

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

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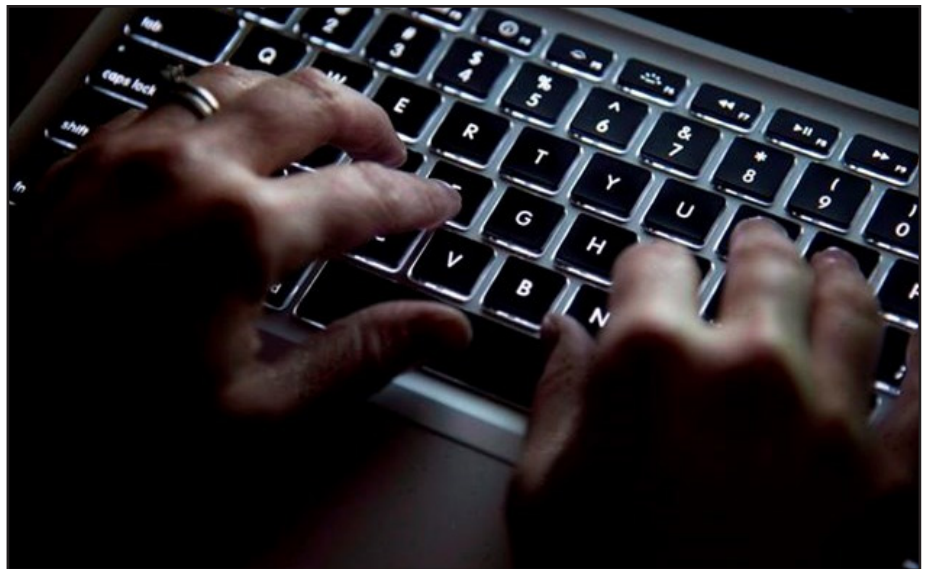
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BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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RCMP setting up cybercrime unit



Dec 02 2015

OTTAWA - The RCMP plans to set up a cybercrime team to investigate and disrupt the most significant online threats to the country's reputation and economy.

The national police force says the Ottawa-based team will probe cyber-related criminal activity targeting the federal government, key business assets and national critical infrastructure, such as power grids and banking systems.

The initiative, to be fully in place by

2020, is a central feature of the RCMP's cybercrime strategy released Wednesday.

The Mounties want to address the challenge of policing digital misdeeds when criminals - and the evidence needed to catch them - often prove elusive.

The borderless nature of Internet-related crime - from digital identity theft to online child exploitation - is the biggest challenge confronting investigators, since "the perpetrator of the offence could be anywhere in the world," said RCMP Chief Supt. Jeff Adam.



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The strategy is backed by \$30 million over five years, enough to create 40 new positions to be staffed by police officers and civilians.

The Mounties unfurled a 15-point action plan that also includes:

- A dedicated federal intelligence unit to identify new threats;
- Efforts to improve forensic capabilities to handle digital evidence;
- Expanded training opportunities for investigators and intelligence analysts.

The force will develop means of more effectively recruiting personnel with the computer and network engineering skills to fight crime in cyberspace. In addition, the RCMP plans to work more closely with private-sector and international partners.

"Cybercrime is vast in scope and magnitude and requires public and private-sector organizations to work together and share information on new and emerging cybercrime threats," the strategy document says.

RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson told a security conference last week that police exhibit rooms are stacked with digital devices - and the trick is finding ways to extract the valuable evidence hidden on them.

Paulson said that while the Internet is a marvellous place, it has a dark and dangerous side that creates a need for a law enforcement presence.

The Mounties are grappling with the dilemma of trying to investigate crime in a virtual world where both criminals and law-abiding people jealously guard their privacy.

Paulson argued the RCMP needs access to Internet subscriber information - without the time-consuming exercise of obtaining a judicial warrant - to keep pace with child predators and other online villains who use encryption to mask their activities.

The top Mountie said a Supreme Court of Canada ruling that curtailed the flow of basic data about customers - such as name

and address - has "put a chill on our ability to initiate investigations."

Adam said Wednesday the police force understands the need for a balance between privacy and the ability to conduct investigations.

The RCMP is committed to exploring with Canadians how they expect the police to enforce the laws on the Internet, he added.

One of those provisions "may or may not be warrantless access," Adam said. "It would certainly assist in some areas, but we will take the advice and follow the guidance of government."

The new strategy does not delve into legislative specifics, saying only that "Canada's legal and public policy regime will need to keep pace with the evolution of technology to permit the effective investigation of cybercrime, both domestically and internationally."

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2015

Nov 26 2015

KAMLOOPS, B.C. - The Crown has abandoned its trial against a British Columbia man accused of operating a "chop shop" for firearms after a judge ruled RCMP made too many mistakes in its investigation.

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Hope Hyslop said police breaches of the charter were too numerous and serious to allow evidence against Charles Patrick to be admitted after guns and ammunition were seized during a raid.

Patrick was charged with eight weapons-related offences, and a trial began in September. The end of proceedings means the charges have been dropped.

