

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK *Celebrating 20 Years*

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Pilot project will test drug detection systems



Dec 14 2016

OTTAWA - Drivers in some jurisdictions may soon find themselves asked by police to volunteer for a saliva test, part of a pilot project aimed at detecting drug-impaired drivers.

The federal government, the RCMP and a number of police departments across the country will conduct the experiment to see how well certain roadside testing devices work to detect drugs.

Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale says his department and the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators will collaborate with police forces on the project, which will look at how two different devices work under varying weather conditions.

The "oral fluid" screening systems test saliva for the presence of drugs, including cannabis, cocaine, methamphetamine and opioids.

The announcement comes a day after a federal task force delivered a series of recommendations about legalizing cannabis and raised questions about detecting drivers impaired by marijuana.

Police forces in Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax and Gatineau, Que., will take part in

the project, along with the Ontario Provincial Police and RCMP detachments in North Battleford, Sask., and Yellowknife.

Police officers will be trained in the use of two types of screening devices and will use them in operational settings, but only with drivers and passengers who volunteer to anonymously provide a sample.

The results will not be used in any court or administrative proceeding, the department said.

"The testing results will help establish possible future operating procedures," the department said in its announcement.

"In parallel, Canadian standards for oral fluid devices will still need to be established before a government procurement process for the device can be launched."

The cannabis task force recommended more study to determine the links between traffic crashes and levels of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, and a national education strategy about the effects of cannabis consumption.

Goodale said the pilot project will help determine how police services can counter drug-impaired driving.

"Testing these new drug screening devices is an important step in our ongoing effort

to enhance the enforcement of drug-impaired driving laws, reduce drug-impaired driving and improve the safety and security of all Canadians," he said.

Currently, the Criminal Code authorizes police officers to conduct a standard field sobriety test on a suspected impaired driver. If the officer has a reasonable belief that an offence has been committed, a specially trained officer can be called to conduct a drug recognition evaluation.

Some police forces have expressed concern that legalizing marijuana will produce problems on the roads. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police welcomed the pilot project.

"Keeping impaired drivers off the road is a priority for the CACP," said association president Mario Harel.

"The CACP welcomes the pilot testing of these devices as they are another potential tool for Canadian police to help keep roads safe."

THURSDAY DECEMBER 8, 2016

Dec 08 2016

MONTREAL - Montreal is spending millions more than it expected on policing this year.

It's not because of any dramatic increase in crime, but because of construction.

The police department budgeted less than \$2.5 million to have officers direct traffic and control lights in construction zones.

The cost this year has ballooned to \$13.8 million -- all from officers earning overtime.

The police department refuses to let officers do traffic control as part of their regular duty, and so officers who are directing traffic are working overtime.

Mayor Denis Coderre said the city is looking at cheaper alternatives, such as

having cadets do the task, but is being stonewalled by the police union.

"You have a fraternity who's playing games, so we are under mediation right now. When we'll have the new bargaining agreement, clearly this is one of it," said Coderre. "We can use cadets. There's millions of ways to proceed."

Negotiations between the city and the police brotherhood are going very slowly. They stalled in the spring and have been taking place under arbitration since May.

Montreal has budgeted \$6 million for overtime pay for police officers directing traffic next year, even though it has acknowledged there will be more construction in 2017 than in 2016.

Montreal police argue Quebec's Highway Safety Code bans non-police officers from directing traffic.

(CTV News)

Dec 08 2016

EDMONTON - The widow of an Edmonton police officer killed on the job last year says she's moving back to England with her children.

Claire Woodall says it's been hard raising her two young boys on her own and she wants to be closer to family.

She says she's received much love from people in Edmonton but it's time to return to Manchester.

Const. Daniel Woodall joined the Edmonton force in 2007 after starting his policing career in Manchester.

The 35-year-old was shot in June 2015 while trying to serve an arrest warrant at the home of a man under investigation for anti-Semitic bullying.

Bullets that ripped through the front door also hit a second officer, but he survived.

Dec 08 2016

VICTORIA - British Columbia's auditor general has rapped the province for dropping its public reports on a commission of inquiry that reviewed the disappearances of 67 women - some of them victims of serial killer Robert Pickton - from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Carol Bellringer said Thursday that the tragedies continue to affect families and communities, and the government must continue to keep British Columbians informed of its progress in meeting more than 60 recommendations from the inquiry.

