large part due to a surge in deaths connected to fentanyl, a powerful prescription painkiller. The drug has been linked to 50 deaths across the province in the first two months of 2015, including 15 in Calgary - a dramatic increase since 2012, when 29 deaths were reported province-wide.

Police will continue their efforts to investigate and charge drug traffickers, but Deputy Chief Trevor Daroux said law enforcement agencies need to work with the community on prevention efforts.

“This isn't a problem that can be solved by any single discipline,” said Daroux, who added Thursday's meeting will be the first in an ongoing dialogue between police, educators and public health officials.

(Calgary Herald)

May 28 2015

EDMONTON - A convicted drug dealer will get a new trial as a result of an Edmonton police officer confessing to buying steroids from a fellow cop and lying about it to an investigator.

Ryan Carl Lind, 32, was found guilty of possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking in March after a trial in which Const. Adam Toma testified against him.

However, on Thursday during a scheduled sentencing hearing, Court of Queen's Bench Justice Debbie Yungwirth declared a mistrial in the case after learning about Toma's involvement in

the police steroid scandal.

Defence lawyer Chady Moustarah applied for the mistrial and Crown prosecutor Jonathan Martin consented to the application after acknowledging the information about Toma would have been used at Lind's trial if known.

Court heard that Toma pleaded guilty to discreditable conduct and deceit at a March 27 police disciplinary hearing, however Lind was convicted on March 5.

Once the result of Toma's disciplinary hearing was made public, it was disclosed to Moustarah by the Crown.

Yungwirth ruled a mistrial was appropriate because Lind had been denied full answer and defence in his trial.

(Edmonton Sun)

**FRIDAY
MAY 29, 2015**

May 29 2015

A 32-year-old Edmonton man has been charged after allegedly trying to shoot a police officer, then leading law enforcement on a tense chase through Metro Vancouver this month.



The New Westminster Police Department confirmed a slew of counts have been approved against Steven Gordon Vollrath, including assault, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, and failing to stop for police.

Vollrath pulled a gun on a patrol officer who found him sleeping in a rented Buick Lacrosse with a woman in New Westminster on May 18, according to authorities.

The couple then allegedly sped off, committed a number of hit-and-runs while being pursued by police, and dumped the car in the driveway of a Vancouver home.

Mounties apprehended Vollrath and the woman he was with almost a week later in Camrose, Alta.

It's unclear what charges she's facing, if any.

Vollrath is also charged with trying to fire a gun at a police officer, using a firearm to assault or try to assault a police officer, fraudulently personating someone to avoid arrest, and having care of a vehicle that failed to stop at the scene of an accident.

He's currently in custody at the Calgary Remand Centre, where he's being held on unrelated criminal charges.

(CTV Vancouver)

WATERLOO REGION - A veteran regional police officer has been suspended from duty and is facing a number of charges in connection with an off-duty collision.

Waterloo Regional Police Sgt. Michael Allard was arrested Friday and charged by Guelph Police Service officers following a joint investigation with regional police.

Allard is charged with public mischief, obstruct police and fraud over \$5,000.

Allard has been with Waterloo Regional Police for 29 years, and is assigned to the service's school resource and youth initiatives.

According to a media release, it's alleged that Allard misrepresented information relating to a single motor vehicle collision in Kitchener in February.

Allard was off-duty at the time. It's not clear whether Allard was the driver in question or whether he played a different role in relation to the crash.

Waterloo Regional Police refuse to comment on the specific evidence relating to the three outstanding charges, said Staff Sgt. Mike Haffner, and aren't releasing further details.

"We do take these allegations very seriously," Haffner said. "That's why because of the seriousness of the allegations, we reached out to the Guelph Police Service to conduct the investigation."

(Waterloo Record)

CALGARY - Calgary police say fentanyl has become a challenge to crack down on because dealers can easily import the drug from Asian markets.

"You can order it online, on the internet," said Staff Sgt. Martin Schiavetta with the drug unit.

He says the potentially lethal opioid is a controlled substance in Canada, but not China.

"Companies guarantee delivery even if it's seized by Canadian Border Services Agency."

Sgt. Schiavetta says the second external challenge for Calgary police is the underground processing of fentanyl in Western Canada.

He says organized crime rings often buy the powdered form of fentanyl from China, then have it converted into a pill domestically.

The commercial pharmaceutical tabletting machines that illegal drug labs use to make "green apples" - a common street name for fentanyl - are not regulated in Canada. They are in the United States, but not in Canada.

"So we're seeing a lot of fentanyl being directed to our country and we're almost becoming a source for the northwest part of the USA," said Schiavetta.

In the Calgary area alone, police seized 10,000 fentanyl tablets in 2014 and have already brought in 13,000 this year.

"Unfortunately, many of the overdoses are young people," Sgt. Schiavetta. "Teenagers."

Calgary police and Alberta health officials have teamed up to raise awareness about the growing threat of the dangerous street drug.

The Blood Tribe in southern Alberta enacted a state of emergency over drug-related deaths in the community.

The chief of the reserve has said 20 people have taken fatal doses of fentanyl over the past six months, and another 60 have overdosed and survived.

(CBC News)

VANCOUVER - A police dog has helped a 10-year-old girl testify in a British Columbia court about an alleged sexual assault.

The incident was the first case in the province of a dog assisting a child during a trial and saw the canine named Caber rest in the witness box, at the girl's feet.

Crown lawyer Winston Sayson says Caber soothed the girl so she could provide a full and candid account in Surrey provincial court of the horrific incident that allegedly victimized her.

He says the successful integration of a dog in the courtroom should be seen as baby steps towards expanded use of canines at trial.

The judge in the trial allowed the dog



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to assist a support worker who is already permitted to accompany children according to the Criminal Code.

Six dogs are believed to be accredited to assist victims in Canada, including a canine who supported a victim in Calgary in December 2014, and another who helped in Edmonton last March.

May 29 2015

TORONTO - Toronto police are looking for a man who tried to rob two convenience stores armed with his cane before fleeing empty handed on his four-wheeled scooter.

Police say the man waved his four-pronged cane "aggressively" and demanded cash at two downtown stores last Sunday afternoon.

Workers at both stores refused his demands.

Police have released video footage of one of the attempts, where the plump white man limps into the store with his cane and yells at the clerk.

They are asking for the public's help identifying the failed bandit.

May 29 2015

TORONTO - The federal government says it now has the power to revoke the citizenship of some Canadians convicted of terrorism, treason or espionage.

A controversial new law, first introduced last June, went into effect on Friday.

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration says there are several serious crimes that could result in dual citizens losing their Canadian status.

The ministry says it would revoke citizenship for anyone found guilty of terrorism, treason and high treason, and spying for a foreign government.

The rules would also apply to dual citizens who take up arms against Canada by fighting in a foreign army or joining an international terrorist organization.

The new law has met with strong public criticism, and two Ontario lawyers have already launched a court case arguing it is unconstitutional.

May 29 2015

A ban on the sale of flavoured tobacco products takes effect in Nova Scotia this Sunday.