Mounties pulled over Patrick's pickup in December 2013 and found a loaded sawed-off shotgun inside his jacket.

The Crown said police seized a number of other modified weapons from his home the same day.

Crown lawyer Frank Caputo said police found another sawed-off shotgun, a shortened rifle, tools to modify guns and "ammo all over the place."

At a news conference following the raid, RCMP displayed the guns and said the operation was gang-related.

While Hyslop acknowledged unlawful firearms are a major concern, she said police errors were too serious to allow the evidence.

Breaches included initially questioning Patrick when he was pulled over and failing to allow him adequate time to call a lawyer after arrest.

Police also did not have a complete copy of a search warrant for the raid while Patrick was not home and provided contradictory facts to a judge to obtain the search warrant, Hyslop said.
(The Province)

Nov 26 2015

EDMONTON - What goes up must come down - including those who climb a tree to escape police. That's exactly what happened Wednesday night in the west end of Edmonton..

Police said an officer responded to a call about a man walking erratically on the shoulder of a road at about 9:50 p.m.

When the police car approached the man and the officer tried to talk to him, he sprayed the officer with what is believed to be bear spray. "A round was subsequently discharged by police," an EPS release said.

There was a large police presence in the area and the police chopper could be seen circling a wooded area nearby.

Police said the man ran away in a south direction and the Canine Unit, Tactical Unit and Air 1 found him at approximately 10:30 p.m. He had climbed about 30 feet up a tree.

After four hours of negotiations, the man surrendered to police. In addition to bear spray, officers also found a replica gun in his possession. He was not injured.

Frederick Andrews, 27, is charged with assaulting a peace officer with a weapon, possessing of a weapon and breaching recognition. Andrews also had 14 outstanding warrants for aggravated assault, assault, possession of a weapon, and several breaches.

The EPS officer sustained non-life threatening injuries, and was not taken to hospital.
(Global News)

Nov 26 2015

VANCOUVER - Mayor Gregor Robertson is convinced that the Vancouver police don't randomly spy on people.

At a meeting Thursday (November 26) of the police board that Robertson chairs, the mayor asked chief constable Adam Palmer if the force uses a device called StingRay to track mobile phones.

"We never have and never would and never will intercept any kind of private communications without judicial authorization," Palmer replied.

Palmer also said that he can tell the board behind closed doors the tools deployed by the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) in this kind of investigation that is covered by a search warrant.

"I'm not about to tell the Hells Angels and the Independent Soldiers and the United Nations and the Bacon brothers what type of equipment the VPD uses in high-level, high-risk operations," Palmer said.

In the audience at the meeting was Doug King, a lawyer with Pivot Legal Society, who had raised concerns about the possible existence of the surveillance device.

During a break, Robertson told reporters: "The chief [Palmer] gave a solid answer to the board today in responding to the community concerns about technologies being used. I think there's a strong rationale for not disclosing what technology the VPD uses, but assuring the public that there's no mass surveillance or any surveillance done without the approval of the courts. That's what we would expect."
(Georgia Straight)

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK Celebrating 20 Years

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

RICHMOND - The City of Richmond is examining creating its own police force to give it more control at the civic level, but also costing taxpayers millions in additional funding per year.



Mayor Malcolm Brodie said on Thursday his biggest issue with how the RCMP is run is that Ottawa calls the shots, and the city's communications with them are limited.

"Cost control, transparency and accountability - we're (currently) in a position that the RCMP is basically able to dictate some added costs and we're in a position where we have to pay them," he said, pointing to how the city has to pay for its share of the RCMP B.C. headquarters, in Surrey.

"The best example is Green Timbers, where years later we still don't have an agreement for what we have to pay in terms of extra costs for that building.

"They had a perfectly good headquarter in Vancouver, they moved to Surrey and we're supposed to pay a lot of extra costs."

The cost for the city, assuming Richmond will have an independent police force in 2018, would be anywhere from \$46.9 to \$48.6 million - in addition to a one-time, \$20-\$24 million transition cost.

The current RCMP projected cost in 2018 is \$44.7 million.

What Richmond would gain under an independent police model is arguably more control. In a civic police board model, the chairperson of the board - which oversees the force - is the mayor of the city.

"You will have very direct input into that as mayor and a higher level of control, but the offset is that in the usual police model you have about seven board members," he said. Five of those members are expected to be appointed by the provincial government.

The proposed change would also likely allow Richmond to keep its officers here, instead of being transferred around every few years as many RCMP officers do. It also gives the city the ability to hire local residents who know the city.

While there are some advantages, Brodie said his chief concern is the major cost involved.

To cover the differences, the city is expected to come up with the transition fee from its savings, Brodie said, while implementing a 1.08-1.9% property tax hike above standard increases - that money will have to be maintained on an annual basis.

"We believe the local (RCMP) detachment has provided a good level of service, we

believe we are a relatively safe community, but the issues we're looking at are higher level and long term," Brodie said.

"The question is whether a local police force with a local police board will be more responsive to the local priorities than the RCMP could be."