She said the government stopped providing public progress reports in 2014, two years after former attorney general Wally Oppal tabled his report.

"Because so many families and communities are affected by these tragedies, we feel that government still needs to share its progress with the public," Bellringer said in a statement.

Oppal's report detailed systemic police failures that allowed Pickton to target sex workers and recommended support for families of victims.

Bellringer's report says the government has established a compensation fund for the children of victims, but has made little progress helping their families.

Dec 08 2016

SYDNEY, N.S. - Nova Scotia police officers worked for years to solve a brutal small-town murder, watched over by a huge photo of the victim - an 82-year-old Second World War veteran whose image on the wall served as daily motivation for catching his killer.

The decade-long investigation into the death of Harold "Buster" Slaunwhite culminated Thursday with 49-year-old Raymond Glenn Farrow of Glace Bay being charged with first-degree murder.

"Every day when those folks went to work, that photo of Mr. Slaunwhite was the first thing facing them when they walked through the door," said Cape Breton Region Police Chief Peter McIsaac.

"It was a reminder that this is all about finding justice for Mr. Slaunwhite and his family for the vicious, horrible crime that happened."

Slaunwhite was found dead in his Dominion home by a relative on Sept. 10, 2006.

In 2013, McIsaac put together a team of roughly 10 Cape Breton Regional Police and RCMP officers to jointly tackle the "complicated" cold case.

"They basically went back to square one. They looked at all the evidence going right back to the original day," he said, adding that dozens of investigators have been assigned to the file over the years.

He said forensic evidence is what led to the murder charge, although he would not elaborate.

McIsaac said he had an emotional meeting with Slaunwhite's family on Wednesday, adding that he hopes the charge brings some closure to the small, tight-knit coastal community of roughly 1,900 people.

Dec 08 2016

OTTAWA - The federal public safety minister is keeping the door open to the idea of Canada's spy agency crunching potentially sensitive data about innocent people.

Ralph Goodale tells MPs at a House of Commons committee today he is weighing views on whether the Canadian Security Intelligence Service should be allowed to retain and use such information.

Last month a Federal Court judge said CSIS violated the law by keeping electronic data about people who were not actually under investigation.

CSIS processed the metadata beginning in 2006 through its Operational Data Analysis Centre to produce intelligence that can disclose intimate details about individuals.

Metadata is information associated with a communication, such as a telephone number or email address, but not the message itself.

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There's a call for more help in northern Saskatchewan, but this time it's from RCMP.

A series of leaked internal emails obtained by 650 CKOM/980 CJME show senior commanders asking for more officers in La Ronge, Stanley Mission, and Wollaston Lake.

"I hate to say that I can't see the light at the end of the tunnel but I can't. We are in dire straits," Supt. Grant St. Germaine said in an email dated Nov. 3.

When police need to do an ambulance escort, there aren't enough officers to respond, according to the emails.

"A member from Stanley [Mission] doing an escort with a mental health patient was 14 hours with that individual and the person is then released. No one is left in Stanley," St. Germaine said.

The north has an RCMP vacancy rate of about 15 per cent, or about 42 members, while parts of the south have a vacancy rate of eight per cent, according to emails.

RCMP normally operate with vacancy rates between four to six per cent, Drew Wilby, a Ministry of Justice spokesperson, said.

"This obviously shows some acute vacancies in northern Saskatchewan as well as some in the south as well," Wilby said.

Wilby said the province funds 924 RCMP positions, up from about 787 five years ago. When a vacant position is not filled, it's not funded, he said.

Premier Brad Wall said Wednesday that he had previously asked the attorney general to speak with RCMP about its numbers.

"We've been funding more police officers and a lot more police officers, including in the RCMP, since 2007, and I think it's reasonable that municipal leaders, urban and rural, know where they are. And I'd like to know where they are," he said.

RCMP said in a statement that it suffers from human resource pressures from time to time, but continue to be well-positioned to respond in a timely manner to calls where peoples' safety may be threatened.

RCMP also said when detachments have a staffing shortage, the division can use the provincial relief unit, redeploy resources or use the reservist program.

