

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

August 08, 2014 – Vol. 19 No. 32

Executive Digest

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Toronto police chair accused of grandstanding



Aug 07 2014

TORONTO - The head of Toronto’s police union is lashing out at the chair of the police board, accusing him of grandstanding and taking advantage of a vacuum in leadership at the Toronto Police Service to further his own agenda.

Toronto Police Association president Mike McCormack issued a statement to union members on Wednesday calling recent comments by board chair Alok Mukherjee about the future of policing “misleading.” In media interviews last week, Mr. Mukherjee spoke of the board’s decision not to renew Chief Bill Blair’s contract, saying the force needs “fundamental transformation” – telling

the Toronto Star the traditional model of policing, with a heavy emphasis on force, “has outlived its utility and relevance.”

Mr. Mukherjee’s comments come amid upheaval at Toronto Police Service. Last week, the police board – a seven-member civilian oversight committee – denied Chief Blair a third term after his contract expires next year. And the board itself will see a changeover in coming years: The October municipal election will end the terms of the three councillors, the city’s appointee will be up for renewal by the new council, and Mr. Mukherjee and the other two provincial representatives’ will finish their terms in 2016.

“It appears to me that there seems to be some type of an agenda,” Mr. McCormack

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said in an interview with The Globe about the police chair's comments.

He said he and the board chair have been talking about the future of policing, and "I don't remember Mukherjee floating these positions forward in a public way like this. But all of a sudden, the chief is removed from the discussion. ... Why hasn't he been talking about these ideas in the past?"

In the TPA statement, titled "Just the Facts," the union challenges Mr. Mukherjee's assertion in the Star that 80 per cent of police work no longer falls under the traditional definition of "crime fighting" – instead, officers deal with issues such as mental health, domestic violence and youth safety.

"His observation is incorrect and does not reflect the multidimensional nature of police work," the statement reads. "Contrary to [Mr.] Mukherjee's observations, domestic violence and youth safety issues are generally criminal in nature."

Mr. McCormack said many of the suggestions Mr. Mukherjee has mentioned are initiatives police are already undertaking. "He knows that this is ongoing, but now he has the opportunity to grandstand," Mr. McCormack said.

The board chair did not respond to requests for comment on Wednesday.

Mr. McCormack also took issue with Mr. Mukherjee's comments that the force could one day take guns away from some officers.

"We had seven shootings this weekend past. ... There are armed people, there are gangs in the city," he said. "We provide a multifaceted service, and we need to have the equipment to deal with that."

The board chair has cited cost-cutting as another reason the board decided to cut ties with Chief Blair. Mayor Rob Ford told reporters he and the chief had also butted heads over costs.

"I think that's where Chief Blair and I had major problems," Mr. Ford said on CP24. "I

asked for efficiencies to be found ... I guess he didn't want to do that." The mayor said he expected the next chief should be able to find at least five per cent in savings.

"I don't care – male, female. I need someone there who can find the efficiencies."

And Mr. Ford – who clashed with Chief Blair after he revealed last year that police have a copy of a video alleged to show the mayor smoking crack cocaine – also questioned the fact that Chief Blair will receive a full year's salary (or \$367,719) when he leaves.

"I wish the chief the best, but that's a little too rich for my liking," Mr. Ford said.

(Globe and Mail)



Jul 31 2014

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. - A man from Lethbridge, Alta., is facing a long list of charges after allegedly driving a vehicle at a police officer.

Police in the southern Alberta city were conducting radar training with two recruits and a member of the Taber police force when they saw a speeding Jeep.

One of the recruits flagged for the driver to pull over while a second officer stepped into the road to get the driver to stop.

Police allege the driver instead sped up, forcing the officer on the road to jump out of the way.

The vehicle was later tracked down and found to have been stolen.

Kyle Wade Kohlman, 25, is charged with assaulting a police officer with a weapon, dangerous driving and flight from police, among other charges.

