

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

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Executive Digest

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Record number of Mounties disciplined over behaviour



Jun 27 2014

TORONTO - The record number of RCMP disciplinary cases involving incidents from having sex in cruisers and watching porn to lying under oath and assaulting members of the public, is indicative of a wider problem with Canadian police, a criminologist said Friday.

At root, said Prof. Darryl Davies, is inadequate training, lack of accountability, and a culture of impunity among officers protected by powerful, "militant" unions.

"There's an attitude within the force - at least within some members - of a sense of entitlement, a sense that we can get away with this," Davies said.

"It's too prevalent, not just in the RCMP (but) right across Canada."

In a new report this week from the Mountie in charge of professional integrity shows a record 104 new formal discipline cases were brought forward in 2012-13, including incidents of drunk driving, ignoring a court subpoena, and lying in relation to a

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criminal investigation.

The incidents involved both uniformed and civilian members of the federal police force.

Professional Integrity Officer Craig MacMillan said in his report the higher numbers are likely the result of a new effort by RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson - armed with a stronger government mandate - to crack down on problem officers.

"It was observed in last year's report that increased scrutiny and the stated expectations of the new commissioner might lead to an increase in both the number of formal discipline cases and suspensions," MacMillan said.

"This may well have been an accurate forecast."

In most cases, punishment for the wayward Mounties was a reprimand and loss of up to 10 days' pay.

One constable, accused of fraud for improper use of a government fuel card, was ordered to resign. In another case, proceedings were stayed against a staff sergeant accused of lying to superiors because the disciplinary case took too long. One constable was docked a week's salary for sexually harassing a colleague - the kind of problem that has prompted widespread criticism of the RCMP in recent years.

Davies, an instructor in criminology and criminal justice at Carleton University in Ottawa, called the number and range of offences identified in the report "quite shocking."

A more rigorous approach to tackling the problem is needed to restore faith in the RCMP and in police in general, he said, than wrist slaps and docked pay.

The solution, he said, is better recruitment, training, and "deprogramming" of a subculture in which officers place loyalty to one another above public duty.

"What Canadians are really looking for are consequences and what is the outcome going to be for these individuals," said Davies, who noted officers can easily make

up forfeited pay by working overtime.

"Until such time as we can inculcate values that place the rule of law and service to the public over and above service to the police subculture, nothing will really change."

Despite the rising disciplinary numbers, MacMillan pointed out that the already low proportion of officers engaged in misconduct is falling.

"That is unqualified good news," MacMillan said.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 25, 2014

Jun 25 2014

EDMONTON - With a call volume of 562,000 last year - and an average of 15 people to answer them - Edmonton police have decided to turn to answering machines. The police communications branch has officially launched its Interactive Voice Response System (IVR).



Police handle all emergency and non-emergency calls in their call centre at headquarters downtown. The IVR will automate the non-emergency phone line so callers can select from a menu that provides two general call paths - "1" for questions or information calls (which make up 50 per cent of calls to the non-emergency line), and "2" for complaint calls.

The IVR, said Sgt. Mitch Liwczak with the communications branch, can provide information for common calls like police station locations, reporting crimes online and non-injury collisions - which police don't respond to, freeing up valuable resources for other calls.

"The IVR will provide information about what they need to do...and kind of directs them on what to do so they are not sitting in a queue waiting for a person to tell them that same information," said Liwczak, noting callers will still have the option of talking to a real person at the end prompt if they feel the need.

"We're 562,000 (non-emergency calls) calls last year with an average of 15 people on a shift. It's just not practical to expect to be able to talk to a call taker with that kind of call volume."

The system has been in the works for more than a year with an up-front cost of approximately \$50,000.

The daily average for calls on the non-emergency line during the summer months range from 2,000 to 2,500 a day. Liwczak said hiring new staff to handle that kind of volume isn't always an option. The IVR is expected to decrease the number of general information and non-emergency calls handled by call takers by

approximately 20 per cent.

"You're going to be going from a 10-minute wait time, sitting in a queue or longer, to maybe a minute or less where you'll be getting the service you require. I think the public will really find this is going to be effective."

Last year, 911 operators received approximately 362,000 calls or about 1,000 calls a day. About a third of those calls are actual emergencies and about 300 are pocket dials.

(Sun Media)

THURSDAY JUNE 26, 2014

Jun 26 2014

VANCOUVER - Dog bites top the list for injuries caused during confrontations involving police forces in British Columbia.

The information is contained in a new report by the Pivot Legal Society and was compiled from two years of data from the RCMP and municipal police departments.

The report says that between 2010 and 2012, there were 490 people bitten by dogs deployed by police, although that number could be higher because many bites go unreported.

Pivot lawyer Douglas King says that unlike other police weapons such as fists and batons, dogs can inflict devastating and permanent injuries and they shouldn't be viewed as friendly ambassadors of policing.

The legal advocacy group says police dog use is largely unregulated in B.C.

