

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY  January 17, 2014 – Vol. 19 No. 3

Executive Digest

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Nearly 40 charges have been laid against a 33-year-old man accused of running over a Mountie with a truck and exchanging gunfire with police at a farm near Tofield last week.

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Too few police in high crime Surrey



Royal Canadian Mounted Police E Division headquarters - Surrey, British Columbia

Jan 14 2014

SURREY - As police keep searching for the killer of Surrey hockey mom Julie Paskall, the contrast between the city's crime rate and its understaffed police force becomes more glaring.

Surrey has one of B.C.'s highest crime rates, but ranks just 31st in the province when it comes to police officers per capita.

Vancouver had six homicides in 2013, while Surrey had 25. In 2012, Vancouver had a Crime Severity Index of 103.4, while Surrey's severe-crime rate was 129.9.

Yet according to 2012 Statistics Canada data, Vancouver had 202 police officers per 100,000 population, while Surrey had just

137 cops for same population sample.

Add it all up and Surrey had more than 300 per cent more murders and 25 per cent more severe crime, but 47 per cent fewer cops per capita than Vancouver.

It's not a reassuring picture for Surrey residents shocked by the unsolved beating death of Paskall, bludgeoned outside the Newton Recreation Centre in an apparently random robbery attempt on Dec. 29.

Other B.C. cities with less crime but more cops per capita than Surrey include New Westminster, West Vancouver, Delta, Port Moody, Victoria, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Central Saanich, Squamish, Vernon, Nelson,

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Castlegar, Kitimat and Trail.

How did Surrey end up so far down the list of police resources? By failing to hire enough cops, according to the city's own official plan.

"Ensure police resources keep pace with population growth," reads a key recommendation in the Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy, endorsed by city council in 2006.

The report calls on the city to "continue its commitment to allocate resources to police services in proportion to the city's overall growth as a minimum of one officer to every 700 residents or better."

The city is 45 officers short of that goal, noted Surrey city councillor Bandler Rasode.

"I think it's time to review our targets," she told the Surrey Leader.

Mayor Dianne Watts admits the city has struggled to meet demands of a booming population.

"It's been a challenge keeping up with the growth," Watts said. "I can always use more police officers."

But she noted the city already devotes half its budget to public safety and "police costs have been escalating."

It would cost another \$6.75 million a year to beef up Surrey's RCMP detachment to the strength recommended in the city's own plan.

The patchwork of unevenly distributed police services throughout the region cries out for police-force amalgamation.

Communities such as Delta — with 65 per cent less crime and eight per cent more cops than Surrey — are not likely to surrender the superior services they enjoy.

(The Province)

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 08, 2014

Jan 08 2014

A rare decision from the Supreme Court of British Columbia has shed light on the extent to which police owe a duty of care to road users during pursuits.



In *Bergen v. Guliker*, Justice John Savage found the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were 20-per-cent liable for a collision that resulted in two deaths.

Plaintiff Inna Bergen's husband, Viktor Bergen, was killed on Aug. 10, 2008, when Gerald Guliker crashed into their car. The Bergens' three-year-old daughter and plaintiffs Dmitriy Igans and Alla Kazavcinska were also in their car.

Guliker, who died at the scene, was being followed by police after breaching a restraining order against his ex-wife.

It was known that Guliker was suicidal, had stated an intention to jump into traffic to kill himself, and was a flight risk, according to Savage's Monday decision.

The plaintiffs argued the RCMP owed a duty of care to other users of the roadway, breached that duty of care, caused the collision and were at least partly liable for the damages suffered.

The defendants — the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of British Columbia, and the Attorney General of Canada — denied Guliker was being pursued or chased by the RCMP at the time of the collision, or that the RCMP had been negligent.

The officers denied they were in pursuit, partly based on a technical police meaning of the word requiring that "all police vehicle emergency equipment must be deployed," says the decision.

But Savage said he was "not persuaded" that a duty of care only exists "when the police engage in a pursuit that meets the technical definition of the word."

He added: "Rather, I find that this duty of care exists anytime the police pursue or chase a suspect, within the ordinary meaning of those words."

The officers did not merely follow Guliker but were closing the distance between their car and his, travelling at up to twice the

50 km/hour speed limit, found Savage.

He also concluded the police had a duty of care before the pursuit occurred, citing *Radke v. M.S.* (Litigation guardian of). That case "demonstrates that this duty of care comes into play at the point at which it is reasonably foreseeable that a pursuit could occur," said Savage.

Guliker's actions were foreseeable, so "the relationship between the RCMP and other users of the roadway was sufficiently close and direct that the RCMP ought to have them in mind as potentially harmed by their actions," he continued.

Scott Stanley, a personal injury lawyer at Vancouver firm Murphy Battista LLP, says Savage's decision is useful as there has been "almost a judicial vacuum" on commentary regarding the duty of care in police pursuit cases and the definition of "pursuit." But he believes the decision is likely to face further scrutiny.