(CJOC)



Aug 01 2014

OTTAWA - An Ottawa man faces 181 charges after police say 38 people in Canada and other countries were subjected to cyberbullying and harassment over a 12-year period.

Eighteen of the alleged victims are Ottawa residents while the others are from elsewhere in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, Ottawa police said Friday.

The charges follow an eight-month investigation dubbed Project Winter.

"This individual stole individual's identities, posted defamatory comments and other material online that affected all these victims not only personally, but also professionally," said Carl Cartright, acting inspector with Ottawa police.

It's alleged the activity began around 2001 with the man targeting people he knew, then preying on his alleged victim's acquaintances as he gained more experience, Cartright said.

He said the techniques became more sophisticated over time, with the suspect using software to cover his tracks, which proved a challenge for investigators.

"As the victims came forward, police forces had to identify a common link," Cartright said.

"The spider web, at the end, it must lead to a centre. At the centre of this web was our accused."

A search warrant was executed Thursday at a west-end residence in Ottawa.

Robert Campbell, 42, faces 27 counts of criminal harassment, 85 counts of defamation libel and 69 counts of identity fraud.

The investigation also involved RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police, police in Vancouver, Halifax, Central Saanich, B.C., Rothesay, N.B., and Ferndale, Mich., as well as London Metropolitan Police and the Hertfordshire Constabulary in the U.K.

Aug 01 2014

HALIFAX - A watchdog agency has concluded police used reasonable force when they subdued a man suffering from a mental illness earlier this year.

The 31-year-old man's leg was broken as police took him into custody and used a conducted energy weapon on him.

Two members of the Kentville Police Service were involved in the May 23 arrest.

The report from the Serious Incident Response Team says the man was experiencing a "significant paranoid crisis," and police were attempting to arrest him under provisions of the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act.

The agency says the man resisted and struggled with police, placing one officer in a headlock.

It concludes police had reasonable grounds to arrest the man and had to protect themselves.

(The Canadian Press)

Aug 01 2014

The RCMP will refine a controversial sting operation technique known as "Mr. Big" and keep using it to obtain confessions after the Supreme Court called for new safeguards to prevent wrongful convictions and police misconduct.

The technique, contentious in legal circles, involves undercover officers who integrate suspects into a purported criminal operation in the hopes they will confess their crimes to a superior, referred to as "Mr. Big" or "the boss."

"Mr. Big isn't going anywhere any time soon," Inspector Scott Sheppard, who is in charge of undercover operations at the RCMP, told The Globe and Mail after Thursday's ruling. "It is the undercover technique that we continue to work on and refine, and that will continue to evolve as it has since we started our program in the early 1970s."

In its ruling, the Supreme Court said the Mounties "preyed" on the vulnerabilities of Nelson Hart, a poor, uneducated Newfound-