Jun 26 2014

VANCOUVER - A woman stands outside Vancouver's Canna Clinic, offering passersby free in-house medical consultations. It's one of Vancouver's 30-plus marijuana dispensaries, many of which have opened in only the last 12 months.

The only catch is that prospective buyers have to present photo I.D., sign a form pledging not to share, and receive a diagnosis from an onsite naturopath confirming they have any ailment ranging from cancer to ADHD to sleep disorders.

"I'm just in a lot of pain, you know," one man, who entered after being assured by staff that the certification process would only take 10 minutes, joked to the assembled patients as he lined up for registration forms.

According to Health Canada, the only legal way to get marijuana is to get a prescription from a doctor or nurse practitioner, and choose from one of 13 government-licensed producers for carefully regulated doses via Canada Post.

But the rest of Canada is not Vancouver, where a legal grey area is ushering in an unprecedented boom in storefront medical marijuana dispensaries and there are now almost as many dispensaries as McDonalds.

Vancouverites can now buy medical pot out of vending machines, drink medical pot smoothies, take in a live concert over a

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medical cannabis vaporizer and buy virtually unlimited quantities of medical weed for increasingly mild medical ailments.

As recently as the 2010 Olympics, Vancouver only counted a handful of subdued clinical-looking marijuana dispensaries selling pot to carefully screened lists of patients who had proven a serious need to use the drug for pain relief.

Now, thanks largely to the laissez-faire reaction of both police and the Vancouver citizenry, the city counts more than 35 locations, and virtually every one of those is laying plans to expand further.

"We do have a priority-based approach to policing here in Vancouver, and we do have other priorities," said Const. Brian Montague, spokesman with the Vancouver Police.

The only exception is if a dispensary attracts enough complaints to become a "public safety issue," he said.

(National Post)

Jun 26 2014

WATERLOO REGION - Former Waterloo Regional Police Chief Larry Gravill will serve as a part-time citizenship judge in Kitchener, Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander announced Wednesday.



Gravill, who served as chief for 15 years, will now decide whether to approve citizenship applications, preside over citizenship ceremonies and administer the oath of citizenship to new Canadians.

After stepping down as Waterloo Regional Police Chief in 2007, Gravill was called upon to lead a review into the University of Waterloo's men's football team after the school suspended the team in 2010 in response to nine players failing drug tests.

He more recently chaired a working group that looked at merging the region's four separate emergency dispatch centres to lower response times.

(The Record)

Jun 26 2014

TORONTO - Four Toronto-area men have been charged after police say 20 kilograms of heroin was discovered concealed in strings and woven into carpets that were imported from Pakistan.

RCMP say they were contracted by border services officers who discovered the heroin at Pearson International Airport.

Police say they arrested three suspects at a Toronto business on June 20 and arrested a

fourth at a Toronto residence.

RCMP say false ID and cash were also seized.

Jun 26 2014

CALGARY - The Alberta Court of Appeal has overturned a Calgary teenager's sex assault conviction because a judge based his verdict mainly on evidence from text messages.

The Appeal Court ruled the conviction could not stand because text messages are hearsay evidence.

The high court ordered a new trial for the youth, who was 17 at the time, and who claimed the sex he had with a 15-year-old girl was consensual.

The trial judge heard that in January 2012 the boy and girl had spent the day together and ended up having sex in the youth's car.

The trial judge ruled the victim's text messages about being scared and being made to do things she really didn't want to do were credible and truthful.

The defence argued the Crown only asked to enter the texts to refresh the girl's memory - not to establish the truth of what happened.

It also pointed out that other text messages between the girl and her mother suggested nothing was wrong.

(CHQR)

Jun 26 2014

WINNIPEG - Winnipeg police are using money from the pockets of criminals to combat crime.

The department is using \$420,000 that the province has seized as proceeds of crime and reinvesting it into new tools and training.

That includes surveillance equipment, a robot that detonates explosives, cameras for recording evidence and new software used in forensic computer investigations.

The money will also train officers in evidence-gathering and specialized interview techniques.

(CJOB)

Jun 26 2014

WINNIPEG - Manitoba officers have raised more than \$25,000 for the families of three fallen RCMP members.

On June 4, Constables Douglas James Larche, Dave Joseph Ross and Fabrice Georges Gevaudan were killed in Moncton, N.B., in an attack with also left two officers injured.

Justin Bourque, 24, has been charged with three counts of first-degree murder and two counts of attempted murder.

This week, more than 650 people attended a police fundraiser, involving Winnipeg police, the RCMP, Canadian Border Services and corrections officers.

On top of the charity event, wrist bands emblazoned with "United for our Fallen Codiacs" are being sold to raise funds. The Winnipeg police hopes that will raise an additional \$23,000.

(Global Winnipeg)

Jun 26 2014

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask. - A Saskatchewan lawyer has been reprimanded by the Law Society of Saskatchewan for writing a retainer on toilet paper.