(Global News)

FRIDAY
DECEMBER 9, 2016

Dec 09 2016

WINNIPEG - The RCMP investigation into Winnipeg's police headquarters remains active as the two-year anniversary of the criminal probe approaches.

Winnipeg Mayor Brian Bowman said the Mounties recently contacted the city to request additional information pertaining to their investigation of the \$214-million police-HQ project, which was completed

this summer after three years of delays, \$79 million worth of cost overruns and two external audits.

"There was information recently requested that's been provided," Bowman said Friday at city hall, adding the RCMP contacted Winnipeg chief administrator Doug McNeil.

City of Winnipeg communications director Felicia Wiltshire could not divulge the nature of the communication.

"We can confirm that we are continuing to work cooperatively with the RCMP during their ongoing investigation," Wiltshire said in an email statement. "Mr. McNeil has recently been in contact with them."

The Mounties launched a criminal investigation into Winnipeg's police headquarters on Dec. 17, 2014, when officers executed a search warrant at McGillivray Boulevard headquarters of Caspian Construction, the primary contractor on the city project.

Court documents later revealed RCMP were looking into fraud and forgery allegations pertaining to the construction. The RCMP also raided the police headquarters itself in June 2015.

Information used by the Mounties to obtain their initial search warrant also revealed former Winnipeg mayor Sam Katz received thousands of dollars in personal cheques from Caspian Construction.

The RCMP are still working on the investigation, said Robert Cyrenne, communications director for D Division.

"This is still an ongoing investigation," he said Friday via email.

(CBC News)

Dec 09 2016

HAMILTON - The RCMP says a Canada Border Services Agency officer has been charged in a smuggling investigation.

The Mounties say the arrest came as part of a joint forces investigation that focused on a criminal organization that was allegedly smuggling truckloads of contraband tobacco into Canada from the United States.

They allege the group's smuggling activities were facilitated by a CBSA border services officer working at the Peace Bridge in Fort Erie, Ont.

Investigators say arrests and seizures were made simultaneously in Canada and the U.S. but gave no other details.

Police say 37-year-old Chad Gale of Welland, Ont. is charged with breach of trust by a public officer.

Dec 09 2016

VICTORIA - Drones will be used by search-and-rescue crews in two communities in British Columbia as part of a one-year pilot project.

The drones will be used in Coquitlam and Kamloops with the blessing of Emergency Management B.C.

The provincial government says the devices have the potential to help emergency management personnel and are increasingly

being used by public safety agencies across North America.

Alan Hobler, president of Kamloops Search and Rescue, says the group has been testing and training with drones.

They can "be a more-effective means of searching terrain that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to search by traditional ground searchers," he said in the release. "Searcher safety is paramount for us and now we have a new tool that we can use in places or circumstances that may pose a risk to our searchers."

Dec 09 2016

MISSISSAUGA, ON - A Mississauga, Ont., woman injured by a stray bullet during an incident in which a man was fatally shot by police is suing Peel Regional Police Chief Jennifer Evans, the police services board and others for damages.

Ontario's police watchdog agency says Suzan Zreik was in her home when officers fired multiple shots, killing a 22-year-old man on March 20, 2015, and she was taken to hospital for treatment of a gunshot wound.

In a lawsuit filed Friday, Zreik, 23, claims assault and battery, negligence causing bodily harm, gross negligence and abuse of process and misfeasance in public office.

The statement of claim alleges Evans failed to ensure officers were properly trained and that she knowingly withheld the extent of Zreik's injuries from the Special Investigations Unit.

None of the claims in the suit have been proven in court.

Dec 09 2016

ST. ALBERT, AB. - An Alberta MP says he'll continue to push his private member's bill named after an RCMP officer who was shot and killed almost two years ago.

Conservative Michael Cooper is trying to get the House of Commons to pass legislation that would be known as Wynn's Law.

Const. David Wynn was slain outside a casino in St. Albert, Alta., in January 2015 while investigating a stolen vehicle.

His killer, a career criminal with dozens of convictions, was out on bail at the time.

Cooper's bill would require the Crown to disclose an accused's criminal history at a bail hearing to give courts more information on which to base a decision.

The federal Liberals indicated again this week that they will not support Wynn's Law, so Cooper has launched an online petition to gather support for a vote in February.

Wynn's widow, Shelly, said the law would be important to her husband.

