

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

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Executive Digest

Aug 26 2015

A New England police department is waging a kinder, gentler war on drugs - offering rehab instead of handcuffs to drug addicts in crisis.

Page 2

Aug 27 2015

CALGARY - Police say fentanyl addicts desperate for cash are behind a quarter of the bank robberies in Calgary in 2015.

Page 4

Aug 31 2015

B.C.'s Independent Investigations Office faces the ire of a demoralized Vancouver police force after the police watchdog determined one VPD officer may have committed a crime during a dramatic shootout with a lone gunman last June.

Page 6

Aug 31 2015

WINNIPEG - Police forces in Manitoba will soon receive new laser scanners, body armour and other equipment thanks to the sale of property seized from criminals.

Page 8

Sep 02 2015

TORONTO - Police forces need to play by the same rules when it comes to carding, or street checks, Ontario's community safety minister said at a heated meeting on the topic in Toronto.

Page 11

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Police chiefs want power to seize guns, drugs in mail



Aug 30 2015

OTTAWA - Canada's police chiefs want legal authority to seize mail in transit to stem the flow of illicit drugs, fake medicine and weapons through the postal system.

In a recently passed resolution, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police say contraband is being sent through the mail "with impunity" because the law forbids officers from swooping in until a parcel arrives at its destination.

This poses a "significant challenge" for police, who must find "alternative ways to work within or around" the system to apprehend criminals, the chiefs say.

The resolution calls on the government to amend the legislation governing Canada Post to provide police with the ability to obtain a judge's approval to "seize, detain or retain parcels or letters" in the mail stream.

Canada Post delivered more than nine billion parcels and letters to some 15 million



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addresses in Canada last year. International mail flows through large plants in the Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal areas.

A November 2012 report the RCMP prepared for the chiefs' organized crime committee revealed that firearms, grenades, a rocket launcher, stun guns, dangerous chemicals and drugs including cocaine, heroin and marijuana were sent through the mail.

"These items represent a significant threat to postal workers and Canadians," say the chiefs, who passed the resolution this month at their annual conference in Quebec City.

"It is imperative that Canada Post and the law enforcement community develop ways to effectively work together to stop the transmittal of contraband through the postal system."


The 2012 report noted counterfeit items - from fake Olympic hockey sweaters to bogus passports - were also being shipped into Canada via the post office.

It called for greater collaboration between police and postal officials to detect suspect parcels.

However, in a background document accompanying the new resolution, the chiefs say recent court rulings have declared that postal inspectors cannot act as agents of the state when tipped by police to contraband making its way through the post.

The chiefs plan to write a letter to the federal public safety minister urging changes to the law, hopefully to be followed up with a meeting.

In addition, members of the chiefs' drug committee plan to discuss the issue with Canada Post representatives in order to further develop the chiefs' strategy for legislative amendments. The chiefs also seek the co-operation of federal, provincial and territorial justice officials.



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GROUP PUBLISHER: Morley S. Lymburner
PUBLISHER: Kathryn M. Lymburner B.A. - Kathryn@BlueLine.ca
NEWS EDITOR: Mark Reesor - News@BlueLine.ca
SUBSCRIPTIONS: Blue Line Store at www.BlueLine.ca
ADVERTISING: 1-888-640-3048

12A-4981 Hwy. 7 East, Ste. 254, Markham ON L3R 1N1
Phone: 905 640-3048 eMail: news@blueline.ca

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26, 2015

Aug 26 2015

PETERBOROUGH - On his first night as chair of Peterborough's police services board, Bob Hall made it clear that any information about the severance owed to Police Chief Murray Rodd and Deputy Chief Tim Farquharson, is private.

The former city councillor was made chair of the board during a meeting on Tuesday evening (Aug. 25), with City Councillor Dan McWilliams named vice chair. While the public portion of the meeting last only five minutes, the board continued their meeting behind closed doors for another three-and-a-half hours.

Afterward, Mr. Hall didn't say much about the nearly \$460,000 an arbitrator awarded to the two top police staffers after the Peterborough-Lakefield Community Police Service disbanded at the end of 2014.

"Listen, we have private contractual matters between the board and the Chief and the Deputy Chief," he says, adding not all of the information reported on the matter in the media is accurate, but correcting it would mean breaking the confidentiality of the two staff members' contracts.

Mr. Hall says he wasn't a member of the previous board that negotiated the Chief Rodd and Deputy Chief Farquharson's contracts, but he and the other current board members plan to honour what was agreed upon.

"We had a very productive meeting this evening," he says.

Mr. Hall is now the fifth person to fill the chair's position in about four years. The previous board chair, Andrea Maxie, resigned in early August alongside fellow member Dr. Tom Phillips.

The meeting on Tuesday evening was the first for the board's newest member Ken East. Mr. East was appointed to the board by the Province to fill one of the vacant positions left by Ms Maxie and Dr. Phillips. (Peterborough This Week)

Aug 26 2015

A New England police department is waging a kinder, gentler war on drugs - offering rehab instead of handcuffs to drug addicts in crisis.

It's a provocative new effort that's caught the attention of lawmakers throughout North America, including the Winnipeg Police Service.

"Very impressive," said David Thorne, the Winnipeg Police Service's deputy chief of operations. "Addiction is an illness. Not a crime."

Last June, the Gloucester Police Department in Massachusetts launched the Gloucester Initiative, including the Angel Program, where addicts could present

themselves to any one of their stations, turn in their drugs and be partnered with a volunteer "angel" to help them.

The initiative is the brainchild of Gloucester Police Chief Leonard Campanello, who told the CBC's Information Radio that it was a long overdue shift change in the way they tackle drug addiction.

"We've made a conscious decision here that if an addict presents to the police department, we will not arrest them," Campanello said. "Instead, we will try to facilitate them and fast track them into a treatment program."

Since its inception, more than 110 addicts have approached the police department seeking help - sometimes relapsing weeks later, only to return for help, without fear of reprisal.

"While we're sad that they didn't make it on their first time or their second time, we're happy that they came back to us," Campanello said, "because that means they're not out there for months on the street."

Thorne calls it a compassionate approach to policing that the Winnipeg Police Service is already trying to incorporate.

"The one thing that connects us all is our humanness. We all have the capacity to be compassionate," said Thorne. "In some cases, people who have an addiction are ill. In a lot of cases, it can happen to anybody regardless of their situation in life, their demographics. We have good people doing bad things, and they get caught up."