Ron Cherkewich of Prince Albert, Sask., wrote the document for a client during a 2011 residential schools claim hearing.

Cherkewich, who has been in practice for 44 years, says it was a moment of silliness.

He says while he can't disagree with the law society's ruling, he notes the toilet paper was clean and "the best kind of tissue on the market."

Cherkewich was fined \$500 and ordered to pay \$10,000 in court costs.

Tim Huber, legal counsel for the law society, says it's not something you see every day.

(Global Saskatoon)

Jun 26 2014

ST. JOHN'S - RCMP Corporal Steven Blackmore has been found not guilty of all 10 charges he had been accused of at Supreme Court. Blackmore was acquitted of ten charges including sexual assault, assault, and careless use of a firearm. Most of the charges involved the same female complainant, who the defence presented as a person with no credibility.

After little more than a day of deliberations, the jury agreed.

Defence lawyer Erin Breen says the RCMP investigation against Blackmore was very one sided from the get-go.

Breen says there was clearly an investigation here that was full of tunnel vision. She says the defense brought the full picture to the jury, and obviously the jury agreed.

Breen says after being investigated and charged by his own police force, Blackmore has some mixed emotions today. She says she's not sure if he will take a new career direction.

Breen says Blackmore managed to get through this trial, but there were times that had a serious emotional impact on him. She says the past four weeks of trial have been hell for Blackmore.

(VOCM)



Jun 27 2014

An Ontario Provincial Police officer has suffered "life-altering" injuries after he was struck by a goose while riding his motorcycle north of Barrie on Thursday.



Const. Peter Tucker, a 20-year veteran from the Niagara detachment and a member of the force's Golden Helmets Motorcycle Precision Team, suffered serious leg injuries, said OPP Commissioner Vince Hawkes.

He would not speculate on whether Tucker will be able to walk again.

"He is undergoing treatment right now," Hawkes said outside Sunnybrook hospital. "But it's going to be a long road for recovery for this officer and his family."

The accident happened around 9:20 a.m. during a VIP escort-training exercise with at least 14 other motorcycles. The escort was southbound on Highway 11 as it merges with Highway 400 when the goose flew into Tucker's path, causing him to lose control and hit the centre barrier, said OPP spokesman Const. Kerry Schmidt.

Tucker was taken to Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie and immediately transferred by ORNGE air ambulance to Sunnybrook in Toronto.

Jun 27 2014

SASKATOON - A 25-year-old man has appeared in court on multiple charges following a harrowing police pursuit in Saskatoon earlier this week.

Timothy Gunn was charged Thursday with assault with a weapon, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle and possession of a stolen vehicle, among other charges.

Police said Gunn was also being sought on warrants stemming from an alleged armed robbery at a hotel in Lloydminster, Alta., on June 11.

They said Gunn was recently released from prison and has a lengthy criminal record.

The incident began Wednesday afternoon when police received a report of a black truck driving erratically.

An officer tried to stop the truck but the driver simply kept going. A criminal pursuit was launched but was called off a short time later due to safety concerns when the driver headed for downtown.

The truck collided with a number of vehicles and then hit a police cruiser, disabling it.

Police say the driver then turned the truck around and headed toward the officer from the disabled vehicle, who was standing on a sidewalk where a number of people had gathered.

The officer shouted at the crowd to move to safety, then drew his firearm and shot eight times at the truck, which then fled the scene.

Another officer purposely collided with the suspect vehicle and the driver was chased down and arrested with the help of the canine unit.

Police say one civilian and the driver of the truck sustained minor injuries, adding the driver was not hit by the shots fired at him.

(CKOM)

Jun 27 2014

OTTAWA - The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority says it has stepped up training after an internal report said screeners at Edmonton's airport mis-handled the discovery of a pipe bomb.

An internal review of last September's incident concluded that screeners failed to handle the pipe bomb in "the manner expected" by Canada's air security authority.

The review, obtained by The Canadian Press, says several personnel felt the item in a teenager's carry-on bag might be a pipe bomb.

But no one acted fully on the suspicious because a CATSA manager felt the item was simply drug paraphernalia.

Police weren't called in until several days later - - the teen was then charged and later pleaded guilty to possession of an explosive device.

He said he built the pipe bomb for his own amusement and forgot he had left it in a camera bag.

CATSA says more than one employee was suspended and received mandatory re-training.

Jun 27 2014

MONTREAL - The RCMP are apologizing for the code name used to describe its latest anti-Mafia bust in Quebec.

The force's commanding officer in the province has written a letter to the National Congress of Italian Canadians Quebec chapter, apologizing for calling the sweep "Project Clemenza."

The Italian group's Quebec chapter complained in writing more than a week ago after receiving what it says was numerous complaints from the community about negative stereotyping of the Italian community by the police.

Police described the alleged criminal organizations in a release as being linked to Italian-based organized crime in Montreal.

The project code name refers to Peter Clemenza, a fictional character from the novel and movie "The Godfather," which is the sweeping saga of an Italian crime family.