Health Minister Leo Glavine says he hopes the restriction will get rid of products that may entice young people to take up smoking.

But the initiative is facing a legal challenge from Imperial Tobacco Canada.

Spokeswoman Nadine Bernard says the measure is misguided because most consumers of menthol products are adults.

She says banning the sale of such goods will only drive people to the illegal market.

New Brunswick is also proposing to ban the sale of all flavoured tobacco products.

Nova Scotia's ban also includes fla-

voured rolling papers and tobacco products that are not smoked, such as chewing tobacco and snuff.

It does not include port, rum, wine and whiskey-flavoured cigars that weigh five grams or more.

May 29 2015

STELLARTON, N.S. - Federal Justice Minister Peter MacKay has confirmed he won't run for re-election this fall, ending a nearly 20-year run as a member of Parliament.

MacKay made the announcement today alongside Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who travelled to Nova Scotia to be there in person.

"For entirely personal reasons I have come to the difficult decision that I will not be standing as the Conservative candidate for Central Nova in the federal election this fall," MacKay told a gathering of supporters in Stellarton, N.S.

"For entirely personal reasons, the time has come for me to step back and concentrate on my young and growing family."

Harper looked close to tears during a heartfelt tribute when he said the occasion had filled him with "tremendous pride and more than a little sorrow."

"Peter MacKay is an outstanding public servant," Harper said. "Peter MacKay is a great person. And Peter MacKay is a historic figure."

MacKay, who represents the riding of Central Nova and was first elected as an MP in 1997, was at the helm of the Progressive Conservatives when it merged with the Canadian Alliance in 2003.

MacKay was placed in cabinet immediately after the Conservatives formed government in 2006, beginning at foreign affairs and then later shuffled to defence.

He became justice minister in 2013, in a sense coming full circle as his career as a lawyer was what prompted him to enter politics.

May 29 2015

VICTORIA - Prosecutors say obstruction of justice charges won't be laid against two B.C. Mounties involved in arresting a man who fell down motel stairs and suffered a "significant" injury.

The Criminal Justice Branch says the officers responded to a complaint of a man swearing, shouting and banging at the motel in the Fraser Valley community of Hope on Aug. 25, 2014.

The branch says the evidence suggests the man accidentally fell down three or four stairs, and at issue is whether the officers made false statements in reports to the province's police watchdog.

That's because prosecutors say some evidence suggests one of the officers wasn't in place to see the man fall as he described in his police report.

Prosecutors say two civilian witnesses were inconsistent about where the officer was

at the time, and as a result the Crown would not be able to prove the officer made a false statement in his report.

The branch says there is no substantial likelihood of conviction and obstruction charges won't be laid.

May 29 2015

PETERBOROUGH COUNTY - Thanks to a re-vamped funding model that's left some rural townships on with a higher bill for policing costs, Peterborough's police service could span across the county.



Starting this year, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are charging by the household instead of on a per-call basis. While some municipalities will pay less to keep OPP contracts going, others are left in a lurch, and residents are left paying the tab.

The new funding model has already encouraged Cavan Monaghan Township and Selwyn Township to sign on with the Peterborough Community Police Service, and it's encouraged Havelock-Belmont-Methuen and Douro-Dummer townships to begin talks with the City to determine what whether Peterborough police could provide any cost-savings.

North Kawartha Township Mayor Rick Woodcock says the per-household rate for OPP will mean that the Township's annual cost for policing will jump from roughly \$650,000 to more than \$1.2 million. Considering the crime rate in the township is low and about 80 per cent of residents are seasonal, he says it's unrealistic to send taxpayers the bill.

But North Kawartha can't sign on unless it borders an area City police already cover. So he's hoping Douro-Dummer Township and the City can come to an agreement.

"If they come on, I would be so quick to jump on that bandwagon," he says, adding the Township has approached the City and has had informal talks with Police Chief Murray Rodd about the issue.

The Municipality of Trent Lakes, which signed a three-year contract with the OPP which runs until 2017, is also considering asking Peterborough Police for some initial information, says Mayor Bev Matthews.

"We've thought about it, because we're not happy with OPP costing right now," she says, adding Trent Lake's bill went up substantially.

(Peterborough This Week)

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SATURDAY MAY 30, 2015

May 30 2015

OTTAWA - The full version of a video recorded by Parliament Hill shooter Michael Zehaf Bibeau shows him praying to Allah and asking for help in his coming task.

RCMP have made public 18 seconds that was left out of a version of the video released in March.

Police say they withheld those portions in order to analyze the specific dialect of Arabic Zehaf Bibeau was speaking.

They originally believed the footage might shed light on how he became radicalized, and wanted time to follow up on a number of leads.

The release comes as the RCMP and House of Commons prepare to make public an outside review of their responses to the shooting.

The House plans to release an edited version of the Ontario Provincial Police reports, eliminating portions it says could compromise security.

Both reports are expected to be released next week.

SUNDAY MAY 31, 2015

May 31 2015

VANCOUVER - A senior member of the Harper government is blasting a BC review board for granting a child killer escorted outings from the psychiatric facility he's being held in.

Industry Minister James Moore says the decision in favour of Allan Schoenborn is an "insult" to his ex-wife.

Schoenborn was found not criminally responsible for killing his three children in 2008 and has been held in a psychiatric facility ever since.

A BC review ruled on Friday that Schoenborn's illness has been in remission for many years and his mental stability would be assessed prior to any outing.

But Moore issued a statement saying the review board's decision can't be defended and the BC government should make changes to how such cases are handled in the future.

The federal Conservatives have been staunch opponents of allowing freedom to those found not criminally responsible.

BC Justice Minister Suzanne Anton says her "heart goes out" to Schoenborn's former wife Darcie Clark, but adds it's important to respect the review board's independence.

May 31 2015

RCMP officers who raced to a New Brunswick neighbourhood under siege by Justin Bourque say the force has failed to supply them with recom-

mended guns and training, months after a report urged the organization to do just that.



Some frontline officers, who spoke on the condition of remaining anonymous, say they fear for their safety because most members still do not have carbine rifles or training on how to use them.

One RCMP officer who witnessed Bourque gun down a colleague last June 4 in Moncton says the organization has moved too slowly in rolling out the carbines and training.

Another member says officers feel they are outgunned and are increasingly bitter that repeated calls for better weaponry over the last decade haven't prompted a swift response from RCMP headquarters.

"A lot of the members are disappointed ... but they've got to the point of saying, 'Well you know what, that's the RCMP. They don't give a s---t,'" said one long-serving member involved in the hunt for Bourque.

"I don't expect to see much more change. ... When it comes to the carbine being put in the vehicles, they say it's going to happen but do I expect it? No, not for a few years."

He says only four people in his detachment of about 80 members have been trained on the Colt C8 carbine.

The RCMP moved the first carbines out in 2013, with 2,200 now available for 12,000 members. Carbine training has stepped up since last year, but the force won't reveal how many officers have been trained.

In mid-May, the RCMP was charged with violating the Canada Labour Code.