It is why, Thorne said, Winnipeg police have already established partnerships with agencies that deal with everything from homelessness to alcohol addiction.

It's also why the compassionate approach goes hand-in-hand when addressing the illegal opiate trade.

As with the rest of Canada, Winnipeg is experiencing an increase in the recreational use of deadly prescription drugs and witnessing the grim results. In the first two weeks of August, police reported two overdoses in the city, one was fatal.

But that doesn't mean the Winnipeg Police Service is ready to fully implement their own version of the Gloucester Police Department's Angel Program.

Not, at least, until a dialogue can be started with partnering agencies, both corporate and humanitarian. And not until resources are committed, both financial and human, to assure its success.

"In other words, if we're going to be on the front end, having people walk into our station like they do in Gloucester, but we don't have the back end, we don't have the resources to support us and to partner with us, then I think we're setting ourselves up for failure," Thorne said.

(CBC News)

Aug 26 2015

Charges laid against a 40-year-old off-duty City of Kawartha Lakes police officer from Dunsford who was

arrested in May in connection with an alleged \$250,000 fraud in Peterborough have been withdrawn.

Charges of fraud over \$5,000, laundering proceeds of crime and possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000 faced by Const. Mark Ryan Donaldson were withdrawn on Aug. 18, Ministry of the Attorney General spokesperson Brendan Crawley confirmed.

After the officer's arrest, City of Kawartha Lakes Police Service Chief John Hagarty announced an "immediate internal investigation" to determine if the allegations had any "direct connection to the officer's employment as a police officer."

Donaldson, a uniformed patrol officer, was assigned to a non-investigative role as the case proceeds, the chief stated previously.

The investigation continues, Hagarty confirmed Wednesday. Donaldson could still face professional misconduct charges under the Police Services Act, depending on the outcome of the internal investigation.

The criminal charges came after an investigation that began last November when \$250,000 went missing from the Ontario Civil Service Credit Union. Bank documents were falsified and the money was used to purchase property and other items, city police alleged.

(Peterborough Examiner)

Aug 26 2015

Dutch research shows that trained detectives of specialized observation teams are much better at registering details of a drug deal than ordinary civilians. Previous legal-psychological research revealed no relevant differences in observation skills between police professionals and civilians. The findings have been published in Legal and Criminological Psychology.

Judges and juries often assume that police officers' statements are more reliable than those of regular eyewitnesses. Because of this assumption, police officers' statements typically carry more weight in legal cases. Now this assumption is supported by scientific evidence.

In a unique collaboration between VU University Amsterdam and the Haarlem Police Force, researchers asked civilians and detectives of specialized observation teams to observe a drug deal near a hotel, which had been recorded on video. Both groups had received identical instructions prior to observation. Prosecutors had also given them a detailed description of the type of details in which they were interested.

Observation team detectives reported many more details about the deal than civilians, and their information was much more reliable. The detectives were also better at identifying drug dealers. Civilians, on the other hand, paid more attention to details that were completely unrelated to the drug deal. Specifically, they

were better at identifying a painting they saw in the hotel lobby than the police.

"The research findings were very surprising to us", the researchers said. "Until now, most legal psychologists assumed that police professionals are no better at observing crimes than ordinary civilians, but that does not seem to apply to these Dutch observation detectives. Perhaps this is due to their specialized training."

The researchers, Annelies Vredeveldt and Peter van Koppen from VU University Amsterdam and Joris Knol from the Haarlem Police Force, expect that this study will lead to a great deal of international academic interest in differences between civilians and police professionals in observation and memory.

(VU University Amsterdam/EurekAlert)

Aug 26 2015

SURREY - Carol Bradley is the Surrey RCMP's first female superintendent.

Bradley is the detachment's new operations support officer and is one of 26 female superintendents in the RCMP across the country.

Over her 29 years of service, Bradley has served in federal, protective, general duty and traffic roles in four provinces.

She also worked at the RCMP depot in Regina for 15 years where she held positions in cast training, recruiting and staffing.

(Surrey Now)

THURSDAY
AUGUST 27, 2015

Aug 27 2015

The Quebec provincial cabinet has confirmed that Philippe Pichet will be the new chief of the Montreal police force.



He will be sworn in on Friday Aug. 28.

Last month Mayor Denis Coderre hand-picked Pichet as his choice for chief, and City Council approved the choice on Aug. 17, but the decision had to be approved at the provincial level.

Pichet joined the force in 1991 and rose to Assistant Director.

Earlier this year Marc Parent, who has been chief since 2010, said he would step down for personal reasons.

(CTV Montreal)

A large advertisement for Commissionaires. It features a background image of a police officer in a light blue uniform with 'SECURITY' on the sleeve, smiling. Overlaid on this is a dark blue diagonal banner with white text. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'COMMISSIONAIRES' with the tagline 'TRUSTED · EVERYDAY · EVERYWHERE'.

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Aug 27 2015

WHITEHORSE - More RCMP officers are needed in the Yukon as the population grows and police deal with a recent spike in break-ins and vandalism.

Community groups have met with Whitehorse RCMP to try and find solutions to the rise in petty crime. Rick Karp, the Chamber's president, said local businesses are shouldering the financial burden of the rise in crime, installing additional camera systems, locks and bars.

According to Karp, the city's police need more support.

"I think it's time now, with the increasing populations in Yukon, for the Department of Justice, for YG [the territorial government] to facilitate having a few more RCMP officers here," he said.

The police recently said that break-ins in Whitehorse have tripled in the last year.

"The RCMP has stated quite clearly that they're maxed out," said Karp. "There are a lot of people coming to them, there are a lot of reports of vandalism - little things like graffiti, break-and-enters - there are a lot of things they have to prioritize and quite honestly they're doing everything that they can do."

(CBC News)

Aug 27 2015

CALGARY - Police say fentanyl addicts desperate for cash are behind a quarter of the bank robberies in Calgary in 2015.

So far this year, Calgary police have investigated 41 bank robberies. S/Sgt. David Keagan says suspects connected to 11 of those robberies have indicated their actions

were motivated by an addiction to fentanyl.