"I think it will go certainly to the Court of Appeal in B.C. and I'd be surprised if it doesn't get to the Supreme Court of Canada," he says.

(Canadian Lawyer)

THURSDAY JANUARY 09, 2014

Jan 09 2014

LONDON - London's police force said Thursday it was rolling out vest-mounted video cameras to some of the capital's 2,300 firearms officers, hoping to help build public confidence after a contentious inquest verdict on a fatal shooting.

The announcement came a day after an inquest jury largely vindicated police officers over the fatal shooting of 29-year-old Mark Duggan, whose death triggered rioting across England more than two years ago.

Speaking late Wednesday, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe said the camera experiment was an attempt to improve transparency and restore public trust in the force. It would allow jurors and judges literally to see events from an officer's perspective.

A police spokesman said Thursday that armed officers will begin wearing recording devices April 1. The number of officers set to wear the cameras has yet to be decided.

Jan 10 2014

SARNIA, Ont. - Police in southwestern Ontario say a mystery caller who placed 370 calls to the Sarnia Police Service since Christmas Day has been identified.

Investigators say the caller is a 10-year-old hearing impaired and developmentally delayed student who cannot speak and at-

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tends a Sarnia public school.

An educational assistant at the school heard the story about the 911 calls and informed a teacher.

The teacher was aware that the student enjoyed playing with gadgets and lived in the area police had identified as the source of the calls.

The parent of the student had removed the SIM card before giving the cellphone to the child, believing that it would have no service capabilities.

Police say the child was not aware that 911 was being contacted each time a call was made. (BlackburnRadio.com)

FRIDAY JANUARY 10, 2014

Jan 10 2014

EDMONTON - A Mountie who was seriously injured when he was run over by a vehicle during a shootout east of Edmonton is in stable condition.

RCMP Sgt. Josee Valiquette says the officer underwent surgery and will likely be in hospital for some time.

Another officer had his arm grazed by a bullet when police went to a farmhouse Monday after getting a call about someone threatening to kill someone with a handgun.

Valiquette says the names of both officers will be released when charges are sworn.

She says the man wounded in the shootout with Mounties will be charged when he is medically fit to appear in court.

Police have previously said the alleged gunman will likely be charged with attempted murder and firearms offences.

On Monday, five Mounties approached a farm, with two officers staying at a distance as three others went to the house.

The officers spotted the suspect's truck parked near a shed. When two of the Mounties looked inside, they found the suspect hiding there and a fight began.

The suspect managed to get away, got into his truck and there was a gunfight with RCMP.

The wounded suspect was arrested after a lengthy standoff.

A couple arrested on the farm with the alleged gunman were later released without being charged.

Alberta's Serious Incident Response Team will investigate the shooting.

Jan 10 2014

SASKATOON - A Saskatoon police officer has been recognized by a U.S.-based online magazine for a heartfelt tribute he wrote last spring to a homeless man.

Alvin Cote abused alcohol and lived on the

streets, but over the years became friends with Const. Derek Chesney and other police officers.

Cote died last April and Chesney wrote a story about him on the official police blog Cops and Bloggers.

Online magazine Slate picked up on the touching story and recently gave Chesney its Most Valuable Cop award.

Chesney says he remembers Cote for his big heart and his ability to laugh no matter what the situation.

Slate says Chesney's written tribute to the homeless man is a reminder that - quote - "cops can be as soft-hearted as anyone else."

Chesney began his tribute by writing: "In my line of work, it's not often that you

can arrest somebody on multiple occasions and end up being friends with them. But such was the case with Alvin."

He went on to tell how Cote suffered years of abuse as a child at a residential school, how he was arrested again and again for public drunkenness and how police officers came to look out for him and buy him a burger whenever they could.

"It brings a tear to my eye to think of the bad things that happened to Alvin in his past to push him to lead the life that he led, but ... I do hope that he will find peace wherever he now may be," Chesney's blog concluded.

"Farewell my friend, you will be missed by many."

(CJWW, The Canadian Press)



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

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

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Jan 10 2014

SEATTLE - A former Mountie from British Columbia's Fraser Valley has been sentenced to eight years in a U.S. prison for his role in a cross-border drug-trafficking conspiracy.

Rapinder Singh Sidhu, of Abbotsford, B.C., was indicted in August 2011 and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to export cocaine in October 2013.

At a sentencing hearing Friday in Seattle, Wash., U.S. District Judge Robert S. Lasnik said Sidhu desired money, wanted to be part of a major drug conspiracy and be of use to criminals.

Sidhu left the RCMP in 2003 over his perceived mistreatment, according to court statements, and then helped a criminal conspiracy allied with the Hells Angels to bring cocaine into Canada and smuggle marijuana into the U.S.

Prosecutors say he also recruited a corrupt Canadian border guard to help get cocaine through customs checkpoints.

