

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY | FEBRUARY 19 2016 – Vol. 21 No.8

Executive Digest

Feb 12 2016

Mounties will once again have final authority over the classification of firearms, the Liberal government says, reversing legislative changes made by the Conservatives allowing Cabinet to override RCMP decisions.

Page 4

Feb 15 2016

The Ontario government wants to talk to the public about policing before it rewrites the Police Services Act, which became law more than 25 years ago.

Page 5

Feb 16 2016

VANCOUVER - A coroners inquest has made 16 recommendations after hearing the case of a 48-year-old man who was fatally shot by police outside a British Columbia casino.

Page 7

Feb 16 2016

MONTREAL - The city and its police department said Tuesday that senior police officers don't get rewarded based solely on how many traffic tickets are issued by their subordinates.

Page 8

Feb 17 2016

HALIFAX - Canadian police forces are grappling with the tricky task of keeping the public safe against sexual assaults without placing blame on the victims of traumatic crimes.

Page 9

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Quebec mourns death of **Lac-Simon police officer**



Feb 15 2016

A Quebec police officer who was killed on the weekend while responding to a domestic issue at a home is being mourned around the province, as the Ministry of Public Security and provincial police investigate the incident.

The province's police college in Nicolet has lowered its flags to half-mast to commemorate Thierry Leroux, 26, who was shot and killed as he and his partner responded to a domestic call in the tiny community of Lac-Simon, near Val-d'Or.

"The most important way I can pay tribute to him is to say there is no greater sacrifice

than giving your life to help others. It's what he wanted to do, and it's what he did," said Michel Leroux, Thierry's father.

Leroux said his son always dreamed of being a police officer.

"When he signed up for police tech at College Alma, we had a conversation about the risks involved in becoming a police officer. But after that discussion, we never talked about it again."

Thierry Leroux, a native of Amos, Que., had been working in the community for only six months with the local aboriginal police force. This was his second contract.

Michel Leroux said he hopes there is a



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lesson to be learned so that no one has to die the way his son did.

The officer's death shocked students and staff at College Alma.

"He was a great police officer," Pierre Saint-Antoine, director of communications for the college, said Monday.

Serge Girard, the director of the college's police technology program, said, "Thierry was very sociable, very open, very involved during his three years in the program." He showed leadership skills as well, Girard said.

Police say one shot was fired from the home on Saturday night, killing Leroux and sending his partner to hospital to be treated for shock.

Leroux and his partner were officers with the local aboriginal police force in Lac-Simon, an Algonquin reserve near Val-d'Or, about 500 kilometres from Montreal in the province's Abitibi region.

Investigators say the gunman was 22-year-old Joseph Anthony Raymond-Papate, who killed himself.

College Alma will set up a committee to review and possibly modify police training as investigators learn more about what happened in Lac-Simon.

Saint-Antoine says students are trained to deal with different situations.

"It's a moment of reflection for everyone to make sure you act with security, but you never know what can happen with this kind of intervention," Saint-Antoine said.

There are fewer open positions with Quebec police forces for new graduates due to provincial budget cuts, said Saint-Antoine. As a result, many students apply to work in First Nations communities.

"We have less promises to be hired from the regular police service in Quebec so some graduates do apply to aboriginal police services," Saint-Antoine said.

Students do not receive specific training for working in First Nations communities

other than training in both English and French.

The Sûreté du Québec took over the investigation on Sunday. Under Quebec law, any incident involving a police officer in which a firearm is discharged must be investigated by a different police force.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees said in a statement that Leroux had been a member of the police force since August, employed by the Anishnabe Nation Tribal Council.

"We are shaken by this horrible news," CUPE spokesman Stéphane Lachance wrote.

"We offer our most sincere condolences to Thierry's family and loved ones."

Federal Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale issued a statement Monday, offering his condolences to Leroux's family.

"As a nation, we stand together with the police officers and citizens of Lac-Simon during this difficult time. We are truly grateful for their dedication and sacrifice," Goodale wrote.

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard said on Twitter that Quebec Aboriginal Affairs Minister Geoffrey Kelley was in contact with community leaders.

Members of the reserve held a march on Sunday afternoon to mourn the death of the officer, as well as the man who shot him.

(CBC News)

The courtroom audience gasped and Officer Peter Liang, who had broken into tears as he testified about the 2014 shooting of Akai Gurley, buried his head in his hands as the verdict came after 17 hours of jury deliberations. Liang is the first New York City police officer convicted in an on-duty death since 2005.

The manslaughter charge, a felony, carries up to 15 years in prison, though no requirement for any prison time. Liang was dismissed from the New York Police Department right after the verdict. His sentencing is April 14.

But an uncertainty remains: Brooklyn state Supreme Court Justice Danny Chun has yet to rule on Liang's lawyers' request to dismiss the charges. Liang also was convicted of official misconduct, a misdemeanor.

Liang was patrolling a public housing high-rise with his gun drawn when he fired. The bullet ricocheted off a wall and hit the 28-year-old Gurley on a lower floor.

Liang, 28, said he had been holding his weapon safely, with his finger on the side and not the trigger, when a sudden sound jarred him and his body tensed.

"I just turned, and the gun went off," he testified.

Prosecutors said Liang handled his gun recklessly, must have realized from the noise that someone was nearby and did almost nothing to help Gurley.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2016

Feb 11 2016

EDMONTON - Police chiefs want the Alberta government to come up with rules that would require motorists to prepay at the pump before fuelling a vehicle.

The Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police passed a resolution calling for legislation, noting gas-and-dash thieves can injure or kill gas station employees.

RCMP Deputy Commissioner Marianne Ryan, president of the association, says prepay would also benefit business owners by reducing gasoline thefts and free up police to work other crimes.

The chiefs passed a similar resolution in 2011, but it wasn't accepted by the former government.

Ryan says the chiefs decided to raise prepay again last summer following the death of Maryam Rashidi, a Calgary service station worker who was run over during a gas-and-dash theft.

She says the government told the chiefs in November that it would review the resolution, but has given no indication what it plans to do or when.