"This drug is so addictive and so compelling that it's causing people to elevate themselves to a form of crime that is what we'd consider to be very high risk for a low return," said S/Sgt. Keagan. "The amount of money typically people believe they'd get from a bank robbery is not even close to what they would get."

Thomas Beach with Recovery Calgary says the robberies show just how desperate some people are to get their hands on the drug.

"It's not that they're addicted to the criminal tendencies... they're addicted to the drug so bad that they'll stop at nothing to get it."

In 2013, Calgary police responded to a total of 31 bank robberies.

(Global News)

Aug 27 2015

VICTORIA - The coroners service says the body of a 28-year-old British police officer who went missing during a dive has been recovered.

Man Timothy Chu was vacationing in the Victoria area when he went on a charter dive in a marine ecological reserve at Race Rocks, in Juan de Fuca Strait, southwest of Victoria.

Chu became separated from a divemaster on July 5 and failed to surface.

A search involving military aircraft, the coast guard and the Search and Rescue Society of BC failed to find any trace of the experienced diver.

On Sunday, a fisherman spotted a man's body off a buoy at Race Rocks, and the coroner began the process of identifying him.

Chu's family has said he was serving as a special constable in London, was about to

begin training as a lawyer, and a guild in the capital city honoured him as Soldier of the Year in 2011.

FRIDAY AUGUST 28, 2015

Aug 28 2015

SURREY, B.C. - British Columbia's police watchdog has forwarded a report to Crown counsel into a downtown Vancouver shootout previously described by a senior officer as "extraordinary."

The mayhem began June 10, 2014, when plainclothes officers witnessed a shooting outside of downtown coffee shop that left the victim fighting for his life.

Deputy police chief Doug LePard said at the time officers exchanged gunfire with the suspect at the scene and then at a family and tourist attraction called Science World after a brief bike chase along a seawall.

LePard called the incident extraordinary at the time and something he had never seen in his 33-year career.

The Independent Investigations Office says its acting chief civilian director has completed an investigation and determined an officer may have committed an offence.

The director does not recommend a charge, a job the watchdog says is left to the Crown, which must determine if there's a reasonable chance of conviction and the prosecution is in the public's interest.

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Aug 28 2015

OTTAWA - Ottawa police officers who chased a man wanted in a London, Ont., murder investigation won't be charged in his drowning.

The Special Investigations Unit says there is no evidence the officers committed a criminal offence in the death of Muhab Sultan, who drowned in June after jumping in the Ottawa River to evade police.

The SIU says the officers even tried to rescue Sultan and were "tantalizingly close to reaching him before he dipped out of sight below the water's surface."

The agency says the chase began after Sultan struck an officer on bike patrol with his car.

He was wanted in the shooting death of 18-year old Jeremy Cook, who was killed on June 14 after tracking his missing cellphone to a car with three men inside.

A second suspect, 24-year-old Mohamed Ibrahim Sail, surrendered to police last month. Investigators have said a third suspect has been identified but isn't co-operating.

Aug 28 2015

LEDUC, Alta. - Alberta appears to have stepped back from a fight to stop a four-year-old girl from receiving a marijuana-derived treatment for her seizures.

Brian Fish, lawyer for the girl's mother, says the Crown has withdrawn a request for an order that would have forced his client to stop giving her daughter cannabidiol and submit her to conventional treatment.

The mother says traditional drugs were ineffective against the girl's seizures and doctors were suggesting brain surgery as an alternative.

Cannabidiol is a non-intoxicating part of hemp that the girl was taking in pill form.

The mother says it significantly reduces her daughter's seizures and that forcing her to stop taking it would be cruel.

Aug 28 2015

VANCOUVER - When the City of Vancouver sparked the idea of regulating pot shops, an April 21 staff report said there were 80 operating without a business licence.

Four months later, it says it received 176 applications under the controversial Medical Marijuana-Related Use bylaw. Sixty-nine are so-called "compassion clubs" that would pay \$1,000 each for a licence, while the rest are businesses that would be charged \$30,000 each if approved.

"It's not a surprise, it's a cash cow," said NPA Coun. George Affleck. "It's an opportunity to sell illegal drugs in our city, through legitimate retail space. It's attracting a lot of interest."

The city staff report, issued the day after the annual 420 pro-pot festival at the Vancouver Art Gallery, conceded the city has no authority to regulate the sale of marijuana, but can regulate land use and businesses. The bylaw passed June 24 by the Vision Vancouver majority city

council set a 300-metre minimum distance for marijuana shops from competitors, schools, community centres and facilities for vulnerable youth.

City hall seems to have left the door wide open for the industry to grow further. Those that did not apply by Aug. 21 may register for notice of the next round of applications, but must close or be subject to "fines and legal action." Rejected applicants who are already doing business must close within six months but may reapply at a new location.

(Vancouver Courier)

SATURDAY AUGUST 29, 2015

Aug 29 2015

EDMONTON - An Alberta judge has a few recommendations for party bus operators after looking into the case of a passenger who died.

Ashley Fair's blood alcohol level was three times the legal limit when he taken off a party bus by staff operators at the entrance of Elk Island National Park west of Edmonton in April 2011.

Fair then tried to run across Highway 16, and was run over by a semi-trailer.

The bus operator is no longer in business. Judge S.E. Richardson presided over a fatality inquiry.

He recommends that the Alberta Liquor

and Gaming Commission have the ability to pull over party buses to conduct inspections, drivers not be allowed to remove passengers unless other arrangements are made and having a set ratio of staff to riders if alcohol is being served.

(CHED)

SUNDAY AUGUST 30, 2015

Aug 30 2015

A class of new RCMP members will get their badges at Regina's RCMP depot on Monday. For one graduating cadet, Andrew Wood, the ceremony is a family tradition.

Wood will become a fourth-generation RCMP officer in his family. His father, grandfather and great grandfather all graduated from RCMP depot, the police service's training division in Regina, and were posted to F Division.

His father says it's a first for the RCMP.

"My grandfather served [with the] Saskatchewan Provincial Police and then RCMP in 1923," Wood's father wrote in an email. "My father served across Saskatchewan in the 1950s and 1960s."

Wood's father said he served in Hanley, Saskatoon and North Battleford between 1986 and 1995.

(CBC News)

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Aug 30 2015

A routine impaired driving check on Salt Spring Island turned violent early Saturday morning, ending with an injured officer, two smashed RCMP service vehicles, and the suspect apprehended under the Mental Health Act.