"Even if it's just one family that doesn't have to go through this, it's worth it," Wynn said Friday. "I will fight a lifetime for this to pass if I have to."

(CTV Edmonton)

Dec 09 2016

EDMONTON - Edmonton police Chief Rod Knecht says he's in favour of a plan to open four safe-injection sites in the city.



"We, Edmonton, have an opportunity to get it right," Knecht said after visiting a safe-injection site in Vancouver.

"I think we can build a safe-injection site that serves everybody's needs in the broader community."

An advisory committee for medically-supervised injection sites presented a report to city council on Monday, asking councillors for support.

At the same meeting, the city's community and public services committee unanimously supported four injection sites in Edmonton - one at the Royal Alexandra Hospital and three others in existing community organizations.

The next step towards safe injection sites in Edmonton is public consultation scheduled for two weeks in early 2017.

(CBC News)

Dec 09 2016

The federal government is expecting a deluge of police requests for marijuana tests once cannabis is legalized and is concerned about whether Canada's shrinking number of forensic labs will be able to handle the surge.

Legalization of the drug is likely to "increase dramatically" the demand for pot analysis of urine and blood samples from suspected impaired drivers, says a tender issued recently by Public Safety Canada.

One outside expert says it's unclear if they can meet that demand, given the RCMP has shut down three of its six forensic testing centres since 2014.

The request for proposals (RFP) asks for contractors to study the capacity of Canada's lab system and the potential for a "backlog of samples," then advise on a new framework for analyzing bodily fluid samples.

"It should be expected that the number of samples requiring lab analysis will increase dramatically once cannabis is legalized, simply because the police will be reacting to the new regime with a similar approach as they do for driving under the influence of alcohol," says the RFP. "Roadside checks and random screening of drivers for drugs will likely occur more often."

In fact, law enforcement in Colorado reported more charges for driving under the

influence of drugs, and more deaths related to "drugged drivers" after the state made marijuana legal, the document notes.

Washington has reported similar trends since implementing the same change.

The Trudeau government has promised to bring in a bill to make recreational use of the drug lawful by this spring.

Whether people actually start smoking more pot and then drive or police simply look for it more, additional testing will be needed, predicts Doug Beirness, a senior research associate at the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse.

Meanwhile, the RCMP recently closed forensic labs in Halifax, Winnipeg and Regina, saving \$3.5 million a year.

"We reduced our toxicology capacity immensely. What were you thinking?" Beirness said. "Now we're going to increase the number of samples we're getting. There's the problem ... This is just added."

(CBC News)



Dec 10 2016

VANCOUVER - An RCMP officer has filed a lawsuit alleging he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder after being exposed to a "significant volume" of child pornography while working in a specialized unit.

Const. Michael Wardrobe says he was exposed to disturbing videos, photographs, interviews and interrogations as a member of the child abuse and sexual offence unit in Surrey, B.C.

"His mental health was impacted by unescapable images and memories from the files he had worked on," says the lawsuit filed in British Columbia Supreme Court.

Wardrobe says in the court document he was "flattered" when he was recruited to the unit in 2009. But he says he told his bosses he had three young children, had to commute hours per day and didn't think viewing child porn would be healthy.

He alleges his supervisor assured him that overtime was uncommon and that the amount of child pornography that needed to be viewed was "very minimal and almost non-existent," as the work was, for the most part, interviewing children.

He says he was told that he was committed to as much as two and a half years in the unit.

Despite the assurances from his superiors, he says, within the first three months on the job he was required to work overtime and was exposed to child pornography. The unit was significantly understaffed, he alleges.

"The plaintiff's supervisors were aware of his struggles with his health and the work load," the lawsuit says.

"The plaintiff was aware of, or had witnessed personally on a number of occasions,

members in the unit breaking down and crying while working on files."

By fall 2010, the lawsuit says, Wardrobe was showing symptoms of having a nervous breakdown. He approached his supervisor and broke down, crying and telling him he was "falling apart," the suit says.

The supervisor promised to transfer him out of the unit but the transfer didn't happen until 10 months later and Wardrobe's health was irreparably damaged, the suit alleges.

None of the allegations has been tested in court.

The lawsuit is filed against the Attorney General of Canada and the B.C. Justice Ministry, but the ministry said the RCMP was responsible for responding.