(24 Hours Vancouver)

EDMONTON - Edmonton police say they presented old information to city council in a budget briefing and the plan to treat mental health patients at the remand centre is no longer being considered.

"Definitely off the table from our standpoint," Supt. David Veitch, who heads the co-

ordinated policing division, said Thursday.

Police are struggling with long waiting times at emergency departments when they apprehend involuntary mental health patients. They are people who have not committed a crime, but whose condition makes them a threat to themselves or others. Officers were stuck waiting at hospital an average 3.3 hours per patient this fall.

Those patients would get care quicker - and police would get back on the streets sooner - if the patients could be treated by the doctors and psychiatrists currently available at the new Edmonton Remand Centre, police said in a budget briefing document this week.

But when that news came out Wednesday, mental health advocates reacted in shock and called it horrific. They said it

would further stigmatize people who have not committed a crime and result in fewer people calling for help when they need it.

Veitch tried to head off those concerns. "We weren't going to be putting them with the general population," he said.

He said the idea came out of brainstorming sessions where many options were discussed. The budget brief says: "EPS is working with the province and hopes to find some type of resolution in the near future," but Veitch said that line should not have been included.

Staff were trying to show councillors the full range of options they considered to deal with the problem, but they have not been pursuing this option, Veitch said. He said they are not currently looking at getting any other facilities designated under law to receive involuntary mental health patients. Only five city hospitals currently have this designation, which has to be approved by the province.

On Thursday, Alberta Health also weighed in to say it is not looking at changing the Alberta Mental Health Act to allow the kind of practice described," spokeswoman Carolyn Ziegler said in a written statement.

"We recognize the current mental health and addictions system can serve Albertans better. We will be receiving recommendations from the Mental Health Review before the end of the year, and will determine the best path forward in light of those recommendations."

Veitch said police have also been trying to bring down waiting times by not apprehending people in crisis, instead connecting them with family members familiar with their condition or other community supports. This works for many of the less severe cases and "our wait time has come down," he said. "We're beginning to see some savings."

The police are also working with Alberta Health Services to better triage the patients police bring in, Veitch said. Currently, police will ask a series of questions to determine if the person poses enough of a risk to be apprehended. Then they bring them to the hospital, sit with them for hours, and see doctors interview the person and sometimes send them on their way.

Veitch said they're working to develop a shared diagnostic tool police can use make sure they and local psychiatrists are considering the same factors when they make these difficult, subjective decisions.

(Edmonton Journal)

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2015

Nov 27 2015

KUUJJUAQ - Despite concerns from regional leaders, Nunavik's Kativik Regional Police Force is defending its plans to equip officers with high-powered rifles.

The region's new police chief, Michel

Martin says officers need the weapons to respond to certain hostile situations.

When police respond to calls involving "active shooters," who are often barricaded inside a home, Martin says an officer positioned outside may not be able to return fire with their pistol.

But this plan drew questions from Kativik Regional Government councillors, meeting in Kuujuaq this week, who said they are concerned about Nunavimmiut who have been shot and killed during altercations with police.

"Our role is to serve and protect," Martin told KRG councillors Nov. 26.

"Because the people themselves are hunters and use rifles to hunt, this is the type of weapon we see, while police officers are under-armed."

KRPF officers currently carry pistols, but those guns have a short range of fire, Martin said.

The KRPF's first task, when called to respond to a situation involving an armed person threatening violence, is to secure the area, Martin said, which means evacuating other people in the home or vicinity.

"When a person comes out and is using a long rifle, [police officers are] a very easy target - we need distance and time. The farther away they are, the less of a target they are," Martin said.

"And if that suspect starts shooting, he will need to be neutralized."

(Nunatsiaq News)

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29, 2015

Nov 29 2015

MONTREAL - Eight people have been taken into custody following a series of predawn raids targeting Montreal organized crime and the drug trade.

A Montreal police spokesman said officers also seized more than \$100,000 cash, two firearms and an undetermined amount of drugs including cocaine, crystal meth and amphetamines.

Const. Andre Leclerc said the people stopped by police include five men between 26 and 48 years of age and three women between 36 and 50.

Leclerc said some of them are tied to street gangs and organized crime.

The police operation targeted ten locations in Montreal and the nearby suburb of Longueuil.

Nov 29 2015

CALGARY - Calgary police need to have a real ear for crime while they're waiting for a final head-nod on their noise meters.

Cops in the city are using the Traffic Safety Act's "excessive noise from a vehicle" section, and Traffic Unit Staff Sgt. Dean Vegso says it's working, but they are not relying on the technology - yet.

Instead the officers are relying on ob-

servation - if a vehicle rolls up next to a police cruiser and the coins in the cup holder start to rattle, well, maybe that vehicle is excessively loud.

"We have issued those tickets, city-wide, and we have had convictions in court," Vegso said.

"We just haven't used the instruments yet as a critical piece of evidence."

And Vegso said those instruments, which there are currently two at the local traffic unit, won't be relied on, "Until we're sure the courts will fully accept the noise meter."

There's optimism that will happen soon, Vegso said.