Not long after midnight on Aug. 29, police at a check stop flagged down a man driving a Chevrolet Blazer on Upper Ganges Road. The driver sped past the the stop to avoid it, nearly hitting an officer on the road.

Two officers then tried to block the driver with their cars, but the suspect drove into them, crushing the front of both vehicles, according to police.

The driver then managed to manoeuvre the truck, which police later discovered was stolen, and sped off north on Upper Ganges Road.

Police followed and found the Blazer not far away, upside-down in a ditch, a press release said.

The driver had armed himself with an axe and was attempting to set the interior of his SUV on fire with lighter fluid.

A firefighter who recognized the man managed to persuade him to surrender his axe. It took hours, but eventually the man was forced from the SUV.

Police said he was apprehended under the Mental Health Act and transported to hospital. They said they believe his injuries are serious.

One RCMP officer involved reported head, neck and back injuries.

(CBC News)

MONDAY
AUGUST 31, 2015

Aug 31 2015

B.C.'s Independent Investigations Office faces the ire of a demoralized Vancouver police force after the police watchdog determined one VPD officer may have committed a crime during a dramatic shootout with a lone gunman last June.



Stunning video footage of VPD officers' actions in the June 2014 shootout exclusively obtained by The Province suggests that the IIO's controversial decision is dead wrong, according to crime blogger Leo Knight, a former Vancouver cop.

"Guys on the force are literally ranting, they are so angry about the IIO casting a cloud over the brave actions in this case," Knight said in an interview Saturday.

The IIO forwarded a report to Crown

counsel on Thursday saying one officer may have committed a crime, following a lengthy investigation into the incident that culminated with officers and the shooting suspect coming face to face with guns blazing outside Science World.

Video footage of the shootout, first obtained by Knight, shows VPD officers apparently running towards gun shots as a suspect races around a corner toward a parked police car. The suspect runs with gun drawn around the back of the car. A male officer taking cover behind the car is exposed as the suspect comes within about a metre of him and takes aim. As the male officer scrambles for cover another VPD officer apparently armed with a rifle appears to fire at the suspect, who drops to the ground as the car's back window

shatters. VPD officers surround the wounded suspect, as the shootout appears to come to an end.

The video is a testament to the officers' training and the footage underlines an almost miraculous outcome that no one - police, public, suspect or the suspect's alleged target - died, Knight says. The incident last summer stunned Vancouverites as fast-changing social media reports detailed shots spraying in busy downtown Vancouver streets. It began with a targeted shooting outside a Starbucks in Yaletown and continued with a frantic police chase and gun battle along the False Creek seawall.

The suspected shooter, Gerald Battersby, is facing 10 charges, including six counts of attempted murder, after allegedly shooting



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his former employer Paul Dragan. Battersby is due in court later this year in connection with those charges.

Dragan, the owner of Yaletown's Reckless Bikes, was seriously injured in the shooting, but survived, recovered and returned to work within months.

The IIO's mandate, under the Police Act, says the police watchdog must forward a report for Crown's review if they decide evidence shows a crime "may" have taken place. Decisions on whether to approve criminal charges against officers are made by the Crown.

In an interview and in his blog posting on the video evidence and the IIO's decision - which can be read at www.primetimecrime.com - Knight argues that the IIO's standard for forwarding cases to Crown is too low.

"They seem to think their job is to find something to prosecute cops," Knight alleged. He says that he believes the outcome of the IIO's decision in the Science World shootout case will be stayed charges, but harm to police morale and operational ability will remain.

Knight compares the Science World case to the case of Delta police officer Jordan MacWilliams, who faced a second-degree murder charge in a November 2012 fatal shooting after an armed standoff with a gunman outside the Starlight Casino in New Westminster. The IIO forwarded the case to Crown counsel. The Crown charged MacWilliams but eventually dropped the case.

Knight says police officers will second-guess themselves when responding to potentially lethal shootouts if they believe the IIO is out to make cases.

In his memo to Vancouver officers following the IIO's announcement Thursday, LePard says VPD officers involved faced dangerous and chaotic circumstances but "were heroic in stopping a violent offender" and LePard will request a copy of the IIO's report to Crown counsel "so we can better understand the information underlying the IIO's decision in this case."

"I want to take this opportunity to again express admiration for the bravery shown by the officers involved in this incident and the professionalism that VPD members demonstrate every day in the performance of their duties," LePard writes. "I also want you all to know that the officers involved in this shooting will continue to have the VPD's complete support through this process."

(The Province)

Aug 31 2015

OTTAWA - An RCMP database on missing persons and unidentified remains, touted by the Harper government in 2010 as "concrete action" for the problem of murdered and missing indigenous women, is still incomplete and far over budget five years after it was announced.

The national database, plagued by technical problems, won't be fully in place until late 2016 - more than three years after it was supposed to be helping police across Canada

solve crimes.

The initial \$1.6-million budget for the project has swollen to at least \$2.4 million, drawing scarce resources away from other important RCMP initiatives.

CBC News uncovered details of the botched IT project through a document obtained under the Access to Information Act.

"Due to the delays, it will take another year and will cost approximately double the original estimate," says a June 28, 2015, internal evaluation of the project.

"In addition to the financial implications, this delay has had an adverse effect on the RCMP's work with Canadian policing partners who had expected the database to be operational by early 2013."

The database was a key element of a \$10-million initiative announced by the minister for the status of women, Rona Ambrose, in Vancouver Oct. 29, 2010.

The RCMP created a slimmer version of the database in 2014 without much of the system's intended functionality, with software updates planned this fall and next year, Staff-Sgt. Julie Gagnon told CBC News.

She added that the incomplete tool has not yet solved any cases.

"The automated linkage analysis function ... has not yet resulted in any confirmed matches of missing persons to unidentified remains," she said in an email.

An internal lessons-learned document says the database project was beset with problems, including delays in getting a basic security clearance for the contractor. The

RCMP itself provides security clearances for the government.

Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney noted in an email that another \$8.1-million project announced last year, creation of a DNA-based missing persons index as part of the RCMP's national DNA data bank, will become a powerful tool to resolve cases of missing persons and unidentified remains, and bring closure to families.

The data bank is expected to start accepting DNA profiles in the spring of 2017.