The RCMP has not made the apology public, but confirmed the existence of the letter. The community organization has released a copy.

In it, Francois Deschenes, assistant commissioner and commanding officer for the Quebec detachment, says the police force meant no harm and measures have been taken to make sure it doesn't happen again.

The organization says it is satisfied with the RCMP response to its concerns and be-

lieves the force has understood the code name only serves to reinforce long-standing stereotypes.

The RCMP intercepted more than one million private PIN to PIN messages as part of an anti-Mafia sweep against two organizations that led to more than 30 arrests earlier this month.

The accused face different charges that include gangsterism, conspiracy, drug importation, trafficking, possession, kidnapping, forcible confinement, possession of weapons and explosives, arson, extortion and assault.

Jun 27 2014

WINNIPEG - Manitoba's top judges say they want to unlog the provincial courts by possibly eliminating some preliminary hearings.

Glenn Joyal, chief justice of the court of Queen's Bench, says it is ridiculous that a case that could go to trial in eight months takes four years.

He says in the meantime, the accused stays behind bars, the memories of witnesses fade and the victim's families are left in limbo.

Ken Champagne, chief judge of the provincial court, says preliminary inquiries don't serve the same purpose they used to because of increased disclosure and the high standard of police investigations before charges are laid.

The judges say preliminary inquiries can tie up a courtroom for weeks at a time and have become mini-trials that have taken on a life of their own.

The judges have formed a committee to design a pilot project that would reform or even eliminate preliminary hearings.

Jun 27 2014

Marine services are up and running in Port Stanley again, days after an Elgin County OPP Marine Unit patrol boat was stolen and set on fire.

A loaner 24 ft. Sea Swirl Inboard Outboard police boat - the same as the one that was destroyed - arrived in Port Stanley Friday afternoon.

Elgin County OPP Const. Troy Carlson says "It is a boat that's used for training purposes but we were able to procure that and we're going to be able to use that for this season."



OPP will keep the vessel until the fall, when it will be returned to the training fleet in Orillia. However, a permanent vessel won't be available until next season.

On Wednesday, the OPP patrol boat was reportedly stolen around 2:45 a.m., and then seen on fire near the rock break wall around sunrise. The vessel was completely destroyed – with damage estimated at \$85,000.

The lack of patrol boat had police concerned for public safety, "There is an enforcement component, but certainly safety is our priority out there. So, making sure that people are out there having fun, doing it safely and ensuring that they get back safe," Carlson says.

Police are continuing their investigation and have transported the burned out hull of the boat to a forensic lab in Tillsonburg.

They are also looking for witnesses, including a couple seen near the lift bridge around 6 a.m. on Wednesday.

(CTV London)

Jun 27 2014

Two paramedics who were injured in a training accident have been released from hospital.

Superintendent Craig MacInnes and Paramedic Reid Purdy have both been discharged from The Ottawa Hospital. They were admitted last Wednesday with second degree burns after an explosion in an abandoned building in Kanata.

In a release, Paramedic Chief Anthony Di Monte said, "the outpouring of support from the community for our injured paramedics has been truly overwhelming."

The officers were practicing gaining entry into a building using explosives when the exercise went wrong, seriously injuring Purdy and MacInnes. Another paramedic and a police officer had minor injuries.

Purdy and MacInnes will need ongoing treatment over the next few weeks, but are expected to recover and return to regular duties.

The Ministry of Labour and the Provincial SIU are still investigating the circumstances around the accident.

(CFRA)

Jun 27 2014

VANCOUVER - Lewis Byers was the first Vancouver police officer ever killed in the line of duty. A century later, one of the key artifacts from the gunfight that led to his death has been donated to the Vancouver Police Museum — his revolver.

Byers had it in his hand when he was shot and killed by Oscar Larson on March 25, 1912 near today's Ballantyne Pier.

According to various Vancouver newspaper stories, the 21-year-old Byers had been dispatched to check out reports of a belligerent drunk waving a gun around a liquor store.

The drunk had left by time Byers arrived. He made some inquiries, heard that Larson lived in a floating squatter's shack, and went down to find him.

Larsen had been firing the gun on the

waterfront, perhaps at a dog. Byers reached the shoreline and yelled at Larson to stop shooting. There was no reply, so Byers went down the bank to a spot behind Larson's shack.

Eyewitness Charles Weidenr said Byers told Larson to "throw up your hands or I'll shoot." Again there was no answer, so Byers went behind a gasoline tank and fired a warning shot over Larson's head.

He then ran toward Larson, who shot at him. Byers turned to run for cover, but Larson fatally shot him in the heart and neck.

More police arrived and engaged in a gun battle with Larson, who turned his gun on himself and shot himself five times. He had also been hit by two police bullets, but lived for several hours before dying.

The Vancouver World headline the next day read "Drink Sodden Outlaw Murders Constable."