Feb 11 2016

NEW YORK - A rookie police officer who shot an unarmed man dead in a darkened public housing stairwell was convicted Thursday of manslaughter.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2016

Feb 12 2016

BELLEVILLE, Ont. - A Belleville, Ont., police officer who was convicted of two Police Services Act charges has been ordered to resign.

The ruling made Friday by the hearing officer in Const. Eric Shorey's case requires him to resign within seven days or be dismissed.

Shorey pleaded guilty to two counts of discreditable conduct at a hearing on Oct. 8.

The charges were laid after Shorey was found guilty of criminal harassment and breach of trust in 2013.

His trial heard Shorey used his police access to run 25 inquiries on secure databases 15 times between September 2010 and July 2012 to find information about his ex and her new partner.

He was also caught on video camera four times near the woman's Prince Edward County home, sitting in his vehicle.

Shorey has been with the Belleville police service in 2007.

(CJOJ)

Feb 12 2016

CHICAGO - Written by hand, the autopsies on the seven bullet-riddled bodies vividly describe why the Valentine's Day massacre of 1929 is still considered Chicago's most infamous gangland killing.

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK Celebrating 20 Years

ISSN 1704-3913
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Published weekly by Blue Line Magazine, Inc. as an executive news briefing service to Canada's top level law enforcement personnel.

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The reports were recently unearthed with inquest transcripts from a warehouse after eight decades, and the Cook County medical examiner's office is now considering how best to preserve and display them.

Executive officer James Sledge, a local history fan and a Chicago native, said he felt a chill down his back when he first read the documents outlining the attack at a Lincoln Park garage that left seven men dead and more than 160 machine-gun casings littering the scene.

The attack, carried out by men dressed as city police officers, is widely believed to have been ordered by famed Prohibition-era gangster Al Capone. The crime was never solved.

Shortly after Sledge joined the medical examiner's office in 2014, he asked for permission to look at the autopsy records. His staff took multiple trips to a Cook County government warehouse to find the reports, which were tucked away in a metal file cabinet.

Sledge is weighing where the documents should be stored and how accessible they should be, he told the Chicago Sun-Times (<http://bit.ly/1XnGk5E>) in a story published Thursday.

"On the one hand, we want to have them readily available," Sledge said. "But we don't want them so accessible that we in some way anger some part of the population who feel we are not paying proper respect to the deceased."

The victims of the Feb. 14, 1929, massacre were five men who were known gangsters

working for Capone rival George "Bugs" Moran, an optometrist who was friends with Moran's crew and a mechanic at the garage that served as Moran's headquarters.

They were gunned down by four men, two of whom were wearing police uniforms. Since there was no evidence of a struggle, it's believed that Moran's men thought it was a police raid.

The documents that are now in Sledge's possession offer insight into the 87-year-old investigation of the unsolved crime.

"The reports are very graphic about what happened," Sledge said. "You read about history, you talk about it, but to have something in your hands - it gives you an odd feeling."

Those documents include an inquest interview with the optometrist's mother in which the coroner prepares her for the grisly state of her son's body. Other documents also outline the difficulties investigators faced while attempting to solve the crime, including witnesses who were too afraid to testify, the limits of forensic science and photographers who were eager to document the event.

Feb 12 2016

KELOWNA, B.C. - RCMP say one of two officers who was attacked in the emergency room of a Kelowna, B.C., hospital ended up with broken bones in his hand.

Const. Jesse O'Donaghey says three Mounties responded to a call about a volatile patient who'd barricaded himself in a treatment room and covered a security camera.

O'Donaghey says the officers tried unsuccessfully to negotiate with the man Wednesday before opening the door.

He says that's when the patient "came out swinging" and hit two officers with his fists.

O'Donaghey says the Mountie with broken bones in his left hand will be off work for about six weeks while an officer who has a sprained right hand will be doing light duties until he recovers.

Charges may be considered as police continue their investigation.

Feb 12 2016

Quebec's finance minister is clarifying his comments about refusing to help with the federal government's plan to legalize and regulate marijuana in Canada.



Carlos Leitao said Thursday his government wanted nothing to do with selling marijuana and that Ottawa should figure out on its own how to distribute pot on Quebec territory if and when it becomes legal.

Leitao took to Facebook later in the day to clarify his remarks.

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He wrote that discussions about the distribution of marijuana are premature and the federal government still needs to create legislation to legalize and regulate the drug.

Leitao added that the issue is complex and Quebec will certainly have the time to meet and discuss with Ottawa when the time comes.

Feb 12 2016

CALGARY - Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett said she heard a familiar message Friday in her final meeting outside Ottawa with families of missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Bennett said many victims' families in Calgary believe their concerns have been ignored by police.

"The upset was throughout the room," she said after the meeting. "What can happen in these cases are not deemed a homicide, and very early on it can be called a suicide or an accident or an overdose, and then there's no investigation," Bennett told a news conference.

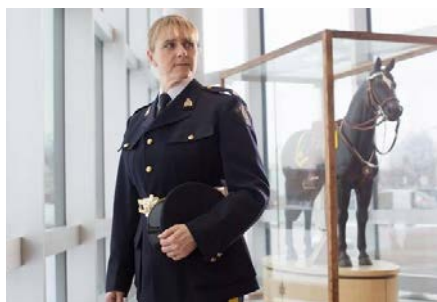
Bennett has been on a cross-country tour to meet with families and other interested parties so parameters can be set for an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women that is expected to begin by summer.

Bennett said she's heard from 1,300 people during the preconsultations about "the uneven application of justice and the lack of support."

"They want to make sure that this doesn't happen to other families."

Feb 12 2016

Neana Lintott wore her blue serge to attend a police ceremony in December. She fears that may be the last time she is allowed to wear her cherished dress tunic - or, at least, the obscure volunteer version of the crimson Mountie dress uniform.



Since the 2014 shootings in Moncton, N.B., Ottawa and St.-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Que., that targeted federal uniformed personnel, the RCMP is cutting back the role of 1,500 unarmed, volunteer Mounties in accompanying regular officers in street patrols and squad cars. The force will also reconsider whether they should continue to wear clothes that are very similar to the iconic work and dress uniforms of Canada's national police force.