The investigation resulted in the seizure of more than 756 kilograms of cocaine and US\$3.5 million in currency.



Jan 11 2014

TORONTO - Paramedics say two police officers were hurt when their cruiser was rammed by another vehicle in downtown Toronto.

The officers were taken to hospital late last night for treatment of injuries the paramedics described as minor.

A male suspect was also taken to a downtown hospital with undetermined injuries after police say he rammed his vehicle into a police cruiser twice.

Police say the suspect fled on foot but was soon captured.

There was no immediate word on charges. (680 News)



Jan 13 2014

OTTAWA - Users of medical marijuana will soon be prohibited from growing their own pot - and the federal government is suggesting they turn to their feline friends for help in properly disposing of leftover stashes.

Health Canada recommends blending marijuana with water and mixing it with cat litter to mask the odour before tossing it into regular household trash.

The department has announced a complete reworking of the medical marijuana system - in part due to concerns about the risk of criminal infiltration.

Under the existing program, to be phased out by April 1, people like Jason Wilcox of British Columbia are issued licences to grow marijuana for their personal use to help ease the symptoms of painful conditions.

Wilcox and thousands of others have until the end of March to destroy any pot they have grown but haven't consumed.

Under the new system, licensed producers will cultivate marijuana for distribution to patients whose health-care providers agree it is the appropriate treatment.

Jan 13 2014

TORONTO - Police have a duty to accommodate people with mental health issues who are experiencing a crisis up until the point when a life is at risk, Ontario's Human Rights commissioner said Monday.



When confronting a mentally ill person wielding a weapon, officers should find ways to respond to the individual, rather than just the knife, scissors or even gun they may be carrying, Chief Commissioner Barbara Hall suggested.

Hall's comments came at an inquest examining the police shooting deaths of three mentally ill Toronto residents.

Under the province's human rights code, said Hall, officers have a duty to accommodate someone's mental health issues "up until a point of undue hardship."

"What we're really saying is don't just go out and react to a knife or a gun, but look at possible ways of responding to people with mental health issues who also have a knife or a gun," she said outside coroner's court.

"We would like to see considerations for meeting the needs of the person with the weapon, the person with mental health issues, and doing that in a way that is still safe for the police and the public."

The inquest has heard that when an officer is faced with an individual advancing with a sharp object, their response is based on the person's behaviour and not their mental state.

It has also heard that officers under threat are trained to use their firearm to protect themselves and others once a situation has

progressed beyond a certain point.

While acknowledging that she wasn't an expert on policing techniques, Hall nonetheless suggested forces could better integrate training on how to deal with the mentally ill into their teachings on use of force and other tactics.

"We're concerned when we see training that focuses on only one issue at a time," she told the inquest. "The two need to be put together - what happens when using force against or towards people with mental health issues."

Combating the stereotypes and stigmas associated with mental illness needs to be a constant battle, she said, while calling for province-wide collation of data on how police deal with those with perceived mental health issues.

"I believe perceptions of people can interfere with how they're responded to," Hall said.

"We recommend more data, we recommend more training, we recommend exploring more options because we know that people with mental health issues are continuing to die in encounters with police officers."

The province's police watchdog cleared authorities of wrongdoing in all three cases being examined by the inquest, prompting calls for justice from the families of those killed.

The officers who fired the shots that killed the three victims all told the inquest they had been scared for their lives at the time and using their guns had appeared to be the only option in what were rapidly escalating situations.

While Hall acknowledged there may always be some such situations, she said the amount of negative police interactions with the mentally ill was cause for concern.

"This occurs too frequently, and as a society we have an obligation to explore whether there are more effective ways. Is it possible to use different techniques that will de-escalate it and prevent the kinds of deaths that are of concerns to all of us?"

Jan 13 2014

York Regional Police is dropping its racially charged case against Const. Dameian Muirhead, an officer who has maintained the force was punishing him under the Police Services Act for not investigating racial slurs made against him.

And Muirhead's lawyer now seems to be considering his own legal action against Chief Eric Jolliffe after the York police chief suggested the lawyer purposely derailed Muirhead's hearing.

"I am proud of the conduct, of myself and other legal counsels that acted with me on this matter, and at the end of the day our position was correct: that there was no basis for these changes, which is why the charges were withdrawn," defence lawyer Courtney Betty said Monday.

“For York Regional to go that step forward — which is blame legal counsel — that’s something the (counsel) involved will be taking under advisement.”

Jolliffe, in a two-page statement released to the media Monday, wrote that “during the hearing there were repeated attempts to disrupt the hearing and bring discredit to the police discipline process. A hearing that should be completed in one or two days was stretched to seven hearing days over the span of several months with Const. Muirhead’s counsel requesting an additional 10 to 14 hearing days.”

The chief’s statement continued: “Despite the hearing officer’s efforts to maintain decorum and civility within the hearing room, it became apparent that legal counsel could not be deterred from derailing the process through personal attacks against the prosecutor, a police witness and the hearing officer himself.”