(CBC News)

Aug 31 2015

TORONTO - New road rules in Ontario will begin Tuesday that include stiffer fines for distracted driving and rules to help protect cyclists, students and tow truck drivers.

The provincial government says penalties for distracted driving will include an increased set fine of \$490 and three demerit points upon conviction.

Drivers without a full license will receive a 30-day suspension for the first conviction for distracted driving.

The Ministry of Transportation says fatalities from distracted driving are projected to eclipse those from drinking and driving by 2016 and a driver who uses a cellphone is four times more likely to be in a crash.

People who "door" a cyclist - opening a car door that a cyclist crashes into - will carry an increased set fine of \$365 and three demerit points upon conviction and drivers



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must now give cyclists a one-metre berth when passing them.

Drivers also face stiffer fines when passing too closely to stopped tow trucks and school buses.

Aug 31 2015

WINNIPEG - Police forces in Manitoba will soon receive new laser scanners, body armour and other equipment thanks to the sale of property seized from criminals.

More than \$672,000 has been set aside this year for the RCMP, the Winnipeg Police Service and provincial conservation officers, Attorney General Gord Mackintosh said Monday.

Funding for other municipal services will be announced in the coming days, he added.

The money was collected under the Criminal Property Forfeiture Act, which, since 2009, has allowed the province to confiscate property, cash and other goods linked to criminal activity. Money is put into a fund which police forces can draw on for new equipment and training.

"It really provides an opportunity to channel profits from organized crime ... into positive things," said Danny Smyth, deputy police chief in Winnipeg.

Last year, the Winnipeg force used some of its share to buy a new robot for its bomb-unit, replacing one that was 15 years old and behind the times technologically. The robot has been used in several recent cases, including an explosion that severely injured a Winnipeg lawyer in July as she sat in her family law office.

RCMP detachments across the province plan to buy new body armour, off-road vehicles and other goods.

The value of criminal property seized for this year's police funding is up slightly from last year, said program director Gord Schumacher, who added the vast majority of cash and property seized is linked to organized crime and the drug trade.

Aug 31 2015

CALGARY - A public awareness campaign is underway aimed at educating people about how to respond to and comfort victims of sexual assault.

The Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services is hoping the "I Believe You" campaign will make victims more comfortable about coming forward to tell their story.

Several videos have been produced and posted to YouTube with the idea that people will share and watch them on social media.

Numbers for the campaign suggest 97 per cent of sexual assaults go unreported.

They also indicate only 15 per cent of Albertans would be confident enough to know what to say if a sexual assault victim came to them looking for help.

The campaign is being funded by the provincial government and is being supported by 23 post-secondary institutions.

(CHED, CHQR)

Aug 31 2015

VICTORIA - There are no such things as unicorns, but a 911 caller in Victoria was adamant that he saw a unicorn chasing a screaming man through a cemetery on Sunday night.

Police say officers responding to the emergency call found a man wearing a unicorn mask waving a large black hunting knife as an apparently terrified victim tried to get away.

They say the second man attempted to get into his vehicle when officers approached cautiously and issued commands for the masked man to drop his weapon.

Police soon learned the supposed attacker and his buddy were making what was

meant to be a funny video.

The two men in their 30s apologized for the unintended impact of their actions.

No charges are being laid.

Aug 31 2015

MEDICINE HAT, Alta. - Three police officers in southeastern Alberta have been found not guilty of aggravated assault in an altercation with a man at a hotel bar.

Constables Robert Angstadt, David Hrycyk and Marc Seiller work for the Medicine Hat police.

A judge acquitted the three after James Halcro was injured when taken into custody on Aug. 25, 2012.

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But Angstadt was found guilty of assault and will be back in court on Nov. 8 for sentencing.

During the men's trial Angstadt's lawyer, Willie de Wit, said police officers simply can't walk away from an arrest if the subject does not comply.

He told the court that Angstadt followed his training to a T and if he is found guilty, police training all across Canada will be forced to change.

(CJCY, CHAT)

Aug 31 2015

VANCOUVER - The wrongful conviction of a British Columbia man who spent nearly three decades behind bars hinged on a flawed police investigation and Crown prosecutors who were willing to go to extremes to prove they'd found their man, a court has heard.



Ivan Henry's lawyer John Laxton was in B.C. Supreme Court on Monday to argue that his client deserves compensation after he was mistakenly convicted in 1983 of 10 counts of sexual assault and spent 27 years in prison.

"The consequences to Mr. Henry and his family have been devastating and the honour and integrity of the judicial system have been seriously harmed," Laxton told the court.

"His release from custody did not release him from the demons that haunted him while in custody."

The B.C. Court of Appeal quashed Henry's convictions in 2010 following more than 40 applications for relief filed by Henry and his daughters.

Reading a piece of correspondence between two Crown lawyers from 1982, Laxton said one of the prosecutors wrote that "the accused is so obvious," before insisting that if "one girl" could successfully identify Henry they would be able to link the remaining cases together against him.

Laxton also presented in court sections of a handwritten letter from one of the complainants sent to the private address of a police officer involved in the investigation, revealing what he described as an inappropriate relationship.

"I didn't want to let you down. I didn't want to disappoint you," read Laxton, describing the comments as reasons offered by the woman for identifying Henry as her attacker.

"You have a very special place in my heart and I think of you often," Laxton read to the court. "Take care of those blue eyes."

The positive identification came from a

photo of a police lineup that showed Henry being held in a chokehold by officers, which Laxton described as "seriously flawed and unfair."

"This is the bedrock point of the failed police investigation," he said.

Additional information that wasn't disclosed to defence included sperm found on several of the complainants, which Laxton said had a blood type that failed to match his client's.

"That evidence would have exonerated Henry," said Laxton. "(Henry was) deprived of the ability to prove scientifically he was not guilty."

Henry's wrongful-conviction lawsuit names the federal government, the province, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department.

The courts initially prevented Henry from holding prosecutors liable for negligence following his acquittal. But the Supreme Court of Canada overturned that decision earlier this year.

Cases of wrongful imprisonment are typically settled out of court in Canada, Laxton told the court.

"This is the first time a victim of such an egregious wrong has found it necessary to bring his claim for compensation to court," he said. "It will be a precedent that should never have had to be necessary."

Aug 31 2015

WINNIPEG - A Winnipeg man has been sentenced to one year in jail for a disturbing string of phone and email threats against police that hinted at a violent attack to come.