Before police took over, Calgary had attempted to use technology as evidence against excessive noise under a city bylaw, but the initiative ultimately fell apart.

(Calgary Sun)

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2015

Nov 30 2015

WINNIPEG - Manitoba says it's beefing up its restraining orders to be the toughest in Canada.



Attorney General Gord Mackintosh expects to introduce legislation today which he says will give domestic violence victims the strongest protection in the country.

The governing NDP says the bill would make it easier for people to get protection orders.

Mackintosh says that right now more than half the applications for protection orders are denied.

The government says the bill will include a ban on possessing firearms for those subject to a protection order and expansion of GPS monitoring.

The move comes after the killing of two women - one who was denied a protection order against her former boyfriend five months before he was charged in her death.

Nov 30 2015

OTTAWA - A spate of shootings this month has prompted Ottawa police to beef up its guns and gangs unit.

Twelve officers have been reassigned to the guns and gangs unit in order to deal with 11 shootings since Nov. 9.

Police say the shootings were all targeted attacks.

Officials say the unit, which normally has 10 members, will have 22 on a temporary basis.

This is the second year in a row Ottawa police have been forced to reassign officers to the unit.

Last year, additional officers were also assigned to the force's direct action response team which deals with gang members on the streets and helps suppress gang activity. (CFRA)

Nov 30 2015

SASKATOON - Saskatoon city council has unanimously approved a 4.78-per cent increase - a net increase of \$3.83 million - to the Saskatoon Police Service's annual budget.



The rise in police funding is one of the highest increases in this year's budget, which is being debated Monday and scheduled to continue into Tuesday. The funding will be used so the police agency can hire eight more constables.

Saskatoon police Chief Clive Weighill, who saw his budget request rejected last year, said there are unfortunate issues with marginalization of First Nations people that continue to drive the high crime rate in Saskatoon.

Policing in the city will cost \$84.3 million in 2016 with the budget approval.

In addition to the increase in funding from the city, the provincial government re-

cently gave the Saskatoon Police Service \$4.8 million in grants to help fund several special investigation units. The money will also help pay for 42 existing positions in 2015-16.

The municipal police grant will help fund:

The Police and Crisis Team, comprised of one police officer and one mental health worker, to assist people suffering from a mental health crisis. The unit aims to reduce the number of people who are in police custody or emergency rooms because of mental health issues. The province also gave money to Regina police to start their own crisis team.

The Combined Forces Special Enforcement unit, which targets organized crime. The unit includes RCMP members and city police officers from Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert.

The Serious and Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program, which provides intense supervision and inter-agency case management for chronic offenders.

The Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) unit, which investigates cases of Internet luring and possession, production and distribution of child pornography.

(Saskatoon Star Phoenix)

Nov 30 2015

BRANDON - A police officer in Brandon, Man., has been stabbed five times near Brandon University.

Police and fire crews were called to a building on Rosser Avenue at about 4:30 p.m. after reports of a fire. When officers arrived they were told that a 19-year-old, who lived

in the building, was witnessed smashing windows and setting his apartment ablaze.

A sprinkler system in the property had extinguished most of the flames by the time crews arrived, police said. But the 19-year-old, who is known to police, was caught on surveillance footage.

At about 5:20 p.m., a Brandon police officer headed for the university in search of the suspect and another male. The officer exited his cruiser and approached the 19-year-old suspect and his 16-year-old brother. That's when the 19-year-old man started a fight with the officer, police said.

The officer thought he was being punched when in fact the suspect had a small knife in hand and was stabbing him with each blow. The suspect stabbed the officer four times in the leg and once in the chest, nicking his lung in the process, police said.

The suspect's 16-year-old brother was armed, too, but did not get involved.

"He was in possession of a weapon, this being bear spray, but didn't take it out or use it, he just kind of stood there," Sgt. Kevin McLean told CBC News.

Other officers arrived on scene and arrested both suspects. They remain in custody.

The 31-year-old officer who was stabbed was taken to hospital in stable condition. He is expected to be discharged Monday night, police said. He has been with the Brandon Police Service for 6 years. He is married and is the father of an infant son.

Charges are pending, police said. The investigation is ongoing.

(CBC News)

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Dec 01 2015

WINNIPEG - Tougher penalties are now in effect for impaired drivers in Manitoba.

The changes, first announced last June, include requiring everyone convicted of impaired driving to have interlock systems installed in their vehicles.

The device only allows a vehicle to be started after a breath sample is taken.

The province is also extending the driver's licence suspension period - to three days from one - for people with a blood-alcohol content of between .05 and .08.

And if someone under 16 is in the vehicle, that suspension will run seven days.

Justice Minister Gord Mackintosh says the government wants to send a message that high-risk behaviours behind the wheel will be punished.

Dec 01 2015

TORONTO - Mental health records and records from police checks can no longer be disclosed in police record checks in Ontario.

The province's legislature unanimously passed the Police Record Checks Reform Act today, which brings in standards for what information can be released.

The Liberal government introduced the act after stories emerged of people being stopped at the U.S. border after records of suicide attempts were disclosed and people being prevented from volunteering because they witnessed a crime.