Betty said he is seeking “legal advice” about Jolliffe’s statement.

Jolliffe could not be reached for further comment Monday evening.

This is the latest twist in an already complex case. Muirhead’s disciplinary case began in February 2013. The officer had been charged with three counts of misconduct in connection to a May 2011 bush party investigation and a subsequent run-in with one of the partygoers at a gas station. Muirhead, a black man, said the partygoers were hostile and some made racial taunts.

But one partygoer felt Muirhead was the one acting inappropriately. He accused Muirhead of being rude: for example, the officer refused to pick up a motorcycle jacket after it was knocked onto the ground during a licence plate search. The man filed a complaint against the officer.

Jolliffe said that, contrary to media reports, Muirhead was not charged with Police Services Act offences because he refused to investigate racial slurs made against him. Rather, his alleged misconduct was related to not following proper search procedure, “providing ... inaccurate information” to the Crown attorney and a failure to “take any responsibility” for actions that led to the public complaint.

The chief said that he would preferred to have dealt with the citizen’s complaint informally with a written reprimand, but Muirhead refused. For reasons not explained, Jolliffe said York’s command team has decided it was “no longer in the best interest” of the service, the community or the complainant to continue with proceedings against the officer.

Muirhead is out of the country and will not be commenting until next week, his lawyer said.

(Toronto Star)

Jan 13 2014

EDMONTON - Two Edmonton police officers were charged Monday after allegedly assaulting a person during an arrest in 2012.

The charges stem from a complaint the officers used excessive and unlawful force on an individual during a Sept. 4, 2012, arrest.

Police say Const. Barry Fairhurst, a nine-year member of the Edmonton Police Service, and Const. David Olsson, a two-year EPS member, were charged with assault Monday after an investigation by the police’s Professional Standards Branch and a subsequent review by Alberta Justice.

The constables are currently assigned to operational policing, the police department said in a news release. Since the matter is before the courts, EPS is not releasing more information about the case.

(Edmonton Journal)



Jan 14 2014

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. - Councillors in Abbotsford, B.C., have voted to repeal a bylaw that banned needle exchanges, methadone clinics and other harm reduction techniques in the Fraser Valley community.

The Monday night vote amending the 2005 bylaw is hailed by Pivot Legal Society lawyer Scott Bernstein.

He represents three people in a civil suit and human rights complaint against Abbotsford for denial of services that could prevent overdoses and diseases such as hepatitis.

Bernstein says now it’s up to the Health Authority to implement programs already proposed for Abbotsford in a 2012 harm reduction service plan.

Abbotsford Mayor Bruce Banman says the bylaw revision allows his city to work with health care officials on programs such as a needle exchange.

Jan 14 2014

SUDBURY, Ont. - A Sudbury, Ont., police officer who was allegedly assaulted by a suspected impaired driver has been released from hospital.

Police say the officer suffered serious but non-life-threatening injuries Monday night after responding to a call about a suspected drunk driver at a business.

It’s alleged that when the officer tried to give a field sobriety test to a 41-year-old woman, she resisted and assaulted him.

Police have not released any details about the officer or his injuries.

The woman is charged with resisting arrest, aggravated assault on a police officer and failing to comply with a demand for a physical co-ordination test.

Jan 14 2014

SIDNEY, B.C. - A child pornography investigation is underway against a Vancouver Island RCMP officer, but the force has already taken quick action to remove the man from its ranks.

Chief Supt. Ray Bernoties says discharge documents were accepted from the unidentified officer within 24 hours of his arrest on Dec. 19.

An RCMP release says a preliminary report to Crown counsel has been heard by a justice of the peace and single counts of possession of child pornography and production of child pornography are recommended.

The former officer has been ordered to return to Western Communities provincial court on Feb. 20.

The off-duty incidents are alleged to have occurred between Sept. 1 and Nov. 23, 2013, around the Victoria suburb of Colwood, where the man lives with his wife.

Charges have not yet been sworn, but Bernoties calls the alleged behaviour deplorable, adding that the man is now a private citizen so will no longer be subject to discipline under the RCMP Act.

Jan 14 2014

AJAX, Ont. - Ontario’s police watchdog has been called in to investigate after a 20-year-old Ajax man suffered serious injuries in a collision in the town east of Toronto.

Durham Region police say two officers saw a vehicle with dim headlights travelling eastbound on Highway 401 at about 3:15 a.m. Tuesday.

The officers ran the vehicle’s plates and found it may have been stolen, but police say the vehicle then accelerated and the officers noticed none of the rear lights were on.

The vehicle left the highway and headed north but as several other police cruisers arrived in the area, police say the suspect vehicle struck another vehicle and rolled several times.

The 20-year-old driver of the first vehicle was taken to hospital with life-threatening injuries and later transferred to Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

A 45-year-old man in the other vehicle received minor injuries.