Police brass in Ottawa say this is a safety measure for auxiliary constables, who were always supposed to steer clear of front-line policing. Yet volunteers such as Ms. Lintott say

they have long had a quiet but outsized role in keeping order, mostly in Western Canada.

For decades, the auxiliaries have filled roles in local policing, from leading community-safety workshops to riding as partners with regular Mounties. Most are local homeowners and have regular full-time jobs. While auxiliaries are barred from high-risk situations, they carry handcuffs, a baton and pepper spray.

The officers say they do not mind a degree of danger, and that taxpayers now may need to pay for hundreds of new salaried officers to pick up the slack in parts of Alberta and British Columbia.

"Everyone asks if you're angry. Angry isn't the right word. I'm disappointed, but I saw this coming," says Ms. Lintott, an eight-year auxiliary constable and single mother from Strathcona County, outside Edmonton.

"Where the impact will be felt is in those smaller rural communities," she warns, adding that she worries about RCMP officers out on patrols alone without a "second uniform and second set of eyes."

The fundamental question is what form a volunteer police program that started in 1963 should have in 2016. While only the longest-serving volunteers get the blue-serge dress uniform, the work uniform is practically indistinguishable from that of a regular Mountie.

Now Ottawa is wondering whether that puts a target on volunteers who are not prepared for lethal confrontations.

"Change isn't always embraced at first, but we're confident that what we're doing is in their best interest," Sergeant Harold Pfeleiderer, a spokesman for the force, said in an e-mailed reply to Globe questions about the policy changes announced in January.

"Auxiliary Constables are often mistaken for police officers while on duty in uniform, which puts them at increased risk of harm," he wrote.

It is for that reason, he added, that "alternative uniform options are being considered to better differentiate between an auxiliary member and a regular member."

From the perspective of Sgt. Pfeleiderer and commanders at National Headquarters, not much is changing. Officials in Ottawa stress that auxiliaries were never intended to supplement the work of full-fledged police officers. Rather, they were supposed to shoulder many of the more feel-good functions of policing - neighbourhood watches, traffic control and public-safety speeches to children.

Yet if you ask auxiliary constables in Western Canada, they say that - official policy aside - it is not uncommon for them, while out on patrol with regular members, to get in tussles, bar fights or pursuits that end with them slapping handcuffs on suspects.

In January, 2015, RCMP Constable David Wynn and Auxiliary Constable Derek Bond were conducting a routine check of licence plates in the parking lot of a casino in St. Albert, Alta., when they encountered an armed suspect in the theft of a pickup truck. Constable Wynn was killed in the confrontation and Auxiliary Constable Bond was wounded.

That came just weeks after the terrorist-inspired killings of two Canadian Forces soldiers in October, 2014, and six months after a gunman shot five Mounties in Moncton in June, 2014, killing three of them.

In response to such events, the RCMP announced this week that half of the front-line force will be trained to use carbine rifles in addition to their standard-issue sidearm.

The force also has ordered auxiliaries not to patrol unless they are with regular officers who carry firearms. In January, a memo went out to say that auxiliaries may no longer ride along in squad cars.

The volunteer auxiliaries say they are valuable because are invested in their communities. "It's pretty standard for the auxiliaries to work in the communities where they live, so they have that local knowledge and familiarity," Ms. Lintott says. She added that, when she was on patrols with rookies fresh out of the RCMP Depot, she would navigate, telling her partner not just where they were going - but what to expect.

With the new restrictions, Ms. Lintott is worried that duties such as going to elementary schools to tell schoolchildren to stay off drugs will not get her enough hours to keep her stripes. "You need to do at least 160 hours a year. ... Even in our larger detachment, that's an awful lot of school talks."

Some observers predict a mass exodus of volunteers should the function and look of auxiliaries get any more divorced from that of front-line officers. "We all sort of feel like we're in a holding pattern," Ms. Lintott says. "I've encouraged our auxiliaries to hang tight and not start handing in resignation papers."

The only recompense people like her want is the occasional rush of actual police work and the respect afforded to the uniform.

"The uniform thing is a significant issue for us. We have pride in that uniform," says Ms. Lintott. "When you go out to events, there is a lot of respect."

(Globe and Mail)

Feb 12 2016

Mounties will once again have final authority over the classification of firearms, the Liberal government says, reversing legislative changes made by the Conservatives allowing Cabinet to override RCMP decisions.

Police are the "experts" in these matters, Scott Bardsley, a spokesman for Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale, said in an email Friday.

Bardsley said details would be announced in "due course."

Message boards on gun enthusiasts' websites have been awash in recent weeks with speculation about what types of gun laws the Liberals would introduce.

A spokesman for the Canadian Shooting Sports Association said Friday it was "immoral" that a technician working in an RCMP lab should be allowed to have the final say on gun restrictions.

"How can a bureaucrat wave a pen and criminalize hundreds, thousands of people,"

said Tony Bernardo, the association's executive director. "We elect parliamentarians to make our laws. ... We would not tolerate police making law in any other segment of society."

The controversy erupted in early 2014 when the RCMP changed the status of Swiss Arms rifles and Czech-made CZ-858 rifles from restricted or non-restricted to prohibited.

Bardsley cited data Friday showing there are nearly 6,000 victims of violent crime every year in which firearms are present.

"We believe in balanced, effective gun control that prioritizes public safety while ensuring law-abiding firearms owners do not face unfair treatment under the law," he said.

Bardsley said the government does not plan to reintroduce the federal long-gun registry.

Work, however, is underway to modify the membership of the minister's firearms advisory committee. During the election, the Liberals promised to add public health advocates, representatives from women's groups and lawyers to the committee so it wasn't stacked with gun industry representatives.

Bernardo, who had a seat on the committee, said he worries non-firearms experts will outnumber members of the firearms community.

"We wouldn't take a committee meant to (examine) surgical procedures and put plumbers on that committee," he said.

The RCMP said it had no comment.

(National Post)

Feb 13 2016

WINNIPEG - The family of a Winnipeg girl shot with a stolen RCMP gun is suing police.

Calli Vanderaa was in a car outside a Windsor Park convenience store in the early morning hours on Oct. 24, 2015 when someone fired a gun and hit her.