Under the act, non-conviction records such as withdrawn or dismissed charges, acquittals and findings of not criminally responsible by reason of mental disorder could only be disclosed through some vulnerable sector checks for people working or volunteering with children and seniors.

Police will have to consider factors such as how long ago an incident took place, if the record relates to predatory behaviour around a vulnerable person and whether the records show a pattern of such behaviour before deciding whether to release those records in a vulnerable sector check.

In a standard criminal record check, only criminal convictions and findings of guilt under the Youth Criminal Justice Act can be disclosed.

A criminal record and judicial matters check could disclose conditional discharges for up to three years, absolute discharges for up to one year, outstanding warrants and certain court orders such as family court restraining orders.

Dec 01 2015

VANCOUVER - A new trial has been ordered for a southeastern B.C. man after the province's highest court overturned a judicial stay of

proceedings in a case of criminal negligence causing death.

The stay was entered last year after a B.C. Supreme Court judge found the charter rights of Kyle Neidig were violated when RCMP ordered the destruction of a Chevrolet Blazer involved in a June 2010 crash.

Neidig was in the Blazer near Jaffray, southeast of Cranbrook, when it rolled, tossing 23-year-old Ian Shepherd from the vehicle and killing him.

Neidig faced three charges, including criminal negligence and impaired driving causing death, but his lawyers argued destruction of the Blazer halted all opportunities to prove who was driving.

The B.C. Court of Appeal agrees the trial judge correctly ruled destruction of the vehicle was unacceptable negligence by the RCMP.

But in granting the Crown's appeal and ordering a new trial, the high court says that considering the other evidence available, failure to preserve the vehicle did not cause irreparable harm to a fair hearing for Neidig.

Dec 01 2015

EDMONTON - RCMP shot a suspect wanted in a triple homicide west of Edmonton while trying to arrest him at a location close to where the bodies were found on the weekend.

Supt. Gary Steinke said Mickell Clayton Bailey, 19, of Edson, was transported to hospital with serious injuries.

"Efforts to arrest the armed suspect peacefully were not successful today and he was shot by police," Steinke told a news conference Tuesday in Edmonton.

"This is a crime that has shocked local citizens, police and all Albertans. The murder of three innocent victims in their own home is unsettling for even the most seasoned police investigator."

Mounties found the bodies of Roxanne Berube, 36, another female and Daniel Miller on Sunday in the home they shared near Edson, just over 200 kilometres west of Edmonton.

Autopsies have not yet been completed, but a police spokesman has said the victims suffered "obvious trauma."

Police have not released the name of the second female, but friends and family on Facebook identified her as Berube's teenage daughter.

Steinke said they have yet to positively identify the girl.

Bailey has been charged with two counts of first-degree murder and one count of second-degree murder.

Steinke said Bailey was known to at least one of the people who was killed.

He would not say if Bailey fired at police, nor would he elaborate on the relationship between Bailey and any of the victims.

Dec 01 2015

CALGARY - Several Calgary police officers are suspected of criminal harassment and corruption and are accused of using police resources to work for a private investigation firm in the city.

The investigation started about a year ago when a woman came forward saying she was being harassed by members of the force.

Police sources told CTV News that retired CPS Drug Unit detective Steve Walton and his wife run a private investigation firm in Calgary called Walton and Walton, which has been contracting officers for jobs like running surveillance and body guarding.

Some of the cases CTV was able to confirm involved the breakups of wealthy Alberta couples.

CTV reached out to Steve Walton who released a statement on Tuesday afternoon saying...

"I do not wish to comment on an ongoing police investigation. I trust that the Calgary Police Service will do a thorough job, as they normally do. We will see the results once this has been completed."

Two current members are accused of doing outside body guard work and, after a closer look from the Anti-corruption Unit, are alleged to have accessed police data bases, giving that information to the third party private investigation firm.

The Calgary Police Service says there may also be a third current member involved and as many as seven members in total may be caught up in the allegations.

So far, two officers have been suspended with pay and both the privacy commissioner and the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team have been notified.

Calgary police say the file will eventually go to the Edmonton Crown's office in order to determine if criminal charges will be laid.

CPS spokesperson Kevin Brookwell says there's the potential for criminal harassment charges, but internally the allegations, if true, would violate the Police Act and Police Code of Ethics.

"It's concerning and that's why we have a unit that is specifically set up to deal with those sensitive sort of investigations. So in that case I would say that if during the course of this investigation, or any other investigation, if we find there's other activities like that going on, there are consequences, there's those criminal consequences and internal consequences and we'll deal with those as they come," said Brookwell.

Last month, CTV News made a request under the Freedom of Information Act to obtain any records involving the detective agency and the suspended officers and on Tuesday received this response...

"This is an active investigation therefore we are denying access to these records."

According to sources, there is a second woman who also says she was followed by these former officers.

(CTV Calgary)

Dec 02 2015

CALGARY - Calgary city police say they are investigating two of their own for alleged corruption and breach of trust.