Labour investigators allege the police force didn't provide appropriate weapons and equipment for "active shooter" incidents. They also say the force didn't give staff the training and information needed to respond to incidents like Bourque's, and that the RCMP didn't "in general" ensure health and safety of its members.

The matter will be heard in court for the first time on July 9.

The latest call for a faster roll-out of the carbines came in a review from retired assistant commissioner Alphonse MacNeil after Bourque fatally shot three RCMP officers and wounded two others with an assault rifle that overpowered the members' pistols and shotguns.

MacNeil released 64 recommendations aimed at improving training, equipment, communications and planning during critical incidents, all of which were found to be deficient in the police response to the shootings.

In particular, MacNeil said the RCMP has been slow in getting carbines, adding that none of the officers who responded to the chaotic scene in Moncton had one because all six were away at a training exercise.

"The time it took to roll out the carbine project, including the training and delivery of the weapons to members of the RCMP, has taken far too long," he said in the 180-page report.

He recommended "the RCMP take immediate action to expedite deployment of patrol carbines across the force."

The RCMP accepted the recommendations, but didn't set a clear deadline for when or how many officers would get the guns.

Still, members say the force has no excuse for the slow delivery of guns that were recommended in 2010 in a RCMP-commissioned report and again in 2011 following the deaths of four officers in Alberta in 2005. The force began researching carbines in 2006 as it developed a policy on required equipment.

One New Brunswick officer who rushed to the suburban neighbourhood in pursuit of Bourque insists that having a carbine would have given police a chance to stop him.

"We knew we were going to a person that was shooting police officers with a high-powered rifle and we show up there with pellet guns basically," said the officer, who is bound by a regulation to not criticize the force.

"Carbines on June 4 was without a doubt a key factor in the outcome. ... You clearly would have had some members that had a shot at Bourque as opposed to somebody who had a handgun who says, 'I won't be able to hit him or my bullet won't go that far.'"

Grumbling over the carbine has persisted since James Roszko used a semi-automatic rifle to gun down four RCMP officers in 2005 in Mayerthorpe, Alta. A 2011 report into the shootings found the Mounties were severely outgunned and recommended they be equipped with carbines.

The Moncton slayings stoked the anger among RCMP members over both the lack of carbines and an explanation on why it's taken so long to get them. That prompted Commissioner Bob Paulson to write an internal email to members last summer that was obtained by MacLean's magazine.

In it, he reportedly says swift calls for the carbine merely "disrespect" fallen constables Dave Ross, Doug Larche and Fabrice Gevaudan and amount to "sensational" second-guessing.

He insisted the force was trying to get carbines well before the Mayerthorpe inquiry recommendations, adding that the RCMP commissioned a report in 2010 to look at the weapon but that it didn't provide the proper analysis.

The force has said procurement also slowed down the delivery.

Paulson suggested the addition of carbines had to be measured following the Taser death of Robert Dziekanski in 2007.

"We knew the addition of another deadly force option, at a time when we were be-

ing condemned for our Conducted Electrical Weapon ... would require a careful and formal analysis of the need for the carbine, together with the creation of precise policies on its use, its distribution and training," he stated in the email published by MacLean's.

Some officers say the incident stopped the roll out in its tracks.

Paulson declined an interview.

One officer who couldn't get a carbine as he searched for Bourque last June slams Paulson's claims, saying the RCMP's emergency response teams were already using them along with other forces.

"If other police forces have been using it for years, the RCMP doesn't have to spend 10 years to go through the research to come to the same conclusion," he said angrily.

"It's unacceptable to me. I know it's all about cost. There's no ifs, ands or buts about it."

May 31 2015

Data collected by the Washington Post newspaper suggests that the number of people shot by US police is twice as high as official figures claim.

The paper said that during the first five months of this year, 385 people - more than two a day - were killed.

The number of black people was disproportionately high among the victims, especially unarmed ones.

Official statistics rely on self-reported figures from law enforcement agencies.

They suggest about 400 people have been killed each year since 2008.

Police are allowed to use deadly force when they fear for their lives or the lives of others, however there is currently no reliable way of tracking police shooting deaths.

Instead, the government relies on self-reported figures from the nation's 17,000 law enforcement agencies. The figures exclude killings deemed not to have been justified.

The Washington Post says it logged every fatal shooting in 2015 by police in the line of duty using interviews, police reports, local media reports and other sources.

It found a homicide rate of almost 2.6 per day so far this year - more than double the average 1.1 deaths per day reported in FBI records over the past decade.

Among the report's other findings:

- Black people were killed at three times the rate of whites or other minorities when adjusted for local population
- Most were armed, but one in six was unarmed or carried a toy weapon
- 365 men and 20 women were killed
- Most (118) were aged 25-34, while 94 were 35-44. Eight were children younger than 18
- In all three 2015 cases in which charges were subsequently filed against police officers, videos had emerged showing officers shooting a suspect during or after a chase on foot.

(BBC)

May 31 2015

TORONTO - Gun-toting criminals and hypertension share one thing in common.



They can be counted as two of the several risks that police officers encounter on the job.

When John Cilia first joined Toronto Police in 1980, his weight - 230 or so pounds, for a man standing around 6-foot-5 - was the last thing on his mind.

By the time he retired four years ago, he was "about 140 pounds heavier."

"I never really worried about it until my health started to suffer," Cilia, 57, told the Toronto Sun. "My health started to get lousy in my mid-40s, late-40s."

He says he developed atrial fibrillation.

"First I got overweight, then I developed sleep apnea, then that ... hurt my heart," he explained.

The nature of police work means officers sometimes find themselves waking up at an ungodly hour to commence a shift, then sitting at a desk or in a patrol car for hours before breaking into a run or quickly escalating activity.

A search for recent statistics specifically on obesity and Canadian law enforcement came up empty. The last time cops were in the news for their weight was 2006 - when a survey of more than 2,100 Toronto Police workers showed that almost two-thirds reported themselves as overweight.

Weight appears to be an unspoken issue, Cilia said: "It's not on anybody's radar at all."

It's on Kim McClelland's radar, though.

At 59, she still takes the voluntary fitness test at the Toronto Police Service every year to qualify for what they call a fitness pin.

A registered nurse who has worked as a wellness co-ordinator with Toronto cops for the past 12 years, McClelland says that by her observations, about 90% of the force "nowadays are fit."

"There's just a higher awareness, they know the risks, and because we've been educating them over the years, many more officers are fit," she said.

The force also has a full-time nutritionist on staff and a fitness co-ordinator.

McClelland acknowledged shift work does mean that cops are vulnerable to high blood pressure.

"You do see a higher incidence of heart attacks than the general population," she said.

But all the resources in the world won't

have an impact unless people use them.

"We're trying to inform people and then they have to make the choices themselves about how they're going to manage it," McClelland said.

Once they had an incentive, Toronto cops began to flock to take a fitness test and qualify for a fitness pin.

A fitness co-ordinator with Toronto Police since 2008, Tim Finlay has seen the number of officers signing up for the voluntary fitness pin go up.

"Everybody's motivations are different," he said.

In 2008, less than 450 Toronto Police workers qualified for the fitness pin out of 502 who tried.