Byers had been with the Vancouver police for only five months when he was killed. He had been a member of the Northwest Mounted Police (the precursor to the RCMP), but quit when he was denied permission to marry his sweetheart Annie Woodcock.

Woodcock was from Vancouver, so Byers applied to the VPD and was accepted. The couple lost their only baby when it was just a month old.

Several years ago, now-retired VPD Sergeant Steve Gibson and Constable Tod Catchpole put together a website honouring the 16 Vancouver policemen who have died on duty.

Gibson located some of Byers' relatives in Alberta, and found out they still had his revolver, which had been given to the family by his former partner.

"We discovered that back in 2001," Gibson relates.

"But they weren't ready to donate it to the museum back then. I kept in touch with them, and two weeks ago out of the blue they said 'OK, we're ready to donate it.'"

The first thing you notice about the gun is that it's quite small.

"At this time the firearm was carried underneath the jacket," explains Kristin Hardie, curator of the Vancouver Police Museum.

"It wasn't until quite a bit later, after the unemployment riots of 1935, that the firearm was worn on a holster outside, visible to the public. All the officers' firearms (in 1912) would have been concealed beneath their uniform."

The second thing you notice about the gun is that it has a small hook underneath the trigger.

"The little hook underneath is called a trigger spur," says Gibson. "It's to give the person a better grip."

"It's so you can have a two-handed grip," says Hardie. "One hand would go underneath, the second would go on top."

The revolver looks like a Webley, a popular English revolver in the late 1800s. Hardie says it resembles a model made for the Royal Irish Constabulary.

It was made in Belgium and is probably a .30 calibre model made by the Freres Neumann company, which marketed it under the name "Frontier Bulldog" or "Elvira Bulldog." There were 75 police officers in Vancouver in Byers' day, but the force didn't issue a standard gun.

"It's hard to say if (Byers' gun) was issued by the VPD or if it was his own firearm," says Hardie.

"We have seen other firearms that officers have used that weren't issued by the VPD. For example, Chief Foster carried his World War Two firearm while he was on duty." (Vancouver Sun)

Jun 27 2014

EDMONTON - No more pencils, no more rule books, no more programs to veer youngsters in Edmonton schools away from hard drug use.

The Edmonton Police Service has circulated a message to schools that the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program will not continue past the end of this year.

"The decision to discontinue the DARE program was not an easy one, given the commitment of our EPS police members, schools and the community," read a letter sent to parents from Michelle Fillion, manager of the EPS Youth and Collaborative Policing Section.

"Ongoing challenges around funding, training and co-ordination have contributed significantly to the decision."

The news comes the same week a city report pointed to EPS answering city council's call to find efficiencies to be found by making \$4 million in operations cuts.

Lori Nagy, spokeswoman for Edmonton Catholic School Board, said she is not concerned that the 19-year program will be ending, choosing instead to see it as a natural switch to more modern methods of police reaching out to school kids.

"It looks like as far as the EPS feels it may have just come to the end of its cycle. We look forward and we're confident that we'll hear more in the next few months from the EPS with perhaps alternative programming that they'd like to replace it with," said Nagy, calling the program positive since it began in the city almost two decades ago.

"The overarching message is the same: to continue on and make positive decisions."

Exactly how that message will be brought to kids in the future, however, remains unclear.

"We are reviewing alternative programming that will allow for continued positive engagement opportunities between police officers and school-aged youth," said the police statement.

Plans are to halt the program by the end of 2014.

(Sun Media)

Jun 27 2014

TORONTO - GTA police officers are flocking to social media in an effort to engage the vast Twitter-verse as they appeal for help heating up an assortment of cold cases.

Friday's international tweet-a-thon — a 24-hour event launched by LAWs Communications in 2013 — provides an opportunity for investigators to highlight unsolved crimes and missing persons cases.

"There is a huge benefit to utilizing social media," says Halton Regional Police Det.-Sgt. John Mans. "It's a great way to reach mass audiences quickly."

"It's also an opportunity for us to let people know what we're doing while offering them a chance to jump in and help us."

Participation in the tweet-a-thons has grown rapidly since they started in March 2013. The second event last November saw a whopping 15,621 Twitter users send out 48,482 tweets using the #PolTwt hashtag.

Halton police took part in that second event and Mans says it was so successful, the force decided to participate again.

His service sent out 186 tweets in the November event, ranking them sixth among participating police services.

The most vocal officers in the last event, according to LAWs Communications, were members of Britain's North Yorkshire force — 568 tweets. Calgary's police service was the top Canadian force, finishing fourth with 209 tweets.

Mans says Halton Police had a narrow focus in their first event but they decided to get "more involved" this time around.

Officers from four districts began tweeting at 8 a.m. and will continue for 24 hours, he says, adding each district is doing something different.

One district involving Criminal Investigations Bureau detectives is tweeting about incidents officers encounter in a day, Mans says. Another district is giving the public a glimpse of a-day-in-the-life of a cop on the road. The third district is tweeting safety and crime prevention tips.