The family's lawyer, Robert Tapper tells CTV, the decision to launch a lawsuit wasn't a difficult decision for the family.

"She has been very badly injured and continues to suffer," Tapper told CTV Saturday. "A bullet went through her, she is scarred, beat up ... and had a three-month infection," he said. "This is not a bump on the nose."

Vanderaa was 16 years old at the time of the shooting.

A statement of claim states Vanderaa was trying to hide from an assailant within a vehicle. It states she "suffered life-threatening and major injuries as a result of the bullet striking her, injuring her leg, lung, spleen and colon."

In the statement, it says Vanderaa continues to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Tapper didn't disclose a monetary amount, but he said in his legal opinion, there is warrant to seek "significant damages."

A police investigation revealed the firearm was stolen from an off-duty RCMP officer's vehicle.

Two men were arrested and charged. (CTV Winnipeg)

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 13, 2016

Feb 13 2016

MONTREAL - United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon says it's a highest priority to work with countries like Canada to stem the rise of radicalization and extremism.



Ban praised Montreal's preventative approach during a visit to an anti-radicalization centre this morning.

He says countries must also protect and promote human rights and dignity while working to counter terrorism.

Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre says the city offers a model for combating radicalization that is unique in the world.

Ban is wrapping up a three-day visit to Canada.

On Friday, Couillard announced the province would allocate \$500,000 to collaborate with the UN to host an anti-radicalization conference later this year.

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SUNDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2016

Feb 14 2016

WINNIPEG - A Winnipeg police officer may lose fingers from frostbite received during a firearms training exercise Friday.

"Our understanding is that a member, during training, received severe frostbite to his hands," said Moe Sabourin, president of the Winnipeg Police Association.

"It's not a mild case of frostbite," he added. "There is a concern possibility of losing digits."

Extreme cold warnings covered much of Manitoba on Friday.

Sabourin said it's not clear how long the officer was outside, or if there was an option to carry out the training exercise indoors. He now wants to make sure no officer is injured this way again.

"We are always concerned when members are on duty, but in particular, because it's during a training exercise," he said.

"For injuries to occur in training is troubling, but we don't know the exact cause, other than the severe weather."

Sabourin said he doesn't remember any past cases of severe frostbite to members and hopes to learn more about the incident Tuesday.

The Winnipeg Police Service told CTV News Sunday, it has no information on the incident and will not be commenting at this time. (CTV Winnipeg)

MONDAY FEBRUARY 15, 2016

Feb 15 2016

The Ontario government wants to talk to the public about policing before it rewrites the Police Services Act, which became law more than 25 years ago.



The Ministry of Correctional Services and Community Safety is launching a campaign to get input from Ontarians, both in person at consultations around the province and through an online survey, as it prepares to rewrite it.

The act is the blueprint that governs practices such as how officers engage with people who are vulnerable and how police services should be accountable and transparent to the public.

"The world has changed fundamentally in the past 25 years and so has policing," Community Safety and Correctional Services

Minister Yasir Naqvi said in a paper about the reform effort.

"More crime is now happening online, like fraud and child exploitation; technology is playing a greater role in both society and policing; and police are increasingly being called on to assist with issues that range from mental health and addiction to homelessness, marginalization and stigma."

One key component the province wants to clarify is the role that police services boards play in overseeing police forces.

The province says it wants to "enhance accountability and strengthen civilian governance" and improve the effectiveness of the boards.

The role of police oversight boards came into sharp focus last year as boards in Ontario squared off against police chiefs over the who got to decide the way police should handle carding or street checks.

Another area the province wants to improve is in police interactions with people who have mental health or addiction issues.

It says it will also develop a "provincial framework for First Nations policing" with an eye on equity and cultural responsibility.

The process will help forces "clarify police duties, modernize training programs and deliver services using a range of public safety personnel," the announcement from the ministry says.

Public meetings are being held in Hamilton, Cobourg, London, Newmarket, Thunder Bay, Ottawa, Sault Ste. Marie and Toronto. (CBC News)

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 16, 2016

Feb 16 2016

FREDERICTON - A Fredericton police officer has pleaded guilty to assault and threat charges in relation to separate incidents.

Sgt. Tim Sowers was charged in January with one count of summary assault by Kennebecasis Regional Police.

That's in addition to a charge of uttering threats that was laid Dec. 22 in relation to an incident that occurred in June.

Alycia Bartlett, who speaks for the Fredericton Police, says Chief Leanne Fitch won't comment until the court process is complete.

She says Sowers will remain on active administrative desk duty until the matters have been concluded.

Sentencing is set for June 6.

Feb 16 2016

SYDNEY - An addictions specialist in Nova Scotia says she hopes to change the acceptance around heavy drinking in Cape Breton.

Samantha Hodder works for the Nova Scotia Health Authority in Sydney and led a study into alcohol consumption on the island.

She has drafted a municipal alcohol policy that is expected to be adopted by council next month.

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Overall, Hodder says the messaging around alcohol needs a big change in Cape Breton, which has some of the highest rates of heavy drinking in the country.

The draft policies would designate some municipal facilities and events as alcohol-free, and prohibit alcohol ads at family-oriented events.

They would also end the practice of announcing "last call" or having happy hour at bars.

Cape Breton Regional Police Chief Peter McIsaac co-wrote the municipal alcohol policy with Hodder.

He's seen first-hand the damaging effects of alcoholism and the permissive attitude around alcohol consumption.

In one year, he reviewed 100 police calls and found that 70 of them had some connection to alcohol use, whether it be impaired driving, domestic violence or petty crimes.

Feb 16 2016

Suspects under arrest in Grise Fiord may have to walk to the detachment as the only RCMP truck in Canada's most northern civilian community is out of commission for at least the next week.



"The car's inoperable," said Cpl. Terry Burns, the detachment commander in Grise Fiord.

"There's been a grinding noise in the wheel and then what I think happened is the pin holding the axle must have broken and it let the axle come off, which basically released the wheel. So it was a snapped pin or something."

Since the nearest mechanic is in Resolute, one and a half hours away by plane, putting the truck back on the road will not be easy.

"The mechanic is supposed to come here next week to work on other vehicles in the hamlet, so we asked him if he could set aside [some time]," said Burns.