But in 2010, receiving four hours of lieu time was introduced as an incentive.

The number of fitness pin candidates rocketed up to 1,123, representing just over 13% of the force. Of those, 1,036 qualified for the pin.

In 2014, almost a quarter of the force's approximately 8,000 employees attempted to pass the test and get their pin. More than 1,700 people qualified.

"This year we're already well ahead of what we were last year," Finlay said.

Participation also went up after the fitness pin was made mandatory in 2013 for any officers on bikes.

"Any officer that works within a physical capacity within the service ... they have to do their fitness pin test every year to stay within the unit," Finlay explained. Participating units also include ETF, mounted, marine, public safety, and canine.

"They have a unit-specific test as well in addition to the fitness pin," he said.

The results were positive - injury rates on bikes were significantly reduced, Finlay noted.

"We want healthy workers, that's our goal within the service."

(Toronto Sun)

MONDAY
JUNE 1, 2015

Jun 01 2015

INUKJUAQ - The Kativik Regional Police Force should get a new police chief by next month.

During regional council meetings in Inukjuak May 28, Kativik Regional Government councillors voted to appoint Michel Martin as director of its department of public security, a position that also oversees the region's police force.

Martin has an impressive resumé: the retired inspector served as chief of service with the Sûreté du Québec provincial police force for almost 30 years.

After his retirement in 2009, Martin went on to serve as the RCMP's Canadian Contingent Commander in Haiti. Martin was stationed in Port-au-Prince Jan. 12, 2010 when a deadly earthquake struck the Haitian city.

In the weeks that followed, Martin and his contingent provided first aid, medicine, food and security to the devastated city, later earning him the Commissioner's Commendation for Bravery.

On June 10, Quebec's public security department will announce if Martin's nomination to the new position is approved, the KRG said.

Martin will replace the KRPF's former chief, Aileen MacKinnon, who resigned from the job last December.

MacKinnon, who first came to Nunavut to work as a teacher, started with the KRPF in the late 1990s, working as an officer in communities such as Kangiqsujuaq and Puvirnituq.

She was installed as interim chief in 2008, and appointed as chief in 2012.

KRPF's deputy chief Pierre Bettez has served in the role as interim chief since January 2015 and will return to work alongside Martin as deputy chief.

(Nunatsiag Online)

Jun 01 2015

CORNWALL - A Cornwall police officer who received nearly five years of pay while he was investigated and then charged with sexually exploiting children has pleaded guilty to the crimes and resigned from his job with the community police service.

Const. Pascal Rossignol pleaded guilty Thursday to three counts of sexual exploitation and two counts of procuring sexual services from a person under 18 years of age. He resigned the same day.

Rossignol had been on trial for ten Criminal Code charges related to sexual offences involving minors. Quebec provincial police charged the then 39-year-old in 2012 with invitation to sexual touching, Internet child luring and prostituting two minors after a two year investigation.

On Oct. 13, 2010, Cornwall Community Police received an allegation about Rossignol, and suspended the officer with pay on the very same day.

Police forces are prohibited from suspending officers without pay according to the Police Services Act, the provincial legislation that governs officers. Cornwall police forwarded the report to the Special Investigations Unit, the civilian police oversight body in the province that investigates allegations of sexual assault against officers.

The offences, however, were alleged to have occurred in Quebec, where the SIU has no jurisdiction. The case was referred to internal police misconduct investigators in the Quebec provincial police force, which then laid charges against Rossignol.

Rossignol is scheduled to be sentenced on Sept. 17.

(Ottawa Citizen)

Jun 01 2015

MONTREAL - A 46-year-old man is dead after being shot by Montreal police during what may have been a domestic dispute.

The man was shot inside an apartment on the edge of the gay village - on Papineau Avenue just south of Ontario Street - around 9:45 p.m. Sunday.

Police had been called to the scene after a 911 call reported an altercation between a man and a woman.

The shooting critically injured the man, who later died in hospital.

The public security ministry has put the Sûreté du Québec in charge of the investigation because the shooting involves Montreal police.

Police are releasing few other details at this point.

(CBC News)

Jun 01 2015

VANCOUVER - A lawyer arguing for a class-action lawsuit against the RCMP says the cases of hundreds of female employees alleging the force discriminated against them must be considered together.



David Klein said the RCMP is toxic to women and has been for a number of years.

"Day after day, week after week, year after year, they were subjected to degradation, humiliation, and demoralizing comments and behaviour. Comments and behaviour that were not adequately addressed by management," he said Monday outside B.C. Supreme Court.

Klein is arguing this week that the complaints of 363 female RCMP employees should move forward collectively because that would provide a full picture of a systemic problem.

"This is conduct that occurs over months or years, by multiple perpetrators, that's ignored by management at multiple locations," he said of the women. Two thirds of them still work for the force.

No dollar figure has been attached to the case, but Klein said that with hundreds of cases involved, a judgment could be in the "many millions of dollars."

The RCMP has taken small steps to address harassment on the force since the suit was originally filed in 2012, Klein said. But he believes there's more to be done.

"They at least pay lip service to taking the problem seriously, but they're not taking the women seriously. And until they take the women seriously, until they take those claims seriously, the problem will not be solved."

The hearing began three years after for Nanaimo RCMP officer Janet Merlo came forward with allegations about discrimination she experienced throughout her career,

including lewd comments and actions from her male colleagues.

Merlo said it's time for the courts and the public to hear not only her story, but the stories of other women who've worked for the force across Canada.

"I think it's time the organization changed, changed for everybody," Merlo said. "It's gone on far too long and there's been too many lives destroyed, and still being destroyed because there's a lot of members who are still active. So that tells me that not a lot's being done to make it right."

The hearing is scheduled for five days, but a decision is not expected for several months.

TUESDAY
JUNE 2, 2015

Jun 02 2015

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. - Ontario's police watchdog is investigating the death of a 26-year-old man who died after falling 34 storeys Tuesday morning.

The Special Investigations Unit says police were called to a Mississauga apartment building on reports of a suicidal man.

The SIU says the man was found on the roof, and officers made their way there with a building security guard.

They say the man fell from the 41st floor onto a seventh-floor patio a short time later.

Jun 02 2015

TORONTO - Ontario has passed new legislation to increase penalties for drivers who text or use a handheld phone, impose a one-metre distance rule between vehicles and bicycles, and hike fines for "dooring" a cyclist.

Fines for distracted drivers will increase from the old range of \$60 to \$500 to between \$300 to \$1,000 plus three demerit points.

Using handheld electronic devices while driving has been outlawed in Ontario since 2009, except for 911 emergency calls.

Police say distracted driving is becoming the No. 1 killer on the roads, accounting for more deaths than impaired driving or speed-related collisions.

Fines for opening a door into the path of a bicyclist will also increase to the same amounts as distracted driving, and motorists must leave a one-metre distance - where practicable - when passing bicyclists.

Drivers must also wait until pedestrians completely cross the road at school crossings and at crosswalks with pedestrian-operated crossing lights, and not yield just half the roadway as required under the old law.