It comes following a year-long harassment investigation, which stemmed from a complaint filed more than a year ago about criminal harassment.

A woman claimed she was being harassed by some retired members who had started a private investigation company.

Police spokesman Kevin Brookwell said an investigation into the allegations was launched immediately.

He said two currently serving members are alleged to have accessed a police database system and provided that information to the private investigation company.

Brookwell added that they were suspended with pay and the privacy commissioner was notified.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team is observing the investigation.

Brookwell said some members could face internal discipline, ranging anywhere from counselling to dismissal.
(CFFR)

Dec 02 2015

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR, N.L. - A small community in central Newfoundland says it doesn't have enough police officers.

Grand Falls-Windsor acting mayor Barry Manuel says some nights are only covered by on-call officers.

Manuel says the local RCMP detachment covers the area from Buchans to Fortune Harbour.

He says that's similar to the Corner Brook police jurisdiction, which has a minimum of five officers at all times.

Manuel suggests some duties now handled by officers could be dealt with by others.

He says RCMP members have to transport people in custody to court, something that could be handled by extra sheriff's officers.
(VOCM)

Dec 02 2015

TORONTO - An insurance industry association says pickup trucks are the hottest vehicle for thieves.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada says the Ford F-350 and F-250 models take up nine spots on its top 10 list of most frequently stolen vehicles.

They other vehicle on the list is a Cadillac Escalade SUV.

The insurance association says Canadian border guards are seeing shipping containers stocked with car and truck parts in an effort to fool inspectors.

They say they have recovered more than \$10 million in stolen vehicles at the ports this year.

Rick Dubin, vice-president of the Insurance Bureau of Canada, says stolen vehicles are up one per cent in 2014 across Canada, with the biggest jump coming from a 29-per cent increase in thefts in British Columbia.

Dec 02 2015

SYDNEY - A million-dollar renovation at Cape Breton Regional Police headquarters in Sydney is wrapping up, according to Chief Peter MacIsaac.

Police have been housed in the former County of Cape Breton municipal building since amalgamation in 1995.

MacIsaac says the building was never intended to be a police station and needed a lot of improvements in the basement - where patrols officers were previously located - and

on the first floor. Both areas have been gutted and rebuilt.

"It makes policing better," said MacIsaac, "They [officers] have the proper workstations. They have the proper work and flow functions, so they can all interact with one another to better meet and serve the needs of our public."

MacIsaac said one of the keys elements of the project was to improve the public's access to police officers.

"The patrol section has moved from the basement to the first floor close to the public entrance," the chief said.

"Because of the work that they do, there's a lot of engagement with the public. They're going to be right here by the front door where people come in."

(CBC News)

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VAUGHAN, Ont. - Ontario Provincial Police have introduced a mental health strategy aimed at helping officers deal with their own mental health as well as those they deal with on the job.

OPP commissioner Vince Hawkes says by supporting the health of its officers, the force will be better able to perform its work in general and will be more cognizant of the complicated mental health issues of the communities it serves.

He says the force will support both active and retired officers as well as their families.

Hawkes says officers will receive training to understand illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety.

He adds the force will increase the officers' peer support program, improve data collection to better understand mental health issues, and boost early referrals from police to communities' mental health services.

Hawkes says the strategy comes after important work done by retired officers to shine a light on the issue, and an ombudsman's report that detailed the force's problems addressing mental health issues.

Dec 02 2015

Police in St. Jean sur Richelieu shot and killed a man on Wednesday morning.

Around 9 a.m. officers went to a house on Fournier St. after being told one man had attacked a woman with a sharp object.

When officers arrived a 25-year-old wielding a knife or similar object rushed at them -- and officers shot him.

He was rushed to hospital where he was pronounced dead. There is no clear word about how many times he was hit.

The Sureté du Quebec is now investigating the shooting, and officers with the force are trying to determine exactly what happened. (CTV Montreal)

Dec 02 2015

TORONTO - Trying to beat a drunk-driving conviction by asking for certain records related to the breathalyzer used has become more difficult following a ruling Wednesday by Ontario's top court.

The ruling limits disclosure of records accused frequently ask for in drunk-driving prosecutions.

"It is critical for the efficient operation of trial courts, especially those in which alcohol-driving offences occupy a prominent place on the docket, that they be able to control their process," the Appeal Court said.

"This includes the authority to discourage unmeritorious third-party records applications that devour limited resources."

The case arose when Ottawa police pulled over David Jackson for erratic driving and he failed a breath test. They charged him with drunk driving.

Before his Ontario court trial, Jackson asked Judge Jack Nadelle to order police to turn over records related to the history and performance of the device that measured his

blood alcohol concentration. Nadelle did so in August 2013 on the basis they were relevant to the defence, prompting the police service and prosecution to appeal.

In April last year, Justice John Johnston of the Superior Court of Justice upheld the disclosure order, sparking the further appeal.

"The issues raised here emerge in a thoroughly unremarkable alcohol-driving prosecution," Appeal Court Justice David Watt said in the unanimous decision. "About as routine as it gets."