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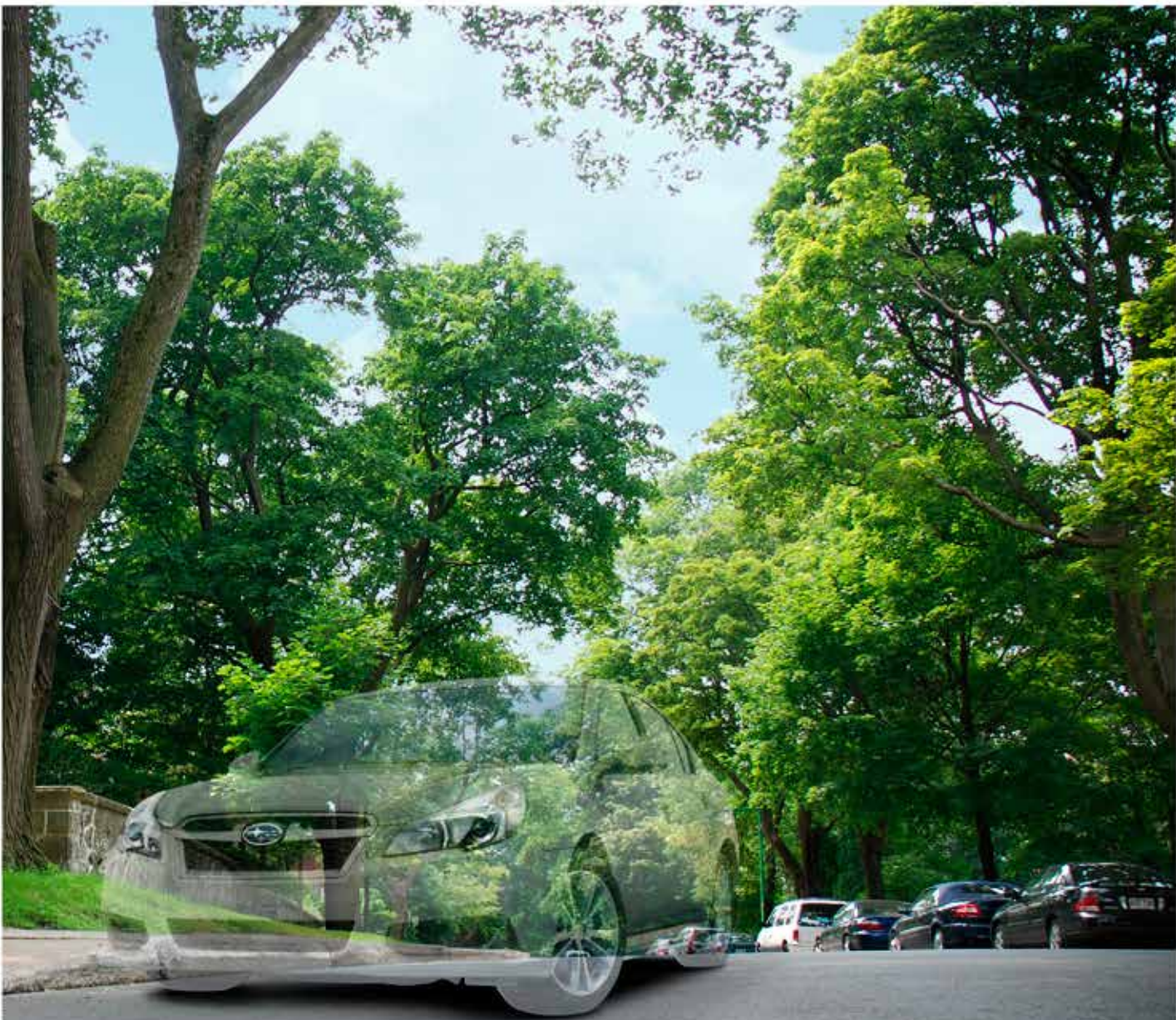
Published weekly by Blue Line Magazine, Inc. as an executive news briefing service to Canada's top level law enforcement personnel.

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land resident who was convicted of murder in 2007 for the death of his twin three-year-old daughters. The provincial court of appeal ordered new trial.

In a ruling on Thursday, the Supreme Court upheld that decision, and said the confessions obtained by RCMP undercover officers in the case cannot be used against Mr. Hart if the Crown goes ahead with a new trial.

RCMP officials said they will abide by the new guidelines in the Supreme Court ruling, including considering the age, education level and economic condition of their targets before they decide whether a Mr. Big sting is appropriate.

In addition, the RCMP will strive to ensure that investigators obtain confirmatory evidence, not just a dramatic confession. The Mounties are also expected to try to shorten the operations, with suspects and undercover officers undertaking fewer activities, and to use new technologies to record more of the interactions.

Pioneered by the RCMP, Mr. Big scenarios have been used for decades to obtain confessions from people suspected of murder, rape and other crimes. The RCMP said the technique has evolved in the decade since it was used against Mr. Hart, and that further refinements are already under way.

(Globe and Mail)

Aug 01 2014

AURORA, Ont. - A police officer north of Toronto and two others are charged after an investigation into alleged misuse of police insurance benefits.