Jun 02 2015

MONTREAL - Montreal police say the city's new anti-radicalization centre, established by Mayor Denis Coderre in March to gather information and offer advice on the phenomenon of young

people joining extremist groups, has already received more than 100 calls.

The centre is still in the process of being created, but a police tip line was set up immediately.

In an email to CBC Tuesday, Montreal police said between March 9 and May 19 the centre received 125 calls.

The email said five of the calls were direct requests for help - one of them coming from Collège de Maisonneuve, a school attended by some young people with suspected links to radical groups.

Five students from that college flew to Turkey to fight with ISIS in Syria in January.

Three weeks ago, four other Collège Maisonneuve students were arrested trying to leave the country at the Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport.

A community police officer is now stationed temporarily at the college. Police said it's the only educational facility with such an arrangement.

Police said three of the calls to the anti-radicalization centre have resulted in "direct interventions," without further explanation.

Collège de Maisonneuve spokeswoman Brigitte Desjardins confirmed to CBC on Tuesday that the RCMP executed search warrants at the college last week, searching some students' lockers. According to Desjardins, investigators didn't find anything suspicious.

A committee formed to set up the anti-radicalization centre is now searching for a physical space to house it. They're also recruiting a director to lead the centre.

The email said once the centre is established it will be completely independent from the Montreal police force.

(CBC News)

Jun 02 2015

VANCOUVER - A British Columbia couple has been found guilty by a jury of plotting to set off handmade pressure-cooker bombs at the provincial legislature two years ago.



The panel convicted John Nuttall and Amanda Korody of conspiracy to commit murder and possession of an explosive substance on behalf of a terrorist group.

In an unusual twist, the conviction won't be entered until next week, after the defence has a chance to argue that police entrapped the couple into the plot during an elaborate sting operation.

The jury began deliberating behind closed doors on Sunday morning after hearing more than four months of testimony.

Jurors watched countless hours of video

evidence collected as part of a lengthy RCMP sting that involved undercover officers with supposed terrorist connections befriending the pair.

Video and audio surveillance showed the pair, who were recent converts to Islam, discussing their ambitions to engage in holy war against the western world for perceived injustices against Muslims.

Jun 02 2015

The OPP's emergency rescue helicopter base located at the Greater Sudbury Airport is still operating, a spokesperson for the force said Monday.

In a message to Northernlife.ca, Sgt. Peter Leon of the OPP said rumours the base had already closed were not true.

The OPP has said it will be centralizing both of its emergency rescue helicopters at its base in Orillia, a move expected to save \$254,000 a year, and allow the force to expand the operating hours of the two helicopters.

But the decision has been criticized over fears it will affect service to people in Northern Ontario. The helicopter is often used to locate people with dementia or stranded in remote locations - both common occurrences in Northern Ontario, where the population is older and the land mass much bigger.

Centralizing in Orillia has also been questioned, because the community is located in a snowbelt and the aircraft are frequently grounded in winter due to storms. When that happened in the past, the Sudbury helicopter could still respond to calls in southern Ontario.

(Northern Life)

Jun 02 2015

The former public face of the RCMP in B.C. has been suspended with pay.

Tim Shields, who was a public spokesman for the force, was suspended May 19, said Sgt. Rob Vermeulen in an email.

Vermeulen said Shields is the subject of an ongoing Code of Conduct investigation, but the details are "subject to the Privacy Act."

"Suspensions are one of a number of administrative steps available to the Force pending the outcome of the matter. They are not a disciplinary measure," Vermeulen wrote in the email.

Shields is facing two lawsuits filed by two former female co-workers, both of whom worked as civilian employees of the RCMP.

In 2014, Anitra Singh alleged Shields sexually harassed and verbally and physically assaulted her between 2009 and 2011. At the time, Singh worked as a senior communications adviser for the B.C. RCMP.

And in 2013, Atoya Montague claimed Shields sexually propositioned her when they were driving to the Interior in 2003 and that he made unwanted sexual advances toward her in 2008.

In a formal response to Montague's suit filed in B.C. Supreme Court, Shields said her allegations are false and he should be awarded special costs due to "significant damage they have caused to (his) reputation and career."

(The Province)

Jun 02 2015

Why have police cars in Vancouver changed from their iconic blue stripes and white body to the darker, more traditional black and white?



There's a story to that - in fact, the Vancouver Police Department's operations division conducted research among officers in 2008 and found 98% supported the black-and-white patrol car.

According to a previously in-camera presentation by VPD Supt. Daryl Wiebe, police cars were originally black - since that was the only colour available at the time.

Then in the 1930s, it was believed that black and white gave high visibility and helped reduce crime.

Some police forces moved away from the colours in the 1970s and '80s, but the colour remains symbolic for police. Today, police still like black and white - it's a cool retro look, it's distinct, and it's popular with officers.

"I love the retro look - everything about the black and white colour scheme says, 'this is the police!,'" said one police member in the department's research.

"I think it's classic and unique to policing," says another.

"Big WOW factor in my opinion; for what it's worth, I love it."

It was estimated at the time that decaling the black-and-white cars would cost \$800 - no additional cost for the vehicles' primary colours.

VPD announced in 2013 it was replacing its entire fleet of 176 patrol vehicles, which had previously consisted of Ford Crown Victorias - the new black-and-white car is the Dodge Charger.

Police spokesman Const. Brian Montague said officers were driving blue cruisers when he started in the 1990s before the colour was changed to the white background, blue stripes.

Decaling the new black and white cars was cheaper than the previous paint scheme, too, he said.

(24 Hours Vancouver)

WEDNESDAY JUNE 3, 2015

Jun 03 2015

TORONTO - More than a dozen people have been arrested as part of a Toronto-area police investigation into an alleged crime family with ties to an Italian criminal organization.



Guns, drugs and vehicles were seized by police as they executed 25 search warrants early Tuesday morning. At the same time, 19 men were arrested, Royal Canadian Mounted Police said at a news conference Wednesday.

The raids were conducted in Vaughan, Ont., and the Toronto neighbourhood of Etobicoke at approximately 5:30 a.m. The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU), made up of Toronto-area forces and RCMP officers, dismantled two alleged organized crime cells police say were involved in importing drugs, trafficking firearms, "extreme violence" and extortion.

"There's no doubt in the investigators' minds that the level of violence that these people were prepared to conduct and exercise in that kind of activity would include homicide," RCMP Supt. Keith Finn told reporters.

Police said the "key cells" were part of a crime family targeted in a two-year investigation dubbed "Project OPhoenix." Finn said the cells had been "significantly dented" by the arrests.

Those arrested are believed to have connections with the 'Ndrangheta criminal organization based in Calabria, Italy, officers said.

Police said they have reason to believe the specific cells are led by Giuseppe Ursino, 62, and Carmine Verduci, who was killed at age 56 in a Woodbridge, Ont. cafe shooting last April. Officers alleged that Diego Serano, 66, was also identified as a significant player in the organization.

"There is an established hierarchy. There's layers of insulation to protect specific individuals in there," Finn said.