And even though the requested documents had been turned over, the higher court agreed to hear the case to help settle conflicting case law.

In ruling against Jackson's request, the Appeal Court noted he was given material that is routinely turned over in such cases, including records of the tests and checks executed by the Intoxilyzer 8000C to ensure it was working properly. Any failure precludes the machine from taking a breath sample.

Jackson wanted more but the Appeal Court said nothing in the records he did get showed any problem with the device or error by the technician that might have made the additional materials relevant. Suggestions to the contrary were speculative, and the historical data sought would prove nothing about the credibility of the officers involved in his case.

"A fishing expedition," Watt called it. "Season closed."

In a post-script to the lengthy decision, the court offered guidance to judges trying to decide if a record is relevant to the issue of whether an approved breathalyzer was either malfunctioning or operated improperly and therefore should be turned over to the accused.

For example, the court said the fact that a record exists showing the device may not have worked properly in the past is not enough on its own to make it relevant. Nor is any previous record related to the credibility of the operator of the instrument.

Dec 02 2015

DOURO-DUMMER - Douro-Dummer councillors decided to extend the township's contract with provincial police Tuesday night in a move that township mayor and Peterborough County Warden J. Murray Jones said reflects the will of a majority of its citizens.

In an unrecorded vote, the five township councillors voted to enter a new three-year deal with Peterborough County OPP that will begin on Jan. 1, 2016.

Tuesday's decision was "not an easy one," Jones, said, noting how both the OPP and city police "do a wonderful job." The township's five councillors were not unanimous in the decision, but a majority agreed that sticking with the OPP was the right move, he said.

"It was a decision that had to be made," Jones said during a brief break from Wednesday's regular county council meeting.

It has been more than a year since the OPP introduced a new billing model that means the cost to some jurisdictions it

policed were going to go up "substantially," said Jones, adding that the provincial force did come back later with a "fairer" costing.

The costing changes were going to translate to a 15% increase to the township, he said previously. That means going from a bill of about \$689,000 a year to more than \$1 million.

The township received a quote from both the OPP and city police that could be seen online. They were summarized in a report from township CAO David Clifford, who wrote it would cost about \$1 million a year for the OPP services and \$759,000 for Peterborough Police.

(Peterborough Examiner)

Dec 02 2015

TORONTO - If the average law-abiding citizen declared that they were heading out to buy some chicken with their girlfriend, you'd probably think they were on their way to KFC or Swiss Chalet with their significant other.

But if that person was involved in Toronto's underworld gang culture, it could mean they're about to buy drugs while carrying a gun.

In an ongoing game of high-stakes cat and mouse, gang members in Toronto have devised an ever-evolving coded language designed to flummox authorities and veil the sinister intentions embedded in sometimes common vernacular.

It's a language that even befuddles most officers.

Toronto police Sgt. Gavin Jansz isn't most officers.

Raised in Toronto's Malvern neighbourhood, Jansz has spent the last fifteen years meticulously decoding this mysterious language, putting in countless hours listening to wire taps, reading intercepted text messages, and soaking in the slang of gangster rap.

When it comes to making sense of it all, you could say he wrote the book.

And in fact, he did.

In an effort to share his vast knowledge with his fellow officers and aid in numerous cases, Jansz created the gangster slang dictionary.

"I realized there was a need for other officers to understand these words as well," he explained. "So I started collecting these words and putting together a lexicon with definitions so that officers understood them."

"There are hundreds if not thousands of codified words being used."

Deciphering the true meaning behind those words can be a challenge, Jansz admits, especially in Toronto.

"Because Toronto is such a culturally diverse city, we've got individuals who are using their knowledge of their language and interspersing that language into their codified conversations.

"So they'll be speaking English or using street language and then they'll throw a foreign term in there, and that term will be codified to mean firearm."

Street level dealers also employ a form of

sign language that Jansz equates to a baseball “pitcher and catcher communicating with each other.”

“It’s a little more difficult (to decode),” he admitted, while refusing to provide examples for fear of tipping off his targets.

Many of his previous targets are behind bars today.

His work provided evidence and context in court cases against the notorious Malvern Crew and Galloway Boys, whose gang war left a trail of death and destruction in Scarborough in the early 2000s.

“We had evidence, ‘Here’s what they are talking about’ and ‘Here’s what they are actually doing,’” he explained.

The case he’s most proud of cracking involved a murder plot hatched behind bars.

After a community mentor was gunned down, the suspects in the case made several calls while incarcerated.

Jansz was listening in.

When he heard one of the suspects talking about a football game his curiosity, and suspicion, was piqued.

“Why would a guy from jail care about a football game?” he asked himself.

He soon found out.

“The individuals that were charged with this murder were ordering a hit on the witnesses,” he explained. “And it was in the analogy of a football game.

“He said, ‘When you are done winning the game, kick away the (football) but take out the laces.’”

“Laces being a term for bullets,” he explained. “Football was a firearm,” he added. “And winning the game was to kill the individuals.”

“These words that seem very silly to most people actually have a very important meaning to these individuals that are involved in this type of crime.”