But the mechanic is only one issue; getting the necessary parts into the hamlet is another problem.

"There's a charter coming in Saturday. Hopefully we'll have the parts by then, so we'll only be down a week or so."

The good news is that the patrol area is not that big.

"The community is only 120 people so it's only a kilometre long. It's very small," said Burns.

For now the RCMP officers are relying on the hamlet office in case they need a car for an emergency.

"They've asked for a loaner from our shop," said Marty Kuluguqtuq, Grise Fiord's senior administrative officer.

"We're trying to make arrangements. We've got a vehicle for the hamlet that they may be able to use in case of emergency. At this point in time, they've got their snowmobiles."

To avoid experiencing a similar problem in the future, Burns said he has spoken to headquarters and they are planning to have a second vehicle sent up by sealfit this summer. (CBC News)

Feb 16 2016

VANCOUVER - British Columbia's highest court has upheld the acquittal of a Williams Lake man on charges of dangerous and impaired driving causing death and bodily harm.

In handing down its decision in the B.C. Court of Appeal in Vancouver, a panel of justices agrees that Martin Gentles had a blood alcohol level well above the legal limit.

But the judges also ruled the Crown failed to prove impairment or dangerous driving were contributing factors to the death of 20-year-old Rayel MacDonald or the severe injuries of her friend, Alysha Mullett.

In a unanimous decision, the judges agree the two victims stepped into the path of Gentles' oncoming truck in April 2012, giving him less than two seconds to avoid impact.

Gentles was convicted of impaired driving and leaving the scene of an accident for the early-morning crash that occurred as the two women walked home from a dance.

After his conviction, Gentles received an eight-month conditional sentence, one year

of probation, a one-year driving prohibition and a fine.

Feb 16 2016

VANCOUVER - A coroners inquest has made 16 recommendations after hearing the case of a 48-year-old man who was fatally shot by police outside a British Columbia casino.

Mehrdad Bayrami was shot and killed following an hours-long standoff outside New Westminster's Starlight Casino in November 2012.

The recommendations include improving access to mental health services and reducing stigma around mental illness.

Bayrami's daughter Nousha Bayrami told the inquest on Tuesday that her father had been on medication for severe depression prior to his death, and that she likely could have helped to talk him down.

The inquest recommended establishing provincial standards for police emergency response teams, that the teams work with psychologists during incidents, and record standoffs on a mobile device.

The coroners inquest was tasked with considering whether to make recommendations aimed at preventing similar events from occurring, but it cannot assign blame.

Feb 16 2016

TORONTO - Members of a new police task force have been tapped to lead a transformation in the Toronto Police Service, finding innovative ways to rethink policing, cut costs and tackle crime.

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The police board announced in a release on Tuesday that it can formed the task force, drawn from both the public and the police, to “guide the transformation of policing in Toronto, with a focus on modernizing operations and containing costs.”

The announcement came a day before city council begins deliberating on the 2016 budget, which includes a proposed police budget topping \$1 billion.

The task force will be co-chaired by police board chair Andy Pringle and Chief Mark Saunders. Six current members of the police service will also sit on the committee: Supt. Mark Barkley, Supt. Barb McLean, Insp. Shawna Coxon, Cheryl McNeil, Det.-Sgt. Justin VanderHeyden and Staff Sgt. Greg Watts.

The task force will report back to the board by June with recommendations related to a KPMG report with a recommended path for implementation. A “full implementation plan” is to be delivered by the end of this year.

“We have to do more than contain the growing cost of policing,” Pringle said in a statement. “This task force will examine all elements of police operations in Toronto and propose bold, responsible measures that will give officers the right tools to do their jobs, while increasing efficiency and building public trust.”
(Toronto Star)

Feb 16 2016

In fall 2015, a 30-year-old Langley man was released from police custody after being charged with mail theft in Richmond and previously in Port Coquitlam.

Just weeks later, in November 2015, Tyler Barta was arrested again, this time by Surrey RCMP who had been investigating Barta since his release.

Police, who searched his vehicle, discovered more stolen mail, as well as break-and-enter tools. Barta was charged with mail theft, possessing break-in instruments and breach of recognizance.

He was released on bail.

In January 2016, Surrey Mounties picked up Barta for a second time in just over two months.

It’s individuals like Barta that the RCMP hopes to keep off the streets, thanks to a new campaign that uses crime analysts to identify and target repeat offenders.

In January alone, Surrey RCMP have arrested 21 prolific offenders.

“It is important that we use our policing resources as efficiently as possible and the approach we are taking to address prolific offenders has been highly successful,” said Surrey RCMP community services officer Supt. Shawn Gill in a media release.

“Each and every enforceable condition that these individuals are currently facing is analyzed and acted upon to ensure compliance and reduce their risk to public safety.”

The crackdown’s success is credited in part to the Surrey RCMP’s behind-the-scenes crime analysts who identify repeat offenders.

The campaign, launched last fall, has resulted in an 18-per-cent drop in property crime during 2015’s last quarter.

Of the 21 offenders arrested in January, many were collared for breaching conditions of release or probation. Others were arrested for theft, drugs, fraud and other offences.

Among them was Barta, who has 41 criminal charges since 2005. Another was a 43-year-old man whose home had become such a “chronic problem” that people had been called to his dwelling more than 25 times in the span of four months.

A third individual highlighted by Surrey police was a 53-year-old man, who has racked up 98 charges since 2009.

Surrey RCMP say the enhanced identification and targeting of repeat offenders has also freed-up front-line officers to “spend more time proactively patrolling the community.”

“As efficiencies are created through this highly analytical work, our patrol officers are not burdened with investigating the same crimes committed by the same criminals over and over again,” said Gill.

(The Province)

Feb 16 2016

MONTREAL - The city and its police department said Tuesday that senior police officers don't get rewarded based solely on how many traffic tickets are issued by their subordinates.

But the city also confirmed that the number of tickets issued is one of several criteria used to evaluate the performance of higher-ranking officers.

“Everyone has the impression that bonuses are linked directly to the number of tickets, but that is totally false,” said Didier Deramond, the assistant director of operations for Montreal police. “We have performance criteria to evaluate how our officers are doing. (Tickets are one part), but it’s not directly linked to the bonus.”