Jan 14 2014

PETERBOROUGH, Ont. - Mayor Darryl Bennett says he’s already spent \$100,000 of his own money on legal bills to defend himself in an inquiry into his conduct on the city police board.

“I budgeted \$250,000,” Bennett told a Rotary lunch meeting on Monday.

Bennett is being investigated over his conduct on the Peterborough Lakefield Community Police board.

The Ontario Civilian Police Commission

(OCPC), a quasi-judicial agency that investigates complaints against police officers and board members, started hearing evidence last week in Peterborough.

It is alleged Bennett violated the code of conduct by criticizing the police service's hiring of a communications co-ordinator, by trying to negotiate with the police chief over the police budget, by sharing an e-mail about the chief that was sent to the mayor's office and by lobbying against the extension of a board member's term on the board.

Many of the allegations stem back to a tumultuous debate over how much money the police would receive from the city's 2012 budget.

The OPCP is seeking to have Bennett permanently removed from the police board.

Bennett said he could save himself plenty of time and money if he just resigned from the board.

"But I don't think that would be the appropriate thing to do," he said, adding that he's out to ensure nobody else has to go through this particular type of investigation again.

"We'll see if we can't promote some positive changes to a piece of legislation that I think is archaic," he said.

(QMI Agency)

Jan 14 2014

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. - The police chief of a southern Alberta city is retiring after 37 years of service.

Tom McKenzie started with Lethbridge

police in 1976 and rose through the ranks, being appointed chief in 2007.

He told the police commission that he won't seek a renewal of his contract when it expires in July.

The commission asked McKenzie to stay on the job until the end of October - an extra three months - to help put together the police budget for 2015 to 2018.

McKenzie agreed and the process to formalize his three-month extension is underway.

Jan 14 2014

A new report from the OPP highlights its efforts to peacefully resolve conflicts that involve Aboriginal people.

Staff sergeant Gary Maracle said the OPP puts an emphasis on communication during incidents such as protests or blockades. The force may bring in specially trained teams that have often already built relationships within First Nations communities.

"That's paramount to our success," he said.

"You know, if you have established relationships prior to any critical incident, it certainly magnifies our ... success rate. It's a lot easier to deal with people you've already established relationships with and built that trust with."

The report gives examples of how police use guidelines from a framework known as "Police Preparedness for Aboriginal Critical Incidents."

The framework is a kind of checklist to ensure that police consider all possible options before deciding how to deal with an incident.

Maracle said people would likely be surprised to see how often this framework is used across Ontario.

"I would say we've come a long way and we have a pretty successful track record," he said.

"We apply this [framework in] a daily approach to issues around the province, especially in our First Nations communities."

He said the framework is all about communication, but education and knowledge of First Nations issues is also important.

The approach police took during the Idle No More protests last year is also an example of how they are approaching First Nations issues.

There has been some criticism of this approach but, at the end of the day, the OPP's biggest concern is the safety of everyone involved in an incident, Maracle said.

(CBC News)

Jan 14 2014

SAINT JOHN - A decision by Saint John city council to look at the process and costs involved in switching to the RCMP for policing may not get very far.

The federal government would likely

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Presenter: Nir Maman

1-4pm: *Iran, Hizbollah, Drug Cartels: Counter-terrorism Considerations*
Presenter: Clare Lopez, CIA

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Presenter: Medic One

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Mentally Ill and Law Enforcement

9am - 12pm: *Suicide by Cop*
Presenter: Jean Guy Gagnon, Forensic Psychiatrist

1pm - 4pm: *The Mentally Ill in a Corrections Setting*
Presenter: Dr Yuki Kanomi, Clinical Psychologist

INTERVIEWING & DECEPTION

Day 1: April 29th, 9am - 12pm
Crisis Negotiation
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Day 1: April 29th, 9am-4pm
The Non Accusatory Interview
Presenters: S/Sgt Gordon MacKinnon (ret'd) and A/Sgt Wayne van der Laan (ret'd)
Fee: \$100

Day 2: April 30th, 9am-4pm
Dealing with Deception
Presenters: A/Sgt Wayne van der Laan (ret'd) and S/Sgt Gordon MacKinnon (ret'd)
Fee: \$100

Fee: \$250 - one day; \$400 - two days
Early Bird Fee (before March 1): \$225 - one day; \$375 - two days

Full details and registration at www.blueline.ca/expo/courses

not consider an RCMP deal with the city at this time, according to an emailed statement from Public Safety Canada spokesman Jean Paul Duval.

Bad relations between any city and local police force is a non-starter, he said.

Only municipalities “not involved or likely to be involved in a labour dispute with its police force,” will be considered.

Saint John is currently locked in contract negotiations with the union representing the Saint John Police Force.

The Saint John Police Association applied to the provincial government for arbitration in September and alleges the latest move by council is a bid to interfere.