Mans and another officer are highlighting cold cases as they tweet from @hrpsris.

"We have 10 unsolved murders in Halton," Mans says. "And some of those cases go back quite a ways."

He urges people who have information about any unsolved cases highlighted during the tweet-a-thon to come forward, regardless of how irrelevant they believe their information may be.

(Sun Media)

SATURDAY JUNE 28, 2014

Jun 28 2014

Two RCMP officers accused of trying to circumvent a court-ordered paternity test have elected to be tried by judge alone in B.C. Supreme Court.

Greg Edward Doncaster and Derek Reginald Carter, both constables with the RCMP at the time of the alleged offences, are expected to set a date for their trial on July 16, said Victoria criminal lawyer John Green.

Both will go straight to trial without a preliminary inquiry, Green told the Victoria

provincial court.

Doncaster and Carter were charged with fraud and obstruction of justice after a Victoria police criminal investigation into fraudulent activity in relation to a DNA identification process.

It's alleged that Doncaster persuaded Carter to complete a DNA test in November, in an attempt by Doncaster to deny he was the father of a woman's baby.

Carter is also facing a charge of fraudulent personation and making a false document. Doncaster is charged with counselling Carter to commit those two offences.

Both Mounties, who previously served with the Regional Crime Unit, were suspended with pay after the Victoria Police Department launched its criminal investigation this year.

Doncaster has since resigned and Carter is suspended without pay, the RCMP said in a statement.

(Victoria Times Colonist)

Jun 28 2014

MONCTON - Dozens of residents from Moncton's north end met Saturday morning to reclaim their neighbourhood.



About 200 walked through the neighbourhood to say "thank you" to the RCMP for what they did to keep the area safe.

They were among the thousands who were under a lockdown order three weeks ago after a gunman shot five RCMP officers, killing three.

Many wore red as they listened to music and chatted with RCMP officers who showed up Saturday.

Gaby Lyness is one of the 13 organizers of the event.

"Everybody is still talking about it," he said.

He says it was part community barbecue and part walk through the neighbourhood.

"Just to get the community out of the house. One of the things was open your doors, come back outside. It's unfortunate that an event like that took place to bring people together but at the same time what better way to commemorate what happened and the efforts from the RCMP and all the first responders," he said.

Lyness says it's also a chance to meet new neighbours and make new friends in Moncton north.

Brian Butler is a retired RCMP officer who also lives in the neighbourhood.

He's glad to see so many people show up.

"It's awful that it has to be a situation like this to bring us together but we're together and it's great to see the community like this," he said.

The organizers say they want to make sure the lives of the three officers who died are never forgotten. They want the community to become stronger because of their sacrifice.

(CBC News)

SUNDAY JUNE 29, 2014

Jun 29 2014

OTTAWA - Ottawa police are investigating a collision between a stolen car and an RCMP vehicle in downtown Ottawa on Sunday afternoon in which seven people, including a Mountie, were injured.



City police say there were six men and women in a white Mazda 3 as it raced off the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway and up Wellington Street at about 3:30 p.m. The car had been reported stolen from the Kanata area several days earlier.

Moments before the crash, the driver of the Mazda had failed to pull over at an RCMP traffic stop on the parkway, according to RCMP spokeswoman Cpl. Lucy Shorey. Instead, he sped away.

That's when another RCMP officer parked on Wellington tried to intervene, Shorey said. Alerted to the situation, he attempted to head off the oncoming vehicle. Instead of stopping, though, the Mazda driver raced through the intersection at Lyon and Wellington only to lose control of the car. The RCMP officer was able to avoid a head-on collision, but the out-of-control Mazda still slammed into the SUV in front of the Supreme Court between Lyon and Kent streets.

"There was no high-speed chase," Shorey said. "It was the RCMP (officer) that had to get out of the way."

Ottawa police quickly blocked off the area to traffic, closing access to Wellington at Lyon, Kent and Bank streets, while ambulances and a fire department rescue truck sped to the scene.

Five people, three men and two women, all in their 20s, were hospitalized, while another man, thought to be the driver, was treated at the scene and released — into the hands of police, who handcuffed him and placed him under arrest.

One of the women suffered "severe head injuries," paramedics said. She remained in critical condition at the Ottawa Trauma Cen-

tre. One of the men was in serious but stable condition at the trauma unit after receiving treatment for facial injuries and a possible concussion. The remaining three were listed in stable condition at other city hospitals.

A 47-year-old RCMP officer who was in the SUV was also taken to hospital with what paramedics described as "minor superficial injuries."

Neither his name nor that of the others involved in the crash were released.

(Ottawa Citizen)

MONDAY JUNE 30, 2014

Jun 30 2014

TORONTO - A 28-year-old police officer wanted for murder in Jamaica has been arrested east of Toronto.

Police say Witney Hutchinson, who they describe as an international fugitive, was taken into custody Friday in Ajax.