Deramond met reporters alongside Anie Samson, the executive committee member in charge of public safety for the city. They said the number of tickets issued is part of 18 criteria used to evaluate performance.

News of the bonus scheme leaked out on Monday. The TVA Nouvelles report said that the officers in a supervisory role - many of them commanders of neighbourhood police stations - are evaluated based on whether many tickets are issued by officers under their charge.

Deramond confirmed on Tuesday that there is a quota for the minimum number of tickets officers must issue.

“There is an objective per officer, absolutely,” Deramond said. “We have said that a few years ago, and we have kept that objective, so this is not news.”

The Montreal Police Brotherhood, which represents unionized officers, said the performance evaluation for superior officers is based on numerous factors, among them whether officers reached their minimum quotas for tick-

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ets. Senior officers are entitled to bonuses of between one and four per cent of their salaries for a satisfactory performance, between four and six per cent for very satisfactory, and between six and eight per cent for exceptional performance.

Yves Francoeur, the union's president, called the bonus scheme "unethical" and said the city must abolish it.

Samson defended the practice, saying it's a way for the city to know if officers are properly applying the Highway Safety Code.

"Applying the Highway Safety Code is part of the job," she said.

She denied that this is a way for the city to fill its coffers, after complaining that police officers have been giving out fewer tickets in recent years.

(Montreal Gazette)

Feb 16 2016

VANCOUVER - The number of bank robberies in Vancouver is a quarter of what it used to be when the city was known as the bank robbery capital of North America.

Robberies at Vancouver banks have averaged 36 a year from 2013 through 2015, according to figures supplied by the Vancouver Police Department.

Compare that to the years 2003 to 2009, when bank robberies occurred an average of 152 times a year, peaking at 203 robberies in 2004.

There are a couple of reasons for the steep decline, Sgt. Randy Fincham said.

"The biggest reason is we've seen a significant increase in the quality of surveillance footage inside the banks," he said.

"Realistically, it's not if you'll be caught, it's when you'll be caught."

When Fincham was with the VPD's robbery focus branch, up to 25 bank robberies might have been committed by one person before he or she was caught.

"Now it's unlikely that someone could commit more than a couple of bank robberies before we identify and arrest them."

Better forensics and contracted security guards have made a difference, too, he said.

Surrey saw a similar spike, then decline, in bank robberies as Vancouver did, according to the Canadian Banking Association.

Province-wide, the average number of bank robberies was 102 a year the past three years, down from an average of 169 during the three years previous.

Only eight years ago, the VPD described Vancouver's number of bank robberies as staggering.

The national average was 1.6 robberies per 100,000 population, the VPD said at the time.

In Toronto the number was five robberies per 100,000 people; in Vancouver it was six times higher than Toronto, 30 per 100,000 population.

Today, Vancouver and Toronto are on par at about 3.5 bank robberies per 100,000 population, according to CBA figures.

(The Province)

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 2016

Feb 17 2016

WASHINGTON - Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook says his company will fight a federal magistrate's order to help the FBI hack into an encrypted iPhone belonging to one of the San Bernardino, California shooters. The company said that could potentially undermine encryption for millions of other users.

Cook's response, posted early Wednesday on the company's website, set the stage for a legal fight between the federal government and Silicon Valley with broad implications for digital privacy and national security.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym had ordered Apple to help the FBI break into an iPhone belonging to Syed Farook, one of the shooters in the Dec. 2 attack that killed 14 people. Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, died in a gun battle with police.

The ruling by Pym, a former federal prosecutor, requires Apple to supply software the FBI can load onto Farook's county-owned work iPhone to bypass a self-destruct feature that erases the phone's data after too many unsuccessful attempts to unlock it. The FBI wants to be able to try different combinations in rapid sequence until it finds the right one.

Cook called the ruling an example of government overreach and said "this moment calls for public discussion, and we want our customers and people around the country to understand what is at stake." He argued that the order "has implications far beyond the legal case at hand." He said it could undermine encryption by using specialized software to create an essential back door akin to a "master key, capable of opening hundreds of millions of locks."

"In the wrong hands, this software - which does not exist today - would have the potential to unlock any iPhone in someone's physical possession," Cook wrote. "The FBI may use different words to describe this tool, but make no mistake: Building a version of iOS that bypasses security in this way would undeniably create a back door. And while the government may argue that its use would be limited to this case, there is no way to guarantee such control."

Federal prosecutors told Pym that they can't access Farook's work phone because they don't know his passcode and Apple has not co-operated. Under U.S. law, a work phone is generally the property of a person's employer. The magistrate judge told Apple in Tuesday's proceeding to provide an estimate of its cost to comply with her order, suggesting that the government will be expected to pay for the work.

The magistrate's order requires that the software Apple provides be programmed to work only on Farook's phone, and said Apple has five days to notify the court if it believes the ruling is unreasonably burdensome.

Feb 17 2016

TORONTO - Police in Toronto are hoping a website launched Wednesday will help investigators solve some of the city's hundreds of homicide cold cases dating back to 1959.

The force says homicide investigators have been highly successful in solving murders, and have averaged near 80 per cent from 1921 until now.

They say that since 1996, through new investigative techniques and advancements in scientific methods, cold case investigators have had success solving cases through the re-examination of old evidence.

Investigators say there are cases that just need a name to match a DNA profile to solve a homicide and they're hoping the profiles of the cases on the website will bring in new tips from the public.

In addition to the case profiles, homicide investigators will be releasing short video clips via the interactive website and social media in hopes of stimulating information on cold cases.

The website - www.torontopolice.on.ca/homicide/search.php - also has a most-wanted page profiling 30 people identified by investigators as being allegedly responsible for homicides in Toronto.

"We would encourage the public to go to the website and use social media to spread the word on the individual cases and people wanted for murder," Chief Mark Saunders said Wednesday.

Each case or most-wanted profile has links for easy sharing to social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

Feb 17 2016

HALIFAX - Canadian police forces are grappling with the tricky task of keeping the public safe against sexual assaults without placing blame on the victims of traumatic crimes.