Association president Jamie Hachey has said he plans to file a complaint with the New Brunswick Labour and Employment Board, alleging “extortion” by the employer.

In addition, a municipality not previously policed by the RCMP must have a population of less than 15,000 people to be considered by Public Safety Canada, said Duval.

Saint John’s population currently stands at about 70,000, meaning the city does not meet RCMP guidelines.

Still, Mayor Mel Norton stands by council’s decision to ask city staff for a report on the issue.

“It’s essentially a request for a report on a report, it’s one of the most benign questions that someone could ask,” he said.

“So the kind of questions you’re raising are the kinds of questions that council has in its own mind and the kind of questions our skilled management will be able to provide us answers to.”

Norton says the motion puts taxpayers first.

“We have a spending problem in Saint John and the recent budget highlights that what’s happening in protective services is not sustainable,” said Norton, whose vote broke the council tie on the motion.

The 2014 police budget increased by \$1 million to almost \$24 million.

(CBC News)

Jan 14 2014

EDMONTON - When former Edmonton police officer Derek Huff heard about the assault charges recently laid against two officers, he couldn’t help but wonder what will become of a complaint of excessive force he made against three of his colleagues in February 2010.

It’s been nearly four years since he and his partner told their sergeant about the beating they witnessed, and he’s still waiting for answers as the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) investigates.

“The hardest part for me right now is that everything in my life is sitting on this ASIRT investigation. It’s frustrating,” said Huff, who was a 10-year veteran and still hopes to get his job back.

“I am more paranoid of the reaction with people when this does come out than when it did in September (when he went public). If some officers do end up getting charged, it’s going to start all over again.”

Huff claims he and his partner witnessed three plainclothes officers in a sting brutally beat a handcuffed man who was a suspected drug dealer.

When he and his partner went to their sergeant to report what they had seen, Huff claims he was told they didn’t need to be involved and the reports that were submitted justified the actions of the officers. He and his partner were branded as rats; the ongoing harassment eventually prompted him to resign last February.

Following an investigation by the public standards branch in 2010 as a result of the victim’s injuries, then Chief Mike Boyd determined there was no reasonable prospect of a conviction at a disciplinary hearing. So Huff went to the deputy chief and wrote a formal complaint, which was sent to ASIRT) which has been investigating the matter since then.

Clif Purvis, executive director of ASIRT, said the investigation is still ongoing.

“It’s kind of a tangled saga. We’re working on aspects of that investigation. New stuff keeps popping up,” he said, adding corrupt practice investigations can go on for a long time, but this isn’t the longest investigation they’ve ever had.

“I think it’s in everybody’s best interest if we could wrap it up quickly. We’ve got to do a thorough job though at this point and there’s just been a lot of water under the bridge so we want to make sure we pay attention to all the things we should pay attention to.”

Most recently, Const. Barry Fairhurst, a nine-year member, and Const. David Olsson, a two-year member, were charged with assault in relation to an incident that took place on Sept. 4, 2012.

Police aren’t releasing details about the case since it is now before the courts, but said the charges stems from a complaint that the officers used excessive force and unlawful force on an individual during an arrest.

Following an investigation by the city police professional standards branch, charges were laid on Jan. 13, 2014. The constables are currently assigned to operational policing.

(Edmonton Sun)

Jan 14 2014

CALGARY- Wil Konybai was only nine-years-old when he arrived in Calgary with his family from Sudan.

Now 18, he has been through more troubles than many will experience in a lifetime.

“My mom and my dad– they haven’t been together since I was four-years-old because there was a war in Sudan that split the family apart. So my dad stayed in the north and my mom went to the south with us.”

Konybai came to Canada as a refugee with his mother and three brothers. He couldn’t speak English and his mother wasn’t able to work because of health problems.

The family received social assistance and to help out, Konybai got his first job as a dishwasher at a restaurant when he was only 12.

The lure of quick cash and crime was always there and his older brother had already gotten into some trouble.

That’s when Cst. Sean Lynn of the Calgary Police Youth at Risk Development Program (YARD) came into the family’s life.

Lynn had an important question for Konybai.

“I sell it to them – what do you need to succeed? We’ll try and help you find that.”

It turns out the answer for Konybai, was basketball. He became a skilled player, thanks to some help from YARD.

“We’ve helped him with his travel documents and permanent resident card so he can travel to the U.S. where he went and played some tournaments this past summer,” says Lynn.

The results of the program speak for themselves.

“It is very, very rewarding,” says Lynn. “I’m starting my 25th year of policing and it’s some of the most rewarding work I’ve done in my career.”

And Lynn will always have a fan in Konybai.

“They basically motivated me to good things, they were there for me, like a father figure, in particular Sean. He always picked me up when I was feeling down.

“God has a purpose for everything that has been brought to my life.”

(Global News)

**WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 15, 2014**

Jan 15 2014

WESLEY CHAPEL, Fla. - A Florida sheriff says a retired Tampa police officer’s praiseworthy career doesn’t offset the severity of the charge that he shot and killed another man after an argument at a movie theatre over texting.