Authorities say he is wanted in the 2011 killing of Sylvester Gallimore.

Jamaican officials are investigating as many as 40 deaths at the hands of alleged police death squads, including Gallimore's.

Toronto police say Hutchinson came to Canada legally to visit family.

He will be held until his removal from Canada.

Jun 30 2014

VICTORIA - No charges will be laid against two British Columbia police officers involved in separate crashes that resulted in civilians being seriously injured.

The province's criminal justice branch has decided that charges will not be approved in connection with the two incidents, which were investigated by the Independent Investigations Office.

Justice branch spokesman Neil MacKenzie says last June, a vehicle driven by a Mountie in Langley struck a male civilian, who sustained injuries.

In November, a Vancouver police officer's vehicle struck a female pedestrian who was crossing the street on the east side of the city.

The branch says it concluded there was no substantial likelihood that either police officer would be convicted of any offence.

Jun 30 2014

GUELPH - Const. Mike Gatto with the Guelph Police Service can't see everything on social media, though he tries to check in as much as he can.

Gatto is the public information officer for Guelph Police, and the only member of the squad that monitors and posts to the service's Twitter account, @gpsmedia. As a result, Guelph Police are pleading with people to pick up the phone and call when they need police assistance instead of turning to Twitter.

"I do try my best off-hours to keep an eye on things, but it's tough for me, sitting out [on] my back deck when a tweet comes

through saying, 'There's an impaired driver on Woolwich street.' Or if I'm out at my son's hockey game or my daughter's dance, I don't have the ability always to call into the station and say, 'You know, I just received this tweet,'" said Gatto.

Police receive tweets informing them of criminal activity once or twice a week, Gatto said. Although that doesn't seem like a high frequency, there are cases where a quick response is required.

A few months ago, someone tweeted at Guelph police because they were concerned someone was harming their children in an apartment. In that case, the person contacting police said they did not have a phone, and Twitter was the best way for them to get in touch with police. Gatto called dispatch to get police on the case.

"If a tweet came through that sounded really serious, I would probably call the station. But the problem is that, if one of these tweets come through and it's a serious situation, I can't guarantee I will see it. And that's the problem with using that at this point," said Gatto.

Police also want more information than can be provided in a 140-character tweet.

"When we take requests for service, we do need to get information from the caller. We need to know who they are, where they're calling from, we've got to get all that kind of information in case we need to then follow up with them afterwards," said Gatto.

It's perhaps not surprising that the public would turn to Twitter to report crimes. People are now used to tweeting at companies to complain about bad customer service or products, and many politicians have had to issue public apologies over poorly-worded tweets.

"We've had everything from impaired drivers, noisy parties, suspicious persons, driving complaints, dogs in cars, you name it, people have tweeted it," said Gatto.

For those who prefer to write in instead of call, Guelph police are investigating a system that would allow residents to contact 911 by text message. But Gatto says it's very early in that process and not to expect the service any time soon.

(CBC News)

TUESDAY JULY 01, 2014

Jul 01 2014

CALGARY - An Amber Alert remained in effect across Alberta on Canada Day as police continue to search for leads in the perplexing disappearance of a five-year-old boy and his grandparents.

Nathan O'Brien was reported missing Monday morning when his mother went to pick him up after a sleepover at the grandparents' southwest Calgary home and they weren't there.

Police say based on things they found in the home, they don't believe the residents left voluntarily.

Investigators now confirm the family held an estate sale in the home over the weekend, but they say it's too early to determine whether it's relevant to the case.

They say they're looking to speak to anyone who was at the sale, but they say they don't have any significant leads.

Investigators have said that the grandparents, 66-year-old Alvin Cecil Liknes and Kathryn Faye Liknes, 53, are not suspects.

"Obviously we want to find them as soon as possible," Insp. Keith Cain said Sunday about the missing trio.

"We have the only scene that we're aware of right now contained, and we're going through that doing our best to find whatever clues may be there," he continued.

"But the bottom line is we don't know where these people are right now."

Investigators have not disclosed what was found in the home that suggested the residents were forced to leave.

The grandparents' vehicles are accounted for, as are those of the family.

Nathan O'Brien is described as three feet tall, curly blonde hair and was last seen wearing peach-coloured shorts and a blue-striped hoodie.

Alvin Liknes is six feet tall, 200 pounds with grey and blond hair and was wearing black shorts. Alvin has a distinctive walk. Kathryn Liknes is five-foot-three-inches tall, 120 pounds with reddish-brown hair and green eyes.

(CFFR)

WEDNESDAY JULY 02, 2014

Jul 02 2014

CALGARY - Calgary's police chief questions whether a reward would help the investigation into the disappearance of a five-year-old boy and his grandparents.



Nathan O'Brien was reported missing Monday when his mother went to pick him up after a sleepover at the grandparents' home.

Alvin Liknes, 66, his wife Kathy, 53 and Nathan weren't there and an Amber Alert was issued by police.