It's a delicate balance, as the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary recently found out after a public advisory warning about drugged drinks and potential sexual assaults in downtown St. John's.

The advisory offered safety tips for women that included socializing only with trusted friends and never leaving a drink unattended - and the force followed up with a tweet showing a martini and the message "Don't be a victim."

"Classic example of #VictimBlaming ... Why not advise people not to drug each other?!" tweeted SPAAT, a self-described feminist organization in St. John's.

"Why is it up to women to always be on guard?" asked another post.

Lynn Moore, a lawyer specializing in sexual abuse litigation, said she found the image of the martini and its message particularly distressing.

"The message is that people have control over whether or not they're victimized and I don't think that people do," Moore said from Mount Pearl, just outside of St. John's.

Not everyone on social media was as critical. One person asked whether the police

would be admonished for advising swimmers to be cautious at a beach where sharks have been spotted.

"Let's educate people on ways to protect themselves from these predators, let's not condemn for trying to help," tweeted another.

But Moore said police forces should handle advisories about sexual assaults the same way they deal with impaired driving.

"The message with drinking and driving is not to stay off certain streets at certain times to other drivers or pedestrians - the message is don't drink and drive."

The force was quick to defend its actions, saying it was not blaming victims, but merely spreading awareness and offering suggestions for prevention. It held a news conference the next day to respond to the criticism.

Feb 17 2016

EDMONTON - You'll often find fat bike riders flying down river valley trails for fun but in recent years they've become a useful tool for Edmonton police in Old Strathcona, allowing officers to patrol snowy streets more effectively during the winter months.



In 2014, Mike Zacharuk, an avid bike commuter and constable with the Strathcona Foot Patrol, applied for funding to purchase two fat bikes.

They proved useful, leading the division to purchase another two in early 2015. Now more divisions - in Edmonton and around Alberta - are looking into the idea, joining other winter cities (such as Minneapolis) in the United States that already employ them.

Edmonton police officers have been patrolling city streets by bicycle for more than 15 years, but not all-year-round. Mountain bike tires tend to slip and slide on ice, but fat bike tires are much wider and have better grip.

"When you're on ice, or snowy patches, you can go at slower speeds and get to areas where you certainly couldn't with a regular mountain bike, or as quickly on foot," Zacharuk said.

The bikes are very maneuverable, allowing officers to cut between buildings and peruse alleyways they couldn't access with a patrol car.

They make it easy for officers to bypass traffic congestion. Their silence is another advantage. Officers often find themselves riding right into drug deals or car break-ins happening in spots people don't expect police to visit.

During a heavy snowstorm in extremely cold weather, Strathcona officers on fat bikes

came across a Tim Hortons at 112 Street And 84 Avenue, where they stumbled upon a personal robbery.

"We pretty much rode right into it," Zacharuk said.

"Nobody was expecting to see the police there."

Officers who ride the bikes have all completed police mountain bike training. Zacharuk said the transition from mountain to fat bike riding is relatively simple because fat bikes are large and stable and don't travel as fast.

In order to stay warm on the bikes, officers wear neoprene mitts that attach to their handlebars. They also wear thinner gloves underneath so that they can still access notebooks and other items easily. In addition, they wear ski helmets instead of regular bike helmets, heavier clothing, fleece and long underwear.

"For avid bikers, the fat bikes are definitely a nice addition to our unit," Zacharuk said. (Edmonton Examiner)

Feb 17 2016

The funeral for Thierry Leroux, the 26-year-old police officer shot and killed in an isolated community 500 kilometres north of Montreal last weekend, will be held Feb. 26 in Chicoutimi.

The service is being organized by the Sûreté du Québec and a police honour guard and dignitaries are expected to attend.

Leroux's parents have been residents of Chicoutimi for a number of years.

The slain officer is also being honoured by cities around the Chicoutimi region.

Flags in front of Saguenay's city hall and public security headquarters have been lowered to half-mast and will remain that way until the day of his funeral. They are also at half-mast in front of municipal offices in Jonquière and La Baie. (CBC News)

Feb 17 2016

VANCOUVER - A British Columbia coroner says vivid imaginations, rather than undetected serial killers, are likely to blame for fears arising from disembodied feet washing ashore on the West Coast.

The recent discovery of two human feet encased in running shoes on a beach in Port Renfrew, B.C., brings to 14 the number of feet found in similar circumstances since 2007.

The BC Coroners Service says 10 of the previous feet found were identified as belonging to seven different people, but no deaths were attributed to foul play.

Coroner Barb McLintock says there are plausible, scientific explanations for the tragic findings - and the service wants to quell the myth that something nefarious is going on.

She says suicide and accidents have been determined as the cause of death for the people whose feet washed up, which naturally separated after a lengthy period in the ocean.

She says it's wonderful fodder for TV show scriptwriters, but the stories don't match reality.

Feb 17 2016

CALGARY - It's a slicker look, and it's a cheaper hit to the police pocketbook.



Calgary Police are halfway finished a makeover of their fleet of vehicles from blue and white to black and white.

Inspector Ken Thrower says they are overhauling about 100 cruisers, vans, and motorcycles a year.

"So we're looking at another two years - we should almost be 100 per cent of the changeover to the black and white colour scheme," he explained.

When CPS made the announcement back in 2012, they estimated over \$1-million would be saved with the switchover.

"We went to that new scheme for a couple of reasons. One was for that look, but also to save on cost. The colour scheme was half the price of going to the blue and white, believe it or not. Also, the installation. These vehicles already show up from the manufacturer with the doors already on them, and it's simply just putting the door decals on it, and the police logos," he said.

Thrower says some members of the public have also told him the new fleet is easier to identify. (660 News)

Feb 17 2016

MONTREAL - Despite multiple calls from Montreal firefighters to boycott, the organizing committee of the annual World Police and Fire Games says it will not be canceling the event, nor will it be moved to another city.

The games are set to take place in Montreal next year, during the city's 375th anniversary.

"Listen, from what I know, no discussion about this has taken place," said Cécile St-Pierre, a spokesperson for the games in Montreal, adding that the plan to hold them in 2017 remains on track.