James Hammell, 56, pleaded guilty to uttering threats for several offences, including asking a 911 operator if he would get in trouble for shooting a police officer in the head.

Hammell also sent several messages to police applauding the June 2014 killings of three RCMP officers in Moncton, calling it "a nice, clean kill," and saying: "They sure do know how to deal with crooked cops in Moncton."

He also threatened to sexually assault a specific male officer.

Court was told Hammell was livid with police following a 2013 incident where officers served him with a protection order that someone had obtained against him.

Following that encounter, Hammell claimed police had threatened him and stolen his wallet which contained \$3,000 cash.

He filed a complaint with the Law Enforcement Review Agency and the Professional Standards Unit. Both concluded last year there was no merit to his claims.

Defence lawyer Iain MacNair said this case is an example of how "frustration with police is a growing concern in North America."

Provincial court Judge Dale Harvey agreed, saying high-profile incidents such as police-involved shootings seem to have soured public opinion.

"Very rarely do police get credit for the dangerous work they do," said Harvey.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

Sep 01 2015

BORDEN-CARLETON, P.E.I. - The RCMP in P.E.I. say one of their officers was injured after being dragged by a vehicle on the Confederation Bridge.

Sgt. Leanne Butler says the officer was approaching a bridge patrol vehicle that had just picked up a man who was allegedly considering jumping off the span connecting P.E.I. and New Brunswick.

Butler says the 28-year-old man from P.E.I. slid into the driver's seat and began to drive away, but the officer was hooked onto the side of the vehicle.

She says he was dragged a "considerable distance" before coming free and being taken to hospital with injuries that are thought to be non-life threatening.

Butler says the man crashed the patrol vehicle into another patrol car and a civilian vehicle at the New Brunswick end of the bridge, where he was arrested and taken into custody.

She says he is facing charges related to the incident, which closed the bridge for several hours.

Sep 01 2015

OTTAWA - A lawyer for Maher Arar says the RCMP is laying charges against a former Syrian military intelligence officer for alleged involvement in the torture of the Ottawa telecommunications engineer.

Lawyer Paul Champ says while the colonel's whereabouts are unknown, the charges represent the culmination of a decade-long RCMP investigation.

Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian, was detained in New York in September 2002 and soon after deported by U.S. authorities - winding up in a grave-like cell in Damascus.

Under torture, Arar gave false confessions to Syrian military intelligence officers about supposed involvement with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Sep 01 2015

HALIFAX - Court documents allege a Dalhousie University medical student who was facing expulsion told a psychiatrist he would obtain a gun and kill up to 20 people and himself.

The search warrant documents filed with Halifax provincial court allege that 30-year-old Stephen Gregory Tynes met with a psychiatrist on Aug. 20 and told the doctor he would stab the associate dean of undergraduate medical education and her daughter, who was also his classmate.

In the document, police say they later went to an apartment in Halifax and seized 1,834 rounds of ammunition for rifles, a Russian SKS rifle, a Henry Golden Boy .22-calibre rifle, a banana clip for a rifle, a baggie

with three spring clips and bore cleaner, two ammunition boxes, a firearms acquisition card and a gun club card.

None of the allegations have been proven in court.

Dalhousie University says Tynes has been suspended from the school.

A spokeswoman for the public prosecution says Tynes was arrested on the same day as his meeting with the psychiatrist and was later charged with two counts of uttering threats to cause death or bodily harm and one count of engaging in threatening conduct directed at a person or any member of their family.

Sep 01 2015

WINNIPEG - A Winnipeg man who defied a jury summons and invited court officials to "come and get me" now says he realizes it was a mistake to thumb his nose at the system.

The man - identified in court as Juror 6417 - offered a belated apology Tuesday after being convicted of violating the Jury Act following his actions last week.

More than 240 citizens responded to random notices they received and came to the downtown Winnipeg courthouse last week, where a total of four juries were selected for upcoming trials.

But Juror 6417 wasn't among them - he angrily told jury officials he would not be coming during several previous phone calls and claimed he didn't have to obey the summons.

He also expressed what Queen's Bench Judge Chris Martin called "racist views of several groups of people before the courts" before angrily hanging up, telling officials the only way he'd come to court is under force.

Martin presided over last week's jury selections and issued a warrant for the man's arrest when he failed to appear.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

Sep 01 2015

CALGARY - A Calgary woman says her stolen car was recently returned to her by police but they did a lousy job of searching it before giving it back to her.

Courtney Pickering says the thieves appeared to have left drugs, identification and weapons behind in the vehicle.

She says she has filed a complaint with the professional standards section of the Calgary police service.

Pickering says the car was stolen from the alleyway behind her home last week.

Several days later, she was relieved to receive a call from police stating her car had been located and she could retrieve it once the forensic unit had conducted its search.

But when she went to the impound lot to pick it up, she noticed a piece of paper in her cup holder, pulled on it and a bag of cocaine flipped out.

Pickering approached a lot worker and asked what she should do with the bag of

drugs. She followed the worker's advice and simply threw the bag to the ground.

When she returned to her car, Pickering says she discovered a crack pipe on the rear seat, four pieces of identification in the glovebox, a knife in the front passenger door and a lead pipe near the floor mat.

Pickering called police and an officer removed the evidence from the car. The vehicle was towed to a repair shop where Pickering searched her car again and noticed the butt of a gun under the seat.

"At this point, I can't tell if it's real or fake, but all I know is my hands have been on too many illegal things in the past 24 hours and I didn't want any more."

She says she filed her complaint in the hopes it will help prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.

"I'm trying to make enough noise so that hopefully maybe it'll affect that one officer or even anyone in their day-to-day operations," says Pickering. "Think of the tax dollars that could've been saved if they had just given it 10 minutes more than they did."

Officials with the Calgary police service say an investigation has been launched into Pickering's complaint.

(CTV Calgary)

Sep 01 2015

Police officers face an elevated risk of being injured in a collision when they are sitting in a stationary car as compared to low-speed driving, as well as when they are responding to an emergency call with their siren blaring as compared to routine patrol, according to a new RAND Corporation study.

In addition, officers face a higher risk of being injured in a crash when they are riding a motorcycle compared to a driving a car, driving solo compared to having a second officer in the car, or not wearing a seatbelt compared to wearing a seatbelt.