York Regional Police say their professional standards bureau began probing an officer, his wife and a fitness facility manager in February after the force received complaints from its benefits provider.

Const. Stuart Coleman, 41, of Richmond Hill, has been suspended with pay since then, pending the outcome of the investigation, and police say he was arrested Thursday.

He and Ruth Coleman, 41, of Vaughan, and Michael McCleary, 40, of Toronto, face charges of conspiracy to commit an indictable offence, uttering false documents and fraud over \$5,000.

All are scheduled to appear in court on Sept. 11, in Newmarket.

Coleman has been with the force since 2005 and was working in criminal investigations at the time of his suspension.

Aug 01 2014

TORONTO - Toronto's top cop is threatening legal action against Mayor Rob Ford's brother.

The threat comes after Doug Ford accused Chief Bill Blair of helping leak information that police were preparing to subpoena the mayor.

The Toronto Star reported today police were set to subpoena Rob Ford to testify in the case of a friend charged with drug offences and extortion.

Doug Ford called the leak "payback" and suggested Blair should "follow the rules."

In response, Blair said Doug Ford was "lying."

Aug 01 2014

OTTAWA - Malicious hackers are "constantly probing" federal computer systems so they can break in and steal coveted information, says the head of Canada's electronic spy agency.

Communications Security Establishment Canada chief John Forster says the revelation this week that a Chinese state-sponsored player infiltrated the National Research Council's computer network shows Canada is not immune from such aggression.

China has vehemently denied involvement in the cyberattack, accusing Canada of making baseless accusations.

But Forster used the attack on the research council - whose specialists study everything from aerospace technology to crop science - to defend CSEC's role in protecting federal computers.

"These malicious actors are constantly probing Government of Canada systems and networks for weaknesses so that they infiltrate them and steal valuable information," Forster wrote in a letter to the editor of the Toronto-based Globe and Mail newspaper.

"When we detect emails or other communications that contain malware or other threats, we block, collect and analyze them. And, we work with appropriate departments to take action to neutralize the threat."

Aug 01 2014

QUEBEC CITY - A Quebec City homicide suspect has pleaded guilty to punching a police officer during a videotaped interrogation.

Bryan Demers Thibault admitted to the assault in court on Thursday.

The 29-year-old answered "yes" as Justice Alain Morand asked if he understood the facts presented by the prosecutor.

The assault was caught on police video in May.

The defendant turned directly towards the camera and said "can you send me someone more intelligent than this one here? I don't like him, I won't talk to this guy. Bring me back to my cell, bring me a girl, I feel like chatting with a girl."

He then threatens the policeman and hits him with his right fist.

Demers Thibault's latest conviction was added to his lengthy criminal record for assault, mischief, drug possession, theft, extortion and forgery.

Quebec City police have still not linked him to the homicide

(QMI Agency)



Aug 03 2014

THUNDER BAY, Ont. - Ontario's police watchdog is investigating the death of a man who was being held at a police

station in Thunder Bay.

The Special Investigations Unit says Thunder Bay police arrested the 44-year-old man, who was in violation of a court order, at 4:30 p.m on Saturday.

The SIU says the man was intoxicated at the time of arrest.

At about 3 a.m., police say they noticed the man in his cell was in some form of medical distress and an ambulance was called.

Emergency medical responders pronounced the man dead.

The SIU has assigned three investigators and two forensic investigators to probe the circumstances of the death.



Aug 04 2014

TORONTO - Ontario's Special Investigations Unit has been called after a man died after being restrained by a Toronto police officer following a concert at Downsview Park.

The SIU says the officer was on duty at the concert early this morning when he saw two people carrying a man.

Investigators say the officer called for an ambulance and while paramedics tended to the man he became violent and had to be handcuffed.

The SIU says the officer removed the handcuffs while the man was being treated in the ambulance, but he was pronounced dead on the way to the hospital.



Aug 05 2014

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. - A Newfoundland man convicted of drowning his twin daughters after a so-called Mr. Big sting will not face a new trial after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled what he told police officers is inadmissible.