The comments come after an Australian firefighters union announced they would boycott the event at the request of its Montreal counterparts.

Firefighters in Coquitlam, B.C. also expressed sympathy towards Montreal's pension cutbacks.

The boycott movement has drawn criticism from the Opposition at City Hall. Projet Montréal called last week for the games to be cancelled, to avoid the city falling into deficit if the boycott gains momentum.

The organization committee's budget is \$22 million, one third of which comes from city grants.

The last games brought \$80 million to the town of Fairfax, Va.

The Montreal games organizing committee is still expecting between 10,000 and 12,000 participants at next year's event. Tourism Montreal estimates the games will bring \$100 million to the city.

(CBC News)

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2016

Feb 18 2016

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. - A Niagara Region police officer has been suspended from the force after being arrested and charged with pointing a firearm.

The incident allegedly occurred inside a Niagara Falls police station.

Police say the alleged incident did not involve a member of the public.

Niagara Region police say Const. Candice Wilson has been released from custody pending a future court date, and has been suspended with pay pending the outcome of the ongoing investigation.

Police say no additional details will be released since the matter is before the courts and the investigation is ongoing.

Wilson is a uniform patrol officer and a six-year veteran of the Niagara force.

Feb 18 2016

TORONTO - Premier Kathleen Wynne says Ontario will have a comprehensive strategy to combat human trafficking by June.

Progressive Conservative Laurie Scott has a private member's bill that would give police the power to enforce protection orders against traffickers on behalf of the victims, and to assess punitive measures if breached.

It would also allow victims to seek compensation in court and add convicted traffickers to the province's sex offender registry.

Wynne agrees the issue has reached a crisis point, and says Ontario is working with Manitoba to see how that province is trying to deal with human trafficking.

Scott says the government should move immediately to give police the financial resources to dedicate officers to human trafficking and provide better training for new officers.

A report issued in December by a legislative committee found Ontario has become a "major hub" for human trafficking and sexual violence, with most of the victims being local underage girls and young women.

The committee said human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is the most common form of trafficking in Canada.

Feb 18 2016

VANCOUVER - A drug trafficking investigation that has stretched across British Columbia since 2014 has now produced dozens more charges.

A release from the Combined Forces Spe-

cial Enforcement Unit, which targets organized crime in B.C., says 50 charges have been laid against five men, all from Chilliwack.

That's in addition to charges laid last year against three of five people arrested in February 2015, after police smashed a drug distribution network operating between the Fraser Valley and northeastern B.C.

The CFSEU says arms, cash and \$5-million worth of illegal drugs, including potentially deadly fentanyl, has been seized in several busts since the ring was first identified in 2014.

A total of 13 trafficking charges have now been laid against three men, ranging in age from 22 to 26, while two others, aged 23 and 25, each face 12 counts of possession of a prohibited device and multiple counts of trafficking.

One of the men is currently in custody on unrelated charges in Alberta, court dates are already set for two more, and arrest warrants have been issued for the final two suspects.

Feb 18 2016

TORONTO - First responders with post-traumatic stress disorder will be able to get quicker and easier access to benefits and treatment under legislation introduced today.

The law would create a presumption that PTSD in first responders is work related, removing the need for them to prove a causal link to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

It would cover police officers, firefighters, paramedics, workers in correctional institutions, dispatchers of police, firefighter and ambulance services, and First Nations emergency response teams.

Labour Minister Kevin Flynn says it's important to keep safe the people who keep everyone else safe.

He says first responders are at least twice as likely - compared to the general population - to suffer PTSD.

The presumption would apply to new claims, as well as pending claims and claims in the process of being appealed.

Feb 18 2016

A group of Mounties has filed a lawsuit against the RCMP, alleging their medical records were obtained by their employer and shared outside the organization without consent.



Dave Reichert is one of the members who says his confidential file was used illegally by the RCMP.

"Some of the stuff is personal. It's got nothing to do with work," he told the Global TV program 16x9.

Reichert, a 33-year RCMP veteran, now retired, says he was seeing a psychologist for mental-health issues stemming from work-related harassment when the alleged privacy breach happened in 2012. So was Rollie Beaulieu, another former Mountie who says he was betrayed by his employer while still a member.

B.C.-based labour Lawyer Sebastien Anderson is representing five Mounties in a privacy breach lawsuit, which was filed in October.

All five have one thing in common: they were patients of long-time psychologist Mike Webster, a man who has long criticized the culture of the RCMP.

Anderson says the privacy breach happened when the RCMP tried to silence Webster in 2012, first by removing his funding to treat RCMP members, then by questioning his professional conduct in a complaint to the B.C. College of Physicians.

To support the complaint, the RCMP pulled information from Webster's treatment files, alleging he made derogatory comments about the organization during treatment sessions, and that those comments could be harmful to his patients.

Anderson says it was payback.

Ultimately, the complaint against Webster was dismissed. But he says in the process of filing the complaint, the RCMP committed a crime against its own members.

By law, your medical information is sacrosanct; your doctor isn't supposed to disclose it to anyone without your consent.

It's different in the RCMP.

Unlike most other employers in Canada, RCMP members must seek approval from the RCMP's in-house Health Services department in order to have the cost of medical services covered by insurance. And doctors have to send detailed progress reports back to the RCMP for any psychological treatments over six hours. The RCMP says it needs the information to make sure its members are healthy and fit to be carrying a badge and a gun.

But Sebastien Anderson says the RCMP has abused their access to that information, and used it illegally.

And Canada's Privacy Commissioner agrees. A 2014 report called the RCMP's actions a "serious privacy breach."

Anderson says the most shocking part is senior commanders authorized the complaint, even though Health Services personnel had warned months earlier that some of Webster's patients were at risk of suicide.

The RCMP did not respond to 16x9's request for an interview.

Anderson says this is not an isolated case. Since filing the lawsuit in October, many more Mounties have come forward to him, complaining about privacy breaches by the RCMP.

Rollie Beaulieu says the ordeal has left a sour taste in his mouth after a long, distinguished career.

"I mean when I joined the RCMP, I was so proud to wear the Red Serge. I had made it with the best. And for a lot of my career it was good until I started to see what was going on, and it wasn't nice."

(Global News)