The findings provide the first quantitative estimates of the risk factors for injury to law enforcement officers in vehicle crashes -- the largest cause of death among police in the United States. The results are published in *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*.

The study finds that about one-quarter of all crashes and 30 percent of injury crashes studied occurred when a police officer's car was stationary.

"Police officers are at risk for getting injured in crashes under all types of driving conditions, not just when they are engaged in emergency driving," said Tom LaTourrette, author of the study and a senior physical scientist at RAND, a nonprofit research organization.

The study found that 80 percent of all nonminor crashes -- both those involving injury and those without injury -- occurred when officers were driving without lights or siren and more than 70 percent of the nonminor crashes occurred during routine driving.

"These findings suggest there are things that law enforcement agencies could do to re-

duce traffic collisions involving officers and reduce the chance of officers being injured," LaTourrette said. "Some steps are as simple as reinforcing the need to wear seat belts and limiting the use of motorcycles."

LaTourrette conducted the analysis by surveying 16 local, county and state law enforcement agencies across the nation to collect details about officer vehicle crashes and which crash characteristics are associated with officer injuries. The departments queried represented a variety of sizes, were geographically diverse and employed about 19,000 officers in total.

The survey yielded information about 854 crashes, including 90 that involved injuries to the officer driving. Findings from the analysis include:

- Officers are at three-to-four times greater risk for injury in crashes where their emergency lights and siren were on or when responding to an emergency call compared to routine patrol. However, the speed of an officer's car was not a significant risk factor.
- The risk of an officer being injured in a crash when he or she is not using a seatbelt is two-to-three times greater than when wearing a seatbelt. This is similar to the risk seen among all drivers in traffic accidents.
- Motorcycle officers are about five times more likely to sustain injury in a crash than an officer in a car and about 10 times more likely than officers in sport utility vehicles.
- A single officer in a vehicle has more than twice the risk of injury in a crash compared to having another officer in the car.

Conversely, having a nonofficer in the vehicle increased the risk of injury. A possible explanation is that a solo officer faces distractions from the radio, data terminal or suspect passengers.

LaTourrette suggests actions for law enforcement agencies to take to lower the risk of injury collisions, including restricting motorcycle use to situations where the use of other vehicles is not feasible and developing alternatives to bracket-mounted mobile data terminals, which officers often strike during collisions.

In addition, further study is needed to better understand the injury risk both when officers are driving under emergency conditions and when officer vehicles are stationary. Efforts also are needed to understand why officers do not always wear their seat belts.

(Rand Corporation/EurekAlert)

Sep 01 2015

The Police Ethics Commission has lowered the boom on a Montreal police officer found to have abused his authority during a rough arrest outside a bar on Decarie Blvd. in 2009.

Officer James Joseph was handed a 75-day suspension - without pay - in connection with an incident involving pepper-spray in a parking lot separating the Pub Paré and an all-night Belle Province hot dog restaurant in the early-morning hours of Nov. 15, 2009.

That night, Joseph and his partner Pierre Hawey were posted there as part of an operation targeting pimps and drug dealers.

The pepper-spray victim, Vasilio Kyritsis, arrived at the parking lot with two of his friends. Kyritsis went to Pub Paré to use an ATM machine, to then meet the two other men at the restaurant. They had apparently been at an Old Montreal bar not long before.

At one point, Kyritsis confronted one of the officers, whose cruiser was parked awkwardly in a private space. A confrontation ensued which led to Kyritsis being pepper-sprayed.

The officer believed the man was acting aggressively. Kyritsis was later charged first with resisting arrest, then assault on a police officer. Those charges ended up being dropped.

In its decision, the Commission wrote that Joseph "acted with malice and with a spirit of vengeance, which constituted a very serious aggravating factor." Making false accusations against Kyritsis, the decision reads, was "highly reprehensible."
(CJAD)

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

Sep 02 2015

BLAINE LAKE, Sask. - The RCMP has launched an investigation into how a suspect in a Saskatchewan stabbing got injured while fleeing from Mounties.

Two men suffered minor wounds in last Saturday's violence on the Mistawasis First Nation.

Police say a 20-year-old Saskatoon man found walking on a reserve road was detained, and officers discovered cocaine and cash on him during a search.

They say the suspect fled into a nearby field, but suffered a non-life-threatening injury while being pursued.

He was treated at the Shellbrook hospital and was later released from custody, but charges are pending.

A senior Mountie will look into the man's injury, and the RCMP has requested the Ministry of Justice appoint an independent observer.

Sep 02 2015

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. - Police are warning people in Newfoundland and Labrador about fake LSD that may be far more powerful than the real drug.

RCMP say the drug known as N-Bomb, Smiles and Smiley Paper has been linked to overdoses and deaths in other parts of Canada.

It looks like blotter LSD and mimics the effects of the hallucinogen.

They say it was previously sold as a research chemical, but can be up to 20 times more powerful than LSD.

Police say the fake version does not break down as quickly, increasing the chance of someone possibly overdosing or experiencing drug-induced psychosis.

Sep 02 2015

BERLIN - Malicious software targeting smartphones with the Android operating system is becoming more common, with some handsets already infected when they're bought.

A report by German security firm G DATA found that the samples containing such malware had increased by 25 per cent in the second quarter compared with the first three months of the year.

The company's 10th such report, released Wednesday, found that analysts could identify a new strain of malware every 14 seconds.

It says some phones by manufacturers such as Huawei and Xiaomi contain modified apps designed to spy on users or display advertising.

G DATA spokesman Christian Lueg says the phones appear to have been installed by middlemen, but in tracing the source "we lost the trail in China."

Users can detect the malware with free software.

Sep 02 2015

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. - Police say a man was prevented from entering a courthouse in St. John's, N.L., today as he approached the building with a revving chainsaw.

The incident happened at the Unified Family Court at about 9:30 a.m.

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary says sheriff's officers locked the doors to stop the man from entering the building.

Police say the man had been served with documents on Tuesday about a future court date.

There were no injuries.

A 43-year-old man was arrested and is facing charges of possession of a weapon dangerous to the public and assault with a weapon against a police officer.

Sep 02 2015

The RCMP officer injured after being dragged by a stolen vehicle on the Confederation Bridge Tuesday remains in hospital.