Curtis Reeves, 71, is charged with second-degree murder in the death of 43-year-old Chad Oulson on Monday. Reeves was ordered held without bond Tuesday pending another hearing.

As a police officer for more than two decades until his retirement in 1993, Reeves regularly received outstanding evaluations

and numerous letters of commendation for his leadership skills and training he led for other agencies on gun safety and other topics.

Still, Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco said Tuesday: "It didn't matter what he had done previously in his life. You don't shoot someone over a texting incident."

As a police officer, Reeves was often praised for his problem-solving and ability to manage stressful situations.

"Captain Reeves not only has the ability to act decisively when necessary but has the foresight to initiate the proper course of action to avoid conflict," a supervisor remarked in one job performance review.

However, early in his career, one supervisor noted: "Reeves has a tendency to be impatient in regards to legal matters and practices now in force ... and may be abrupt with complainants in some areas of the city."

"He must have just snapped," said neighbour Joe D'Andrea, who described Reeves as a friendly, "stand-up" guy. "I'm trying to put all of this together."

Pasco County Sheriff's officials say Reeves initially asked Oulson to stop texting at the theatre in Wesley Chapel, a suburb about a half-hour north of downtown Tampa.

Sheriff's Detective Allen Proctor wrote that Reeves spoke to Oulson during the movie previews, then got up and informed management.

When Reeves returned to his seat "additional

words were exchanged" and Oulson threw a bag of popcorn at Reeves, the report said.

After officers read him his rights, Reeves told the detective that Oulson struck him in the face with an unknown object, and that's when he removed a .380-calibre gun from his pants pocket. The report said Reeves fired the gun and struck Oulson once in the chest and that he "was in fear of being attacked."

The sheriff said at a news conference that Reeves' son - who was off duty from his job as a Tampa officer - was walking into the theatre when the shooting happened. Nocco said Reeves briefly struggled with an off-duty deputy but released the weapon. The gun was jammed and unable to fire again.

Pasco Sgt. Steve Greiner was among the first officers in the theatre. When asked about Reeves' demeanour, Greiner replied: "He was very calm. He was seated in the chair, looking at the screen."

Reeves was instrumental in establishing the Tampa Police Department's first tactical response team, that agency's spokeswoman said. He retired in 1993 and later worked security at the Busch Gardens theme park. He also served on the Crimestoppers board of Hernando County.

Jan 15 2014

FREDERICTON - Police say the number of fatal collisions in parts of New Brunswick dropped nearly 30 per cent last year.

But the RCMP says the primary causes

of serious injuries and fatal collisions continued to be not wearing a seatbelt, drinking and driving, speeding and distracted driving.

They say in their jurisdiction, there were 38 fatal crashes with 48 victims last year, compared to 54 fatal collisions and 58 victims in 2012.

Staff Sgt. James Bates says the most recent figures are the lowest number of fatal collisions and victims in five years.

Of the 38 fatal crashes, 23 involved not wearing a seatbelt, drinking and driving, speeding or dangerous driving and distracted driving.

Jan 15 2014

OTTAWA - The federal government has agreed to turn over thousands of police documents that survivors of a notorious aboriginal residential school say are crucial to their compensation claims.

A spokeswoman for Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt says the government will comply with a ruling by an Ontario Superior Court judge that ordered it to hand over the documents in its possession.

Survivors of the St. Anne's school in northern Ontario had taken the federal government to court over access to thousands of pages of evidence from a provincial police investigation in the 1990s.

The police investigation found evidence of horrific abuse - including the use of an electric chair - against the aboriginal students.

The federal government had argued it lacked the authority to turn over the police documents.

But Justice Paul Perell of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruled that the federal government took an unduly narrow interpretation of its obligations and must hand over the police documents.

Jan 15 2014

VANCOUVER - The families of several women whose remains or DNA were found on Robert Pickton's property are asking a court to adopt the findings of a public inquiry in an ongoing civil lawsuit.

The children of nine murdered women are suing the City of Vancouver, the B.C. government, and Pickton himself, at a hearing where Pickton is watching the proceedings by video.

The families want a B.C. Supreme Court judge to conclude the factual findings of a public inquiry report that was released in December 2012 should be binding on the governments.

Their lawyer, Jason Gratl, says the inquiry heard extensive evidence and made numerous findings about what happened when the Vancouver police and the RCMP investigated reports of missing women in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Gratl says it would be a waste of time for

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the court to now hear the same evidence as the inquiry.

Pickton, who's straggly blonde hair is now shaved bald, is appearing by video from Kent Institution, southeast of Vancouver.

Pickton has not yet addressed the court, other than to say he didn't care whether he was present for this week's proceedings, but he will have the opportunity to speak later.