Donovan Molloy, director of public prosecutions, also confirmed in provincial Supreme Court today in Gander, N.L., that with the withdrawal of the two first-degree murder charges, Nelson Hart will be released from prison.

Hart's conviction of first-degree murder in the 2002 drowning deaths of his three-year-old twin daughters was initially overturned on appeal in 2012.

The Supreme Court of Canada upheld that decision last week and ruled that a confession Hart gave to police posing as mobsters cannot be used against him.

Lawyers for Hart say there is no evidence of a crime without the confession given during an elaborate police sting.

Hart, now 45, was convicted of first-degree murder in 2007 and sentenced to life in prison for the 2002 drowning deaths of his daughters at Gander Lake.

Aug 05 2014

OTTAWA - The Federal Court has approved a multimillion-dollar class-action settlement for a group of disabled RCMP veterans whose disability payments were clawed back.

The case involves 1,056 disabled RCMP officers whose long-term disability payments were reduced by the amount of their monthly disability benefits from the Veterans Affairs Department.

The estimated value of the settlement is about \$70 million.

The proposed agreement also means the reduction would end for all RCMP veterans now receiving benefits and Mounties who are medically released in the future.

The case was launched in 2008 by Gerard Buote, but was taken over by David White after Buote died from cancer the following year.

The case is almost identical to one that a judge deemed harsh and unfair in a class-action lawsuit by military veterans, who were awarded a \$887.8-million settlement after a former army sergeant took the government to court in 2007.

Aug 05 2014

In recent weeks police officers across Quebec have taken to wearing bizarre uniforms and plastering stickers on city vehicles to show their opposition to provincial plans to alter pension plans.

Now Laval police officers have been caught on tape racing squad cars through a construction site and splattering their own vehicles with mud.

In a video taken at a construction site, a Laval police car sits parked in a large puddle as two more squad cars race past, covering the parked car with mud.

Charles Ledoux posted the short video to Facebook on August 1, saying the officers repeated the stunt several times that day - all in an area where the posted limit is 10 kmh. He has since removed the video.

Union coalition spokesperson Marc Ranger didn't confirm the muddy incident was a pressure tactic but says since going on strike is illegal, they have to find other means to express their anger.

Meanwhile on Tuesday off-duty police officers held a demonstration in front of Ste. Julie town hall, which is also the office of Suzanne Roy, president of the Union of Municipalities of Quebec (UMQ).

Mayors across Quebec are in favour of the change proposed by Bill 3, which would see civil servants keep their Defined Benefit plans but see the employee contribution increased to 50 percent.

The federation of police officers (FPMQ) has also released a new series of print and video ads to protest the pension regime change.

Police officers are opposed to contributing more to their retirement savings, saying that the only reason for shortfalls is because of mismanagement and because corrupt officials were able to divert funds for years without being detected.

(CTV News)

Aug 05 2014

EDMONTON - A judge in a fatality inquiry says police in Edmonton have made sufficient policy changes for chasing vehicles equipped with GPS tracking devices.

Colleen Joan Cappel was a passenger in a stolen car being pursued by police on Feb. 16, 2009.

Police called off the chase when it became dangerous, but seconds later the speeding car collided with another vehicle and crashed into a tree. The 31-year-old woman died in hospital.

Judge Raymond Bodnarek said in his inquiry report released Tuesday that officers broke some rules during the chase. An officer in a second cruiser followed the stolen car six extra blocks and police vehicles didn't have their sirens on continuously.

But the judge ruled that those mistakes are not likely to have contributed to the crash.

What may have changed the outcome, he said, was the stolen car's satellite GPS system. The car was being tracked when it crashed, so it wasn't necessary for police to be chasing it.

The force has since changed its policy and officers no longer chase a vehicle equipped with GPS - as long as police are able to establish communication with a device's provider.

"Under the new policy, a CFR (criminal flight response) in circumstances of this case would be prohibited," Bodnarek wrote.