Nathan's father, Rod O'Brien, has told local media the family will be offering a reward and a news conference was scheduled with investigators later Wednesday.

But Chief Rick Hansen said in cases like this, a reward can just cause more work for police because people could step forward with bogus tips that must be checked out.

"If you do use a reward, if there is a lot of money that is created for a reward, frequently it increases the workload because you have got all

kinds of people then who step forward with information that may not even be related to it," he said in an interview with radio station CHQR.

"You have to, at that point in time, filter any and all information that you get. And if you have a significant reward, it does add to the workload, not only for us, but for the Crown prosecutors and everybody else."

Hansen said if people have information about a case they will usually call the Crime Stoppers phone tip line.

Jul 02 2014

CALGARY - Calgary's police chief pledged Wednesday to boost both in-person and electronic speed enforcement on city streets after repeatedly hearing from members of city council and the public.

"There's not any community we go to where one of the top issues if not the top issue is traffic safety in the community," Chief Rick Hanson told reporters. "We will do everything we can to make the streets safer."

That will include "more police officers out there during enforcement" and "more electronic enforcement," Hanson added.

Coun. Shane Keating said "speeding, specifically on residential collector roads" is the No. 1 concern he hears from his Ward 12 constituents and a lot of councillors "are in the same boat."

Keating asked Hanson if bylaw officers could be retrained to do more traffic enforcement but the chief said police prefer to handle it "comprehensively" as a "core function" of their larger crime-fighting strategy.

"Individual, officer-based traffic enforcement is vital," Hanson said. "It's amazing the number of traffic stops where there's other infractions."

The chief also voiced support for stiffer fines for speeding in residential areas, saying it's something the provincial government should take a "good, serious look at."

The flood and the especially cold winter made last year an "aberration" in a number of traffic respects, Hanson added. He said not too much should be read into the total of 40 traffic fatalities in 2013 - a 39-per-cent jump over the previous five-year average - but added it's something police are monitoring.

"Statistics are such that every year there's a variation," Hanson said. "If last year was a bad one, then this year is one where you could see a drop because we are putting extra effort into the enforcement."

(Metro Calgary)

Jul 02 2014

CALGARY - Calgary police are planning a crackdown on excessively noisy vehicles later this summer.

The force has purchased new decibel meters which will help officers measure which motorcycles, cars or trucks are too loud.

Staff Sgt. Paul Stacey says they're responding to public complaints about the noise.

"We're going to conduct some training and some testing and then we should be out in full force in August starting to do that, we'll do that for the rest of the summer."

Stacey said there isn't an actual limit on noise under the Traffic Safety Act, but officers do have the discretion to issue tickets.

In 2012 the city's bylaw services department introduced a device called a Noise Snare which acted like photo radar when triggered by excessively noisy vehicles.

But no tickets were ever issued and the city discontinued use of the device last year after a dispute with the manufacturer resulted in the contract being terminated.

(CBC News)



Jul 03 2014

WALKERTON - The second suspect charged in connection with a May 8 Walmart theft that resulted in serious injuries to a police officer has been sentenced in a Walkerton court.

A 49 year old Clifford woman was charged with obstructing a peace officer and causing a disturbance.

She interfered and tried to help a man avoid arrest by yelling and cursing at residents who came to the officer's aid. She was fined \$100 and given 12 months probation.

36 year old Chris Weber is due back in a Walkerton court July 7. He faces several charges including theft and assault police.

The injured officer has had two surgeries in a London hospital and faces a long recovery.

(Bayshore Broadcasting)

Jul 03 2014

EDMONTON - Charges have been laid against an Alberta man following the seizure of hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of illegal steroids from an Edmonton production lab.

Investigators say a four-month probe

and a tip to police led to the seizure in an Edmonton apartment in late May.

They say the lab contained large quantities of steroid in pill, liquid and powdered form.

An apartment in nearby Fort Saskatchewan, where the suspect lives, was also searched.

Scott Pattison, a police spokesman, says the steroid seizure is the largest of its kind in the history of the Edmonton Police Service.

Rees Baron, who is 32, will be in court July 17 on charges that include possession of a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking.

(Global Edmonton)

Jul 03 2014

MONCTON, N.B. - A young man charged with fatally shooting three RCMP officers and wounding two others in Moncton, N.B., last month will return to court July 31 after undergoing a psychiatric assessment.

Justin Bourque is facing three first-degree murder charges and two counts of attempted murder.

The 24-year-old has not entered pleas on the charges.

Bourque did not speak during his brief appearance today in Moncton provincial court, but his lawyer, David Lutz, said he was making the request for a psychiatric assessment after speaking to his client's father.

The Crown agreed to the defence request.

Lutz would not comment outside court.

Constables Dave Ross, Fabrice Gevaudan and Douglas Larche were gunned down after responding to a report of a man with firearms in a residential neighbourhood on June 4.

Two other RCMP officers - constables Eric Dubois and Darlene Goguen - were wounded and later released from hospital.

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