Jan 15 2014

EDMONTON - The agency responsible for airport screening says its staff made a mistake when they confiscated an explosive device from a passenger's bag but let the young man get on a plane rather than calling police.



Mathieu Larocque, spokesman for the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, said staff in Edmonton should have contacted police right away, not four days later.

He said a review was conducted after the incident last fall and some screening employees were suspended.

"There were people disciplined and they were required to take extra training," Larocque said Wednesday. "The procedure is to call the police and it didn't happen or it happened very late in the process."

News of the foul-up only made headlines this week. Federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt issued a statement earlier Wednesday calling the incident unacceptable.

"The safety of Canadians and the travelling public is our government's top priority," Raitt said. "This individual should not have been allowed to board his flight, and it is unacceptable that CATSA waited four days before seeking the RCMP's assistance."

She said she planned to call the president of the agency to discuss the matter further.

Skylar Murphy, 19, of Spruce Grove, Alta., pleaded guilty last month to possession of an explosive substance while at the Edmonton International Airport on Sept. 20.

He was sentenced to a year of probation and fined \$100.

Court documents describe the material seized from his carry-on luggage as "black powder" and some reports say it was a 15-centimetre pipe bomb with a fuse wrapped around it.

CBC and The Edmonton Journal quoted sources as saying a screening officer tried to return the device to Murphy when it was found, but the teen didn't want it back.

The media outlets reported Murphy made

the device while fooling around with friends and mistakenly left it in a bag he was taking on a trip to Mexico with his family.

RCMP spokeswoman Josee Valiquette said officials with the security authority notified police on Sept. 24 about the seizure. Officers arrested Murphy on Sept. 27 at the airport, following his return flight home.

Larocque said it's procedure for screening staff to immediately call police if they find something suspicious. "Our screening officers are not police officers and they can't charge anybody with a crime."

Officers are stationed at major airports. It's up to them to decide if a passenger should be arrested or allowed on a plane, said Larocque.

He said training for screening staff across the country is being updated to emphasize the procedure.



Jan 16 2014

Nearly 40 charges have been laid against a 33-year-old man accused of running over a Mountie with a truck and exchanging gunfire with police at a farm near Tofield last week.



The man, Michael Leslie Johnson, was injured in a hail of bullets and recovering in an Edmonton hospital. Now that his medical condition has improved, he's been charged with 36 offences, including attempted murder with a firearm on four RCMP officers.

The drama unfolded when Mounties from Tofield and Vegreville went to the residence near Township Road 524 and Range Range 192 around 4 p.m. on Jan. 6 to question the homeowner and his girlfriend about an acquaintance believed to be responsible for numerous thefts and break-ins throughout the area.

It was by chance that the five officers who attended the scene located the wanted man hiding in a shed on the yard. A confrontation occurred when officers tried to arrest the man, who fled to his stolen truck hidden behind one of the outbuildings.

At some point, gunfire erupted, with one of the bullets grazing the upper arm of an officer. The man ran over the other Mountie with his truck during an attempt to

flee the scene. The truck, however, hit the ditch, getting stuck in a snow bank against some trees.

It all ended around 3 a.m. Tuesday when the wanted man, injured during the gunfire, was taken into custody and to an Edmonton hospital for treatment of gunshot wounds.

Police say Johnson is from the area, but has no fixed address. His court date has been scheduled for Jan. 27 in Vegreville. (Edmonton Sun)

Jan 16 2014

The village council in Blacks Harbour has voted to end the community's contract with the RCMP.

It will now join forces with the town of St. George to approach the province about having a local force established to police the two communities.

The council in St. George, located less than 20 kilometres away from Blacks Harbour, voted Monday to drop the RCMP.

Together the two communities pay more than \$500,000 a year for RCMP coverage and both feel they aren't getting their money's worth.

Blacks Harbour resident John Craig sat on a local committee that didn't like the idea of the RCMP taking over from the local police force back in 1988.

"They're a more expensive force," said Craig. "Per officer they cost you more money."

"And whereas a local force, they know your people. They stay here in the Harbour and they know the people that are here. Whereas the RCMP, they rotate in and out."

Craig thinks sharing police services with St. George is the way to go.

"The province of New Brunswick wants municipalities to work together and to share costs and if you've got two communities that want to do it, they should move ahead and do it."

St. George and Blacks Harbour will now seek permission from Public Safety Minister Bruce Northrup to end their contract with the RCMP.

"If we receive permission from the minister of public safety to move forward with the next step, we would notify the RCMP," said St. George Mayor Sharon Tucker. "And we hope if that is to be the opportunity, then we hope to be able to do that in March."

The communities think they should get better service for the money they pay to the RCMP. One of their complaints is the slow response times from the RCMP dispatch centre in Fredericton.

"And then they determine from there whatever the emergency is and what the response should be," said Blacks Harbour Deputy Mayor Natalie Harris. "So sometimes it may be a next-day response, or two days, or sometimes even longer before there's a response."

(CBC News)