“And you are trying to put the pieces of the puzzle together.”

(City News)

Dec 02 2015

EDMONTON - Edmonton’s finest will have to do more with way less after Edmonton City Council passed budget amendments Wednesday to fund a fraction of the police asks in hopes the province will agree to help lighten their workload.

Of five unfunded service packages, totaling nearly \$15 million in 2016 alone, council opted to fund roughly \$3 million.

“We came forward and asked for 82 resources, at the end of the day we’re getting six or seven,” said Edmonton Police Services (EPS) chief Rod Knecht following council’s deliberations.

Though the EPS wish list remained relatively unanswered, Knecht did take solace in council’s dedication to what Mayor Don Iveson called “predictable, sustainable funding” that he said would set an example for what the city expects from the province’s budget makers.

Rather than continuing a trend of funding police at twice inflation, something Iveson

said has been happening for a number of years in the past decade, the mayor’s motion to fund them with a formula that takes into consideration inflation and population growth.

“The chief is going to have to make difficult decisions, and that’s his job,” said Iveson.

“We are providing more officers and we provided more officers last year and the year before and the year before,” he said, adding the city will continue to add to police resources but he also wants to put more focus on preventative action by lobbying the province for funds to deal with addictions and mental health issues.

“Working and focusing on going after those economies with the province, arm in arm with the chief, is what I’m looking forward to doing next,” he said.

Knecht said he supports that model.

“I really like the idea of knowing what our funding is going to be over a three-year period,” he said. “It lets us know what this year’s budget is going to be, what next year’s budget is going to be. So we’re going to be able to hire accordingly and prioritize accordingly. It just allows us to manage the police service a lot better and a lot easier because there’s predictability in the model.”

(Edmonton Sun)



Dec 03 2015

VICTORIA - British Columbia’s justice minister says municipalities should speak to the federal government if they are worried about paying more for police to test DNA.

Suzanne Anton says until recently the federal government, through the RCMP, paid for the testing, with the provinces contributing funds.

She says that changed when the former Conservative government revised the funding model, requiring municipalities and provinces to pay more.

Anton says B.C. will continue to subsidize testing and help municipalities by contributing \$1.3 million annually.

She says the province also paid an additional \$1.2 million last year and will pay an extra \$1.7 million this year for the service.

Anton says the Union of B.C. Municipalities has known about the added costs for more than a year and local governments should raise the issue with their federal colleagues.

Dec 03 2015

MONTREAL - Montreal’s police chief is questioning whether his officers should be responsible for directing traffic around road work in the city.

Philippe Pichet says posting officers at construction sites isn’t always necessary - and is often a waste of money and resources.

“There are sites where it takes the police. There are other sites where we have to ask ourselves [if it’s necessary],” Pichet said Wednesday.

In other parts of Quebec, police are not the only ones directing traffic.

Quebec’s Ministry of Transport uses special employees trained in traffic control.

Pichet also said “smart” traffic lights -

which recognize when vehicles are approaching and can change to a green light more quickly - could have a role to play.

Part of the push to move police away from directing traffic is the cost. The city have already spent \$8 million this year on police officers at construction sites.

Pichet said taking police officers off traffic duty would allow them to be reassigned to other tasks.

(CBC News)

Dec 02 2015

EDMONTON - While Alberta grapples with a public-health crisis from fentanyl overdoses, the province-wide police agency at the forefront of the battle against the deadly drug is now preparing to lose more than a quarter of its officers because of budget cuts.

The Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams, known as ALERT, is a specialized law enforcement agency that targets gangs, drugs, domestic violence and human trafficking. The unit seized 18,010 fentanyl pills and charged 503 members of organized crime last year.

Created with the help of a \$42.2-million grant from the federal government that expired in 2014, ALERT has seen provincial funding fall by one-third over the past three years.

The policing unit has warned the Alberta government that unless the budget reductions are reversed, the agency will need to cut 70 of its 268 positions next year. The unit’s budget was \$47.2-million last year, \$31-million of which came from Alberta. Most of the shortfall was covered by the last of its federal funds.

The cuts could have serious consequences at a time when ALERT has been one of the leading agencies in a province confronting fentanyl, a powerful opioid that has been responsible for 213 deaths over the first nine months of 2015.

The nine-year-old agency has already left some positions empty as it has started to run out of money.

Alberta Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley said that following an audit of the policing unit, her office is engaged in a conversation about whether her ministry will continue to fund ALERT. She promised that a decision about the future level of provincial funding, if any, “would come in the normal course of budgeting.”

With officers seconded from the RCMP and five of Alberta’s largest police forces, ALERT is divided into teams that target organized crime, child exploitation, illegal activities in communities and domestic violence.

Cuts to any of those teams could have tragic consequences ranging from more guns on the streets to more drug deaths, according to William Pitt, a former RCMP officer and former criminology professor at the University of Alberta.

Edmonton police Deputy Chief Brian Simpson said that a decrease in ALERT’s operations would leave a gap in the policing of Alberta’s capital city and could worsen a situation in which violent crime is up 12 per cent compared with last year.