"The challenges in this investigation are to peel back those layers to expose for the court and for the Canadian public exactly how it is they conduct their criminal enterprise."

In addition to the arrests, officers seized three firearms, approximately 8.5 kilograms of what is believed to be cocaine, 7 kilograms of marijuana, and a quantity of cash.

"There's a constant drip of illicit funds coming into this organization," Finn said.

(CTV Toronto)

Jun 03 2015

TORONTO - There will soon be stricter limits on what police record checks can disclose in Ontario.

Civil liberties advocates have long complained that non-conviction records such as mental health information and acquittals have been inappropriately disclosed.

There is currently no provincewide standard on what type of information can be disclosed but the Liberal government intends to create those standards with the Police Record Checks Reform Act.

Community Safety Minister Yasir Naqvi says Ontarians have lost their jobs or have lost out on volunteer opportunities because of disclosed mental health records or simply because they witnessed a crime.

Under the act, non-conviction records such as withdrawn charges, acquittals and findings of not criminally responsible by reason of mental disorder could only be disclosed through some vulnerable sector checks.

Police interactions known as carding and mental health interactions such as suicide attempts could not be disclosed under this legislation.

Jun 03 2015

CHARLOTTETOWN - A judge has confirmed guilty verdicts in the case of two Charlottetown men accused of trafficking in cocaine after rejecting defence arguments the accused were victims of police entrapment.

Judge Gordon Campbell found Sebastian Didier Ayangma and John Michael Keighan Scott guilty of one joint charge of trafficking in cocaine on or about Dec. 31, 2013.

He also found Ayangma guilty of three additional counts of trafficking in cocaine.

Ayangma and Scott were among dozens of suspected drug traffickers rounded up by police in January 2014 as part of an extensive drug raid in the Charlottetown area.

They are scheduled to be sentenced Sept. 8. (Charlottetown Guardian)

Jun 03 2015

PETERBOROUGH - When the police services board met without chairman Garth Wedlock Tuesday night, the board wouldn't say whether Wedlock will be the subject of an Ontario Civilian Police Commission (OCP) investigation.

Although it was reported Monday that Wedlock stepped down because he's about to be investigated by the OCP, the board wouldn't confirm it.

Board member Andrea Maxie chaired the meeting and she made this statement about Wedlock's absence:

"The board would like to briefly address the situation circulating in the media," she said, meaning the story reported earlier this week that Wedlock has stepped down.

"We want to be perfectly clear that Mr. Wedlock remains a member of the board," she said, reading from a prepared statement.

"The board has been directed by the OCP to keep all information regarding this matter confidential. The board will therefore make no further comment."

When asked why Wedlock wasn't in attendance on Tuesday and whether he's about to be investigated by the OCP, Maxie said: "We can't make any further comment."

Calls to the OCP were not returned Tuesday. (Peterborough Examiner)

Jun 03 2015

EDMONTON - The president of a tobacco company from Mohawk territory in Quebec has been found not guilty of importing millions of cigarettes without a licence for resale to a central Alberta reserve.

Robbie Dickson of Rainbow Tobacco was convicted last month in provincial court of two other charges under the Tobacco Tax Act.

They include possessing tobacco not marked for tax sale and for having more than one thousand cigarettes.

The Alberta Crown says whether he will be sentenced on those charges will depend on a constitutional challenge that Dickson has filed.

His lawyer says part of the challenge will focus on Dickson's aboriginal rights to trade tobacco with other First Nations.

Dickson was charged in 2011 after the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission and RCMP seized almost 16 million cigarettes from a reserve south of Edmonton.

The province said it would lose three million dollars in tax revenue if the cigarettes were sold.

The cigarettes were produced by Rainbow Tobacco near Montreal and shipped to the Montana First Nation in Alberta.

The plan was to use the Alberta location to distribute and sell the federally licensed cigarettes to aboriginals on reserves across Western Canada.

Jun 03 2015

Two Montreal police officers will receive sanctions after an intoxicated young man was assaulted downtown and then abandoned on Île Sainte-Hélène.

The police ethics commission found the officers, Luc Gauthier and Alain Poirier, failed to fulfil their duties, illegally detained a citizen and wrote up a false report about the incident.

According to evidence presented before the commission, Gauthier struck the young man several times after he shouted insults at police at the corner of Ste-Catherine Street and St-Laurent boulevard.

The two officers then drove the Montreal resident to Île Sainte-Hélène and left him there.

In their report, they indicated they left him at the corner of Berri and Viger streets.

Several 911 calls from motorists reporting the young man walking on Jacques Cartier Bridge corroborated the account.

The sanctions imposed will be determined at a June 30 ethics commission hearing.

(CBC News)

MONTREAL - A former interim mayor of Montreal has been ordered to stand trial on fraud and corruption charges.

Michael Applebaum's preliminary hearing ended today with Quebec court Judge Yvan Poulin ordering he stand trial. The accused chose a trial by judge alone.

He faces 14 charges, including fraud, corruption, conspiracy and breach of trust involving two real-estate projects in the borough where he served as mayor.

Applebaum later served as interim Montreal mayor for roughly seven months, beginning in late 2012, after Gerald Tremblay stepped down.

He was the first anglophone mayor of the city in 100 years and his time in office ended one day after his arrest by Quebec's anti-corruption unit in June 2013.

Evidence heard this week is subject to a publication ban.

Jun 03 2015

VANCOUVER - RCMP members may be individually answerable for complaints of mistreatment alleged by hundreds of the forces' female employees, but government as a whole bares no responsibility, a Crown lawyer has argued.

Mitchell Taylor asked a British Columbia judge on Wednesday to throw out claims by the group of 375 women - whose numbers keep growing - attempting to sue over claims of harassment, bullying and gender discrimination.

The federal attorney general and B.C. justice minister, named as defendants for operating the RCMP, are trying to block a proposed class-action lawsuit from certification.

About 30 of the women have turned out from across the country for the hearing.

But the proposed legal action ties together disparate allegations of workplace discrimination and harassment better resolved on a case-by-case basis, states written submissions argued in court by Taylor.

"The proposed class is overly broad, encompassing every woman who has ever worked in one of three categories within the RCMP in the history of this organization," states the submission.

It describes the plaintiffs' litigation plan as overly simplistic for attempting to pack together multiple wrongdoers, locations and periods of time.

"The proceedings would inevitably devolve into a series of individual actions."

Taylor's multi-pronged argument, which began Tuesday in B.C. Supreme Court, also contends time is up for the women to seek redress.

Until this week's proceedings, the government had largely stayed silent about waves of allegations that began when veteran Mountie Janet Merlo went public about years of harassment. Merlo is the representative plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Taylor has argued all complaints refer to incidents that allegedly occurred more

than two years before the 19-year veteran from Nanaimo, B.C., filed her initial claim in March 2012.

He told the court the government isn't arguing the merits of the allegations. But he suggested the law firm representing the women is trying to use a class-action procedure as a proxy for a Commission of Inquiry.

Justice Miriam Grouper pointed out that a commission would not lead to any damages, which the plaintiffs are seeking in the millions of dollars.