The RCMP said it could not comment on Saturday and would reserve its response for the court process.

Dec 10 2016

TORONTO - One of the clearest conclusions following the recent Toronto Police Service pilot project of body-worn cameras was how positive the public felt about them.

A police commissioned survey found 95 per cent strongly supported the idea and 85 per cent of the police officers involved agreed, according to Insp. Michael Barsky who led the program, adding many officers didn't want to give the cameras back at the end of the pilot.

Less clear was the cost. A report following the pilot project pegged the price tag at \$85 million over 10 years.

"That's an estimate," explained Barsky:

"That doesn't include the administrative costs, the cost of the personnel, the cost of computers, the cost of ... software that would also be incurred and so because of that we know that that number is very very high."

Now, the Toronto Police Board has approved spending \$500,000 on a non-binding request for proposals to find the best, most affordable camera technology.

But Barsky concedes, while the technology may be the wave of the future: "I don't know if that means today, though. It may mean that we need this to mature a little bit more."

(CBC News)

Dec 10 2016

MONTREAL - In the past five years, Montreal police have helped almost 200 victims of sexual exploitation leave that life behind with the help of a program called "The Survivors."

The program was developed with the help of former prostitutes.

There are now 10 former victims of sexual exploitation helping police understand what goes on in that world and helping them support women who want to leave it.

Montreal police inspectors Josée Mensales and Diane Veillette have dedicated their careers to fighting prostitution and work

within The Survivors program.

"We had victims who passed through the entire legal system and wanted to help other women," Veillette told Radio-Canada.

"We really created this program to give a voice to these women."

Veillette added that former victims of sexual exploitation have become the best resource for police working to understand what leads a person into that life - and how to help them get out of it.

"We trained officers to perform better in interventions, better detection. Because of that, the number of complaints have quadrupled," Veillette said.

"A lot of victims aren't ready, or don't want to turn to the justice system," Mensales said.

"But that doesn't mean that they accept being abused or that they don't need help."

According to police, eight prostitutes out of 10 are stuck because they owe a lot of money to their pimp. And in Montreal, 75 per cent of victims being helped by The Survivors program are minors.

The Survivors program isn't meant to be a path leading directly to criminal charges - Mensales says it's meant to be a way to make contact with victims and pull them out of their isolation.

The success of Montreal's program has led to incarnations of it being used in other areas of Quebec, as well as Ontario.

(CBC News)

SUNDAY
DECEMBER 11, 2016

Dec 11 2016

A Toronto police officer who helped convict the murderer of Barrie's Alexandra Flanagan has been honoured for investigative excellence with the 2015 William Bishop Award.

Const. Scott Aikman received the award recently.

In 2007 Flanagan, a 33-year-old hairstylist, went missing from her Barrie home. Human body parts found months later by dog walkers were confirmed as belonging to Flanagan, following DNA tests.

Phone records show Flanagan was in communication with Andrew Keene the night she went missing. A search warrant at his home turned up her blood in a large hockey bag.

With no motive or cause of death, Barrie police investigators sought the help of Toronto police in October 2011.

'Project Mystic' was launched.

Aikman befriended Keene, gained his trust and was able to secure a confession a year later.

Keene, then a 29-year-old Innisfil man, was arrested and charged in October of 2011.

In 2015, Aikman testified at the trial and Keene was found guilty of second-degree

murder and indignity to a dead body.

Keene was sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 17 years.

"It was an incredible experience to endure," said Aikman, who had his life threatened during the court proceedings. "I couldn't even imagine how devastating it could be for a family member to be taken away so abruptly and brutally and then to have no answers."

Aikman, who joined Toronto police 26 years ago, dedicated the award to his father, who died while the officer was active in this undercover operation.

"He was a religious minister, a volunteer firefighter and policeman and the Niagara Regional police chaplain," said Aikman.

The Bishop Award was established 22 years ago by the retired superintendent and his family, with the support of then deputy chief David Boothby.

(Barrie Examiner)

Dec 11 2016

Canada's border guardians have reason to fear the elimination of visa requirement for Mexico will lead to an influx of drug cartel operatives, says a former DEA agent.



But while the Liberal government action on visas will ease the way for drug traffickers, Mike Vigil said Canada's already ripe for the ruthless cartels.