The judge said officers have received proper notice and training on the new policy. He made no recommendations for further changes.

Edmonton police have "demonstrated that they are responsive to adapting their CFR policy to keep pace with emerging technologies and changing circumstances," he said.

Aug 05 2014

RICHMOND HILL, Ont. - Police have charged a 16-year-old after a laser pointer was aimed at a police helicopter north of Toronto.

York Regional Police say it happened early Friday while the helicopter was helping officers stop an impaired driver.

Police say the chopper landed safely and the pilot and tactical flight officer were treated at hospital.

They were able to identify where the light was coming from and a teen was arrested and charged.

A Richmond Hill youth is charged with several offences, including two counts of assaulting a peace officer, obstructing police and mischief endangering life.

He is due in court Aug. 28.

Aug 05 2014

TORONTO - Toronto police appealed Tuesday for photos and videos from anyone who attended a weekend music festival where two people died after taking what's believed to be party drugs purchased at the concert.

The deaths of a 20-year-old woman and a 22-year-old man who attended the Veld Music Festival in Downsview Park are being investigated by the homicide squad, police said.

Police identified the drugs - which sickened 13 other people - as a small brown pill and a small clear capsule with a white substance.

"Unfortunately, some of these people didn't even know what they were taking," Det.-Sgt. Peter Trimble said at a news conference Tuesday. Some people took upwards of 10 pills while others were picking up pills off the ground, he said.

Investigators had earlier urged anyone who may have bought the drug to turn it over so experts can analyze the substance.

"I am pleased to say that members are coming forward and turning over narcotics that they have in their possession," Trimble said.

More than 30,000 tickets to the concert were sold and police will be speaking to the promoters, he said.

Autopsies have been completed on the two people who died and no "anatomical cause of death" was found, Trimble said. Toxicology test results are pending, he said.

Aug 05 2014

EDMONTON - A judge has given an Alberta Mountie a one-year conditional discharge for shooting a motorist in 2011.

Const. Jason Clace pleaded guilty earlier this year to assault with a weapon and careless use of a firearm.



A previous investigation by the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team recommended the charges.

It found the officer had stopped a vehicle in the town of Boyle, north of Edmonton, and, when the vehicle started moving again, shot the driver in the shoulder.

The 22-year-old man survived and was treated in hospital.

An RCMP spokesman says Clace was temporarily suspended from his job but returned to frontline policing in February following an assessment.

WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 06, 2014

Aug 06 2014

CALGARY - Calgary police investigators are in Mexico as part of an ongoing investigation into the disappearance of a five-year-old boy and his grandparents.

Nathan O'Brien and Alvin and Kathy Liknes have not been seen since they disappeared from the couple's Calgary home June 29th.

And, although their bodies have not yet been found, police have laid three murder charges against a 54-year-old man.

The couple had been having an estate sale the weekend they vanished as they downsized ahead of a move to Edmonton and then to a residence in Mexico.

Nathan was at his grandparents' house for a sleepover.

Police spokeswoman Emma Poole confirms officers are in Mexico, and says it's just a matter of making sure all the avenues are covered.

Douglas Garland faces two charges of first-degree murder and one count of second-degree murder.

Aug 06 2014

West Vancouver Police's new Chief Constable Len Goerke was sworn into office on Tuesday.

Goerke, who served with Abbotsford police for 27 years, was hired after a management crisis led to the retirement of several of the force's executive officers earlier this year.

Former West Vancouver top cop Peter Lepine has previously said that his retirement was not related to management concerns that were noted by West Vancouver Mayor Mike Smith.

"A high performing police department starts with every employee determined to make the community safer," Goerke said in a statement Tuesday. "While there are many reasons people commit crime or undermine community safety, a police department can and must make a community safer tomorrow than it is today."

In a previous interview with The Province, Goerke said he was aware of reports of management problems on the force
(The Province)

Aug 06 2014

HALIFAX - Nova Scotia's Serious Incident Response Team is investigating an arrest by Halifax police that resulted in a woman breaking her arm.