David Klein, who is arguing for the class-action, has argued there's systemic problems within the RCMP ranks and their claims should be combined.

"The courts should look at this as an organizational problem," Klein said Wednesday outside court. "The responsibility to women in the RCMP is owed by the government itself."

He said nearly 100 new women have contacted his firm since its first submissions were filed two years ago.

"It climbs every time there's publicity about the case," he said. "There are a lot of women who, when they read about this case, it gives them the courage to come forward."

A decision isn't expected for several months.

Jun 03 2015

TORONTO - The controversial practice of carding has been on hold since January and won't resume until fundamental changes are made, Toronto police spokesperson Mark Pugash said on Wednesday.



Mayor John Tory applauded the decision at an afternoon conference.

"The manner in which so-called carding was carried out, and the way it singled out members of the black community disproportionately, was not acceptable," he said. "I do not and cannot, as mayor of Toronto, accept that."

"Toronto police service personnel have not been issuing community engagement reports, or cards, since January," he added.

"A moratorium on carding was implemented then by former police chief Bill Blair and it continues today. Carding is not taking place at the present time."

The police board voted in favour of a new draft carding policy in April.

Mayor Tory called the new policy "a beginning, not an end."

Tory said police Chief Mark Saunders also assured him that information derived from past carding encounters would "be kept in a separate, secure database with very limited access provisions..."

"This is a significant, positive step," Tory said.

"The Chief has also instructed his officers...that there should be no random stops of citizens, that engagements should only be with those engaged in criminality."

Earlier on Wednesday, former elected officials, business leaders and community activists gathered at Toronto City Hall to speak out against carding.

Among those speaking out against carding were former mayors Barbara Hall, David Crombie and John Sewell and former Ontario chief justice Roy McMurtry.

Hall said everyone's rights are at risk with carding, adding that it's a policy that needs to end now.

"Lately, it feels like we've been going backwards. How can that be in 2015?," she questioned.

"Our job is to say no, not anymore, bad policy, get rid of it. We want to build a positive city."

The group - Concerned Citizens to End Carding - is calling for an end to carding on the grounds that it violates human rights and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Hall said carding is "destroying young people's futures and communities," and that its effects can have a lasting impact.

Tory said he met with the group and the "message has been received."

"I completely accept that strong expression of urgency communicated today by a respected group of community leaders," he said.

McMurtry said the new chief of police has inherited a major controversy and hopes he will withdraw his support of carding.

The former provincial attorney general said carding causes "great collateral damage," and should be abandoned.

Tory didn't go as far as to say carding was gone for good, but he did say it needed a serious overhaul.

"The challenge we are trying to meet now, is to find ways for people have their necessary engagements with people...but done in a context where people are aware of their rights, that police are aware of what people's rights are to not stay if they are not being detained or arrested, and also to make sure that whatever data is collected...is treated properly."

(City News)

THURSDAY

JUNE 4, 2015

Jun 04 2015

OTTAWA - Federal information commissioner Suzanne Legault says gun owners may never know if their registration records have been secreted away by the RCMP once the Conservative government creates what she calls a legislative "black hole."

Legault filed a preservation order in Federal Court on Wednesday in an effort to keep the government from destroying more contested gun registry data.

Legault told the Senate finance committee Wednesday night that amendments buried in the latest omnibus budget bill go far beyond the original 2012 law to simply end the long-gun registry and delete the records.

The changes - backdated to the day in 2011 that the bill was first introduced rather than when it actually passed - exempt and nullify not just gun registry data from the Access to Information Act, but all documents related to the registry's destruction.

The unprecedented rewrite of the law also nullifies any jurisdiction over the documents for Legault and even the Federal Court.

"This probably means that no one will be able to request information about whether the RCMP has really deleted his or her information from the registry, or about how much the destruction of the registry cost Canadian taxpayers," Legault told the Senate finance committee.

Legault, in a brief interview after her Senate appearance, said she has no evidence the RCMP continues to hold secret copies of the gun data outside Quebec.

But she continues to question why the Harper government imposed such a sweeping and unprecedented lockdown on the entire subject.

"You must ask yourselves 'why?'" she continually implored the senators.

The RCMP did not shed any light on that question.

Deputy commissioner Peter Henschel, who appeared at the committee after Legault, said the Mounties didn't ask for the backdated legal help.

"We were neither consulted nor involved in this legislation," said Henschel.

Henschel insisted all non-restricted firearms data outside Quebec - including paper copies held by provincial firearms officers - has been destroyed.

The RCMP has previously said there was no cost to deleting the registry but Henschel said they spent months developing and testing an "algorithm" to root out the records from what he called "a very complex database."

The Mounties maintain they provided all the data from the registry records they were required to under the access-to-information rules - a matter of interpretation that Legault says she'd be happy to argue in court.

"If the government's position and the RCMP's position is that everything that happened is way above board - everything they did is legal, and I am wrong - then let the police investigate the matter," said Legault.

"We're actually passing a retroactive law that will nullify any record that exists over everything that happened in this file."

The budget bill is on the fast track to be passed by Parliament within days before the rise for the summer recess and a fall election call.

Legault recommended two months ago that charges be laid against the Mounties for their role in withholding and later destroying registry records, which were subject to an active access-to-information request, before

Parliament had passed the law ending the long-gun registry in April 2012.

The Ontario Provincial Police have since begun an investigation of the RCMP actions after receiving the file from the Office of the Public Prosecutor.

Jun 04 2015

MONCTON, N.B. - The widows of three fallen Mounties are thanking the public for their support one year after their husbands were gunned down in Moncton, N.B.



Angela Gevaudan, Nadine Larche and Rachael Ross stood before hundreds of people gathered at a ceremony in the city Thursday to unveil the winning design for a memorial to the RCMP officers who were killed by Justin Bourque last June 4.

Constables Dave Ross, Fabrice Gevaudan and Doug Larche died and constables Eric Dubois and Darlene Goguen were wounded by Bourque.

Angela Gevaudan said they wanted to show their gratitude for a community that has embraced them and their families since the officers rushed to a neighbourhood in the city's north end to try and apprehend Bourque.

"To everyone near and far who has been there for us, thank you," she said. "Your light guides us as we rebuild our lives and move forward."

The women also thanked the government and the artist who designed a memorial statue that features the three RCMP officers.

They received a standing ovation from the crowd in attendance for the ceremony in front of Moncton City Hall, including representatives of all three levels of government.

The federal budget tabled in April allocated up to \$1 million for the memorial, which will be placed in a waterfront park.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said the shootings deeply affected the entire country and that memories of the fallen officers will endure.

"This violent incident was a vivid reminder of the dangers that our courageous men and women in uniform face every day as they protect communities across our nation," Harper said in a statement.

"The ultimate sacrifices made by constables Larche, Ross and Gevaudan will not be forgotten. We will honour their memory and we will work to ensure that

the RCMP has the resources it needs to counter those who threaten the safety and security of Canadians."

That message was repeated in Moncton by Steven Blaney, the federal minister of public safety.

"We are here to support the resources of the RCMP, support their policy, but also tell them thank you," he said.