"It will definitely be a factor but not the only factor," said Vigil, who battled Mexican drug cartels in the Latin American country for 13 years, four of them along the border with the U.S.

Compared to that border, the one shared by Canada and the U.S. is porous and easy to exploit by drug cartels who are relentless in their quest for new markets, he said.

"The Mexican cartels are very similar to a state army that probes for weaknesses and then exploits them," he said.

"They'll easily be able to spread their chemicals into Canada - you have a large border that's easily penetrated."

In a document obtained by Postmedia, officials with the Canada Border Services Agency say lifting the visa requirement will enable the traffickers to "establish or strengthen existing cartel smuggling chains."

It says they expect those criminal gangs to recruit airport and marine port workers to help with smuggling and distributing drugs.

Elements of two of the organizations - the Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels - are present in Canada now, focused mainly on distributing more profitable drugs like crystal meth, heroin and cocaine, said Vigil.

And he said the CBSA's citing the car-

tels' intention to woo locals to their cause is well-founded.

"Particularly the Sinaloa Cartel are very good at recruiting, like ISIS," said Vigil, who's authored two books based on his experiences, including Metal Coffins.

"They use images of posing with lions, cheetahs, Lamborghini, gold, beautiful women to entice," said Vigil.

Postmedia has already reported the fact criminal gangs have been operating at the Port of Vancouver.

Those Mexican-based drug gangs already operate in 600 U.S. cities and 40 countries with Canada's multi-cultural make-up an advantage in recruiting, camouflaging and operating, he said.

"Not only do they export drugs, they export violence," he said.

Calgary police chief Roger Chaffin said organized crime groups will come to a place where they believe there are opportunities for them.

"We watch and we track and we pay attention to how these things migrate up to the U.S. up here," Chaffin said in an interview. "We've not been subjected to it before very much, but that doesn't mean it won't show up. And if they do, we'll be on top of it."

Chaffin said factors like the upcoming change in federal legislation regulating marijuana, drugs like opioids and methamphetamine and downtrends in the economy tend to attract various organized crime groups.

(Calgary Sun)

Dec 11 2016

OTTAWA - The federal government's crisis response centre is outdated, understaffed and "inadequate" for coordinating emergency situations such as national security threats or natural disasters, a new audit warns.

In 2015, the Government Operations Centre (GOC) was called on to triage more than 5,000 incidents. Of those, more than 500 were deemed to be of national interest, requiring a risk assessment, planning and coordinated response, making it a vital nerve centre.

But a Public Safety Canada audit found persistent problems - even after a 2010 review revealed "widespread confusion and uncertainty" about the operation centre's mandate and its ability to fulfil its role.

The latest audit assessed the policies, processes, controls and protocols the GOC uses to respond to and manage emergency events ranging from flooding and industrial accidents to acts of terrorism and cyber events. It was completed in October 2016 and recently published online.

People interviewed for the audit identified challenges with communications, outdated technology and the ability to staff up quickly, the so-called "surge capacity" required to respond to emergencies.

But the interviewees cited the current physical infrastructure - the building, its fixtures, equipment and utilities systems - as posing the greatest risk.

Despite a long-identified need and business case for a new location, the review found the Government Operations Centre remains in facilities “that have been deemed to be inadequate.”

“From an operational perspective, the principal risk to the operation centre’s ability to fulfil its mandate is that current infrastructure would likely be unable to support the concurrent management of two or more events,” the report warns.

The audit found outdated technology is hampering work, including the main software system. While it’s intended to help share incident data and information among federal, provincial and territorial operations centres, it is certified only to manage unclassified information.

Physical infrastructure is also sub-par, from electrical wiring that doesn’t meet requirements to physical space that doesn’t allow for proper security zones, and creates “operational risks related to the handling of classified information.”

(CBC News)

MONDAY
DECEMBER 12, 2016

Dec 12 2016

TORONTO - Toronto Police Chief Mark Saunders says there’s nothing wrong with giving taxpayer-funded gift cards and free days off to employees who agreed to make tax-deductible contributions to the United Way.

“There’s nothing wrong with giving incentives. Companies do it, it’s nothing new, so to make this a flash point, it’s not a flash point,” Saunders told Global News in an interview at police headquarters Monday.

The practice, which the police service acknowledges has been going on for