The police watchdog says officers responded to a parking lot of a business at the Dartmouth Crossing shopping area on Tuesday where a 51-year-old woman was screaming and yelling.

The woman was taken into custody under the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act and taken to hospital without incident.

However, as the woman was waiting for medical attention an officer attempted to put her in handcuffs for safety reasons and a struggle ensued.

The woman's arm was broken during the struggle.

Aug 06 2014

VANCOUVER - An off-duty Vancouver Police officer is being lauded a hero by the VPD for his quick actions during an armed robbery of a Granville Street pharmacy on Friday.

Police say the officer was driving his car at around 5 p.m. when he witnessed a man wearing a balaclava and carrying a handgun enter the Pharmacy at the corner of Granville and West 16th Avenue.

He called 9-1-1 and remained on the phone as the masked man ran out of the drugstore "carrying his loot to a waiting getaway car driven by a second suspect," Vancouver Police said in a release.

The officer followed the suspects while continuously updating his location to police by phone. The motorized surveillance came to end when the suspects drove themselves into a dead-end cul-de-sac.

Uniformed officers arrived and arrested the getaway driver. Police, thanks to the description and information provided by the off-duty constable, were able to catch the suspect robber nearby.

The handgun was later found by police in a recycle bin.

"This is a great example of our officers going beyond the call," Vancouver Police spokesperson Constable Brian Montague said in a release. "He put public safety first and risked his personal safety to stop a pair of violent criminals."

Police didn't release the name of the hero cop.
(Vancouver Sun)

THURSDAY
AUGUST 07, 2014

Aug 07 2014

ENFIELD, N.S. - Nova Scotia's police watchdog agency has concluded that two RCMP officers did not use excessive force while arresting a man in a community north of Halifax.

The Mounties were responding to a 911 call about three men who had been drinking at a home in Enfield on May 22.

A 52-year-old man allegedly threatened police.

His arm was broken during the arrest.

The province's Serious Incident Response Team says witnesses reported the officers' conduct as being professional.

No charges will be laid against either officer.

Aug 07 2014

MONCTON - Codiac Regional RCMP members, first responders and the citizens of Moncton will receive the Governor General's Commendation for Outstanding Service today in connection with their actions during the Moncton shootings in June.

"This commendation is being presented in recognition of their professionalism, collaboration and solidarity during the tragic events of June 4, 2014, when three RCMP constables — Dave Ross, Fabrice Georges Gevaudan and Douglas James Larche — were killed in the line of duty," a statement from the office of Governor General David Johnston states.

Constables Éric Stéphane J. Dubois and Marie Darlene Goguen were also wounded.

"This type of commendation honours the exceptional contributions made by individuals or groups to their community," the statement said.

Lt.-Gov. Graydon Nicholas will make the presentation on behalf of Johnston, who had to cancel his visit to New Brunswick due to illness.

Justin Christien Bourque, 24, is charged with three counts of first-degree murder and two counts of attempted murder in connection with the June 4 shootings.

He has been deemed fit to stand trial and has elected to be tried by a judge and jury.

Bourque has waived his right to a preliminary inquiry and is scheduled to appear in the Court of Queen's Bench on Aug. 8, when the case will be transferred from provincial court to the higher court.

Bourque was arrested just after midnight on June 6, following a two-day manhunt that involved hundreds of police officers from across the country and caused a lockdown in parts of the city.

Police found him when they responded to a complaint of someone being in a backyard.

The RCMP has ordered an internal investigation into the shootings.

Aug 07 2014

EDMONTON - Alberta's justice minister says he has arranged for prosecutors from Ontario to work with the RCMP on a review of former premier Alison Redford's expenses.

Jonathan Denis says the use of out-of-province lawyers is needed to ensure an independent investigation and remove any perception of a conflict.

Alberta's auditor general has released a report that says Redford and her office used taxpayer money inappropriately and for personal and partisan purposes.

Denis says he has instructed that the auditor's report be sent to the RCMP.