The RCMP say the officer's injuries include a broken femur.

The officer was transferred to hospital in Charlottetown from Summerside for more testing and consultation with a surgeon.

RCMP arrived at the Confederation Bridge Tuesday at 5:45 a.m. after receiving a call from bridge staff of a man walking on the 12.9-kilometre bridge.

Bridge officials say they found the man and were able to get him into one of their service trucks.

When the official who was driving the service truck went to speak with RCMP officers, the man moved from the passenger seat to the driver's seat and sped off toward the New Brunswick side of the bridge, according to police.

Police say the RCMP officer was dragged by the truck before he managed to break free from the vehicle.

The driver then smashed the stolen pickup into two vehicles near the New

Brunswick side.

The bridge was closed for several hours.

28-year-old Scott Alexander McNally of Borden-Carleton will appear in provincial court on September 21 on charges related to the incident.

Charges against him include being criminally negligent in the operation of a motor vehicle causing bodily harm, flight from police, theft of a vehicle, failing to stop at the scene of an accident, and causing damage to motor vehicles.

(CBC News)

Sep 02 2015

TORONTO - Police forces need to play by the same rules when it comes to carding, or street checks, Ontario's community safety minister said at a heated meeting on the topic in Toronto.

Hundreds showed up at the Toronto Reference Library for the final of five public consultations about the controversial practice of street checks on Tuesday evening. The police tactic allows officers to stop people on the street to collect information that's stored indefinitely to help with future investigations.

The city's black community says the tool amounts to racial profiling and has called for it to be stopped immediately, but police have resisted. At times, frustrations boiled over with protesters yelling their demands.

Minister Yasir Naqvi didn't make any firm commitments to ending carding, but said police need to make changes to make sure there's nothing random about the practice.

"We as government stand opposed to any random or arbitrary police stop that take place for no cause or reason or without any suspicious activity," he said.

"For us, that practice must end."

Police Chief Mark Saunders called the meeting "an important assessment."

Saunders said he's looking forward to the new regulations the province comes up with.

"The street check thing right now is something that definitely needs to have regulations put in place," he said.

(CBC News)

Sep 02 2015

The Quebec police ethics commission has handed down a 65-day unpaid suspension to a Montreal police officer after he unlawfully arrested, pepper sprayed, detained and laid unjustified charges against a civilian.

The report on officer James Joseph's actions was released by the Comité de déontologie policière on Aug. 26. Louise Rivard, who presided over the case, described Joseph's misconduct while in the line of duty as "reprehensible".

Joseph, who joined the force in 2004, filed false charges and lied, according to the commission's account of events.

The case dates back to November 2009 when Vasilios Kyritsis and two friends stopped at a restaurant after a night out in Montreal's Old Port. Kyritsis had two shots of alcohol and a bottle of water during the

evening. He was driving that night.

The three friends left the restaurant to withdraw money from an ATM in order to buy food. Kyritsis told police officers Joseph and Pierre Hawey, who were parked in a squad car on the same lot, that they should not be issuing tickets on private property. Joseph ordered Kyritsis to go home, telling him to "get lost."

This situation escalated quickly after Joseph and Hawey exited the car and blocked the entrance to the restaurant. Joseph pepper sprayed and arrested Kyritsis without warning after he told Kyritsis "you are not going anywhere."

Kyritsis was taken to a holding cell by Joseph and two other officers. He was not told the reason for his arrest, informed of his rights or given the opportunity to call his lawyer.

Kyritsis was released upon promising to appear in court for resisting arrest and given an infraction for loitering drunk in public. Six months later, the charges against Kyritsis had changed to include obstructing justice and assault against Joseph.

When Joseph testified in 2010, his version of events differed greatly from Hawey's testimony. The charges laid against Kyritsis were dropped in 2012.

In the eyes of the commission, Joseph acted with "malice and in the spirit of vengeance" that night and in the events that followed.

The commission also wrote in its decision that the 65-day suspension given to Joseph was to ensure that he will not re-offend. The harsh penalties are also meant to dissuade other officers from committing similar acts of police misconduct.

(Montreal Gazette)

Sep 02 2015

TORONTO - The provincial government cannot compel Ontario's police forces to hand over their data on street checks - including information as to how many times the controversial practice has helped solve crimes, according to Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services Yasir Naqvi.



That means that as the province continues its review of street checks, commonly known as "carding," it will do so without knowing how often the practice has actually proved useful to investigations, by leading to an arrest, to the discovery of a weapon or drugs, or more.

"Legally we are not entitled to that data, under the Police Services Act, unless we require it in the regulation," Naqvi told report-

ers during Tuesday's public consultation at the Toronto Reference Library.

Naqvi said his ministry has been consulting with Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner about how to gain access to this policing data in aggregate form, stripped of any personal information.

"One of the reasons why this regulation is needed is to give the province the ability to require the disclosure of data, specific to how police services conduct street checks, to ensure that they are conducted in a way that is rights-based, fair and consistent across the province," Lauren Callighen, Naqvi's press secretary, said in an email.

Under Ontario's Police Act, Callighen said, there are certain circumstances where the province may inspect municipal police services to review their practices, such as the use of force. "This regulation will ensure the same oversight for any policy on street checks."

Nonetheless, in the absence of such data, the province described street checks in its online discussion document as a "necessary and valuable tool for police" when used properly - something critics of the provincial review have decried as, at best, presumptive.

Naqvi's office did not respond to a question about what criteria were used to describe street checks as "a necessary and valuable tool," if not police data.

The lack of information as to how carding interactions produce results has become one of the central issues in the heated debate around the practice.

(Toronto Star)

THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 3, 2015

Sep 03 2015

EDMONTON - Edmonton police are foreshadowing trouble after some people were duped by fraudulent astrologers and psychic readers into believing they were cursed with black magic or witchcraft.



Police say they've been getting complaints about such scams since April.

They say victims across Canada have paid between \$2,000 and \$15,000 to self-proclaimed fortune tellers.

In one case a family paid \$85,000, but the fraudsters left the country and no arrests were made.

Investigators point to requests for upfront money to carry out healing rituals, or expensive plans to perform prayers, as signs of fraud.

Const. Harpreet Jhinjar, an Edmonton police spokesman, says in a release that it's difficult to track the criminals, who often have visas and quickly disappear when they believe they could be caught.



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