The force has been criticized for not properly equipping its officers with adequate training and resources, such as patrol carbines.

Still, RCMP Assistant Commissioner Roger Brown says the force in Moncton has better equipment than it had a year ago.

"I think we're much better positioned, but we can't just say we're there," he said. "If we say that we're there, then I think we will fail the membership and we'll fail the public because then we will become complacent."

Brown said there will be an opportunity to speak in more detail about the resources for the force, but Thursday was not the day for that.

Moncton saw an outpouring of emotion in the days and weeks following the shootings. People often lined up to hug police officers, shake their hands or just thank them for their duty.

The RCMP in New Brunswick posted a video to YouTube on Wednesday to thank residents for their support.

The video features members of the Codiac Regional RCMP and support staff holding personalized "Thank You" signs for the people of Moncton, Dieppe and Riverview.

"As a police force, it's our job to look after the community, to look after you, but during our darkest days you looked after us," reads the video's opening caption.

"For the past year, the support the people of Moncton, Dieppe and Riverview have provided us, both personally and professionally, has been incredible."

The RCMP Musical Ride will pay tribute to the fallen officers with a free performance at the Magnetic Hill concert site in Moncton later Thursday.

Bourque was sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 75 years after pleading guilty to three counts of first-degree murder and two counts of attempted murder.

Jun 04 2015

THUNDER BAY, Ont. - Ontario's police watchdog says a man who died in his cell last summer received "substandard" care from Thunder Bay police, but there are no grounds to lay criminal charges against any officers.

The Special Investigations Unit says police were called to a church on Aug. 2, 2014 and found an unconscious man who turned out to be seriously intoxicated.

The SIU says paramedics checked him out before police took him to the station, where he was placed in a cell.

The agency says the man was found unresponsive in the early morning hours of Aug. 3 and paramedics pronounced him dead at the scene.

SIU director Tony Loparco says that while the officers were right to arrest him "for his own safety," they should have taken him to hospital after he complained of breathing difficulties.

And he says the man was left unattended in his cell for more than five hours, despite police policies that require jailers to make physical checks of any prisoners every half hour.

Loparco says an autopsy found the cause of death to be ketoacidosis complicating diabetes mellitus, chronic alcoholism and septicemia.

It's unclear whether getting the man to hospital would have saved his life, he says.

"A tragic series of missteps by all the officers involved in the man's custody conspired against him that day," Loparco said in a statement.

"While I am satisfied on the evidence that the care the man received from the police was substandard, I am not satisfied on balance that the care of any one officer was markedly so in the circumstances. For the foregoing reasons, the grounds in this case fall short of proceeding with criminal charges."

Jun 04 2015

OTTAWA - The Supreme Court of Canada says drunkenness isn't a defence against a charge of arson and has ordered a new trial for a man who burned down his former girlfriend's home in Brockville, Ont., in 2010.

Paul Tatton was drunk when he put oil in a pan, placed it on a stove and turned the burner to high before going to get coffee.

He claimed the subsequent fire, which destroyed the contents of the house, was an accident and was acquitted at trial.

The Ontario Court of Appeal, with one dissenting justice, upheld the acquittal.

But the Supreme Court, in a 7-0 decision, says drunkenness is not a legitimate defence for arson.

Justice Michael Moldaver, writing for the court, says the lower courts were wrong.

"Intoxication short of automatism is not a defence to a charge of arson," he wrote.

The trial judge determined that the arson charge was a "specific intent offence," meaning that Tatton could rely on self-induced drunkenness as a defence.

The Crown argued in its appeal that arson is actually a "general intent" offence, meaning drunkenness isn't a defence.

"I agree," Moldaver wrote.

He said arson does not involve sophisticated reasoning, as the risk of damage by fire is obvious.

"I have difficulty seeing how intoxication short of automatism would prevent an accused from foreseeing the risk of causing damage to someone else's property by fire," he wrote. "Complex reasoning is not required to recognize the danger."

Jun 04 2015

OTTAWA - An Ottawa police officer is in serious condition following a T-bone collision Thursday morning.



The incident took place at about 9:20 a.m. near Stittsville. When paramedics arrived, the police officer was unconscious.

The officer, who's in his 30s, was responding to a call when he crossed the intersection and T-boned another car.

He was treated for a serious head injury which initially rendered him unconscious. However, he regained consciousness when paramedics arrived at the scene.

He was taken to the Ottawa Hospital's Civic campus and is said to be in serious but stable condition.

The driver of the second car, a 52-year-old woman, was trapped in her car. Fire crews used the Jaws of Life to extricate her.

She was treated for hip, spinal and leg injuries and is also in serious but stable condition at the hospital. She was taken to the Civic hospital.

Paramedics reported both the officer and the woman are awake.

Police confirmed the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) will be investigating the crash.

SIU assigned seven investigators, two forensic investigators and a collision reconstructionist to find out what caused the crash. (Ottawa Sun)

Jun 04 2015

TORONTO - Nearly three dozen people have been arrested as a result of a police investigation dubbed "Project Pharaoh."



Officers said 50 search warrants were executed across southern Ontario early Thursday morning, in an area spanning from Barrie to Hamilton, and 35 people

were arrested as a result.

Raids were also executed in Toronto, Peel, Halton, Bradford, Durham, York, Niagara and St. Catharines areas, police said.

The search warrants were part of an investigation that began in September, involving federal, provincial and local police forces. More than 700 police officers were involved.

The investigation targeted a street gang known as "Monstarz," Toronto Police Insp. Bryan Bott said at a news conference Thursday.

Bott said the gang operates in the northwest quadrant of Toronto, but added that their investigation led officers to areas outside the city's boundaries.

"I think that speaks to their sophistication," Bott said.

"I don't think we're dealing with a street gang, I think we're dealing with a mid-level gang."

A number of firearms were seized in the raids, conducted simultaneously at 5 a.m. on Thursday. Police also seized approximately \$45,000 in cash, several vehicles and a large quantity of drugs.

Bott said 35 people were arrested on Thursday, and 27 have been arrested at earlier dates in connection with the investigation.

The investigation is ongoing, and more information will be made available at a news conference scheduled for 11 a.m. on Friday morning. (CTV News)

Jun 04 2015

WINNIPEG - The office tower connected to the new Winnipeg police headquarters will need a huge injection of cash to make it marketable.

The city's finance committee heard from staff Thursday that a study has been started to determine what exactly is needed to upgrade the building and at what cost.

Currently 110,000 of a total of 150,000 square feet of the building is empty. Staff said the city is losing approximately \$200,000 a month in lost revenue while the space in the 11 storey building goes unleased.

The shortcomings of the building didn't become apparent until tenants moved out and city staff got a closer look at the problems, they said.

Costs are also once again rising on Winnipeg's new police headquarters. Staff said they've gone up by a dollar per square foot.

They said the shared systems between the police headquarters building and the office tower are also making it tough for city to sell.

Chair of the finance committee, Marty Morantz, said the extra costs come at a time when the city's general budget shortfalls are an "enormous, enormous problem" for the city of Winnipeg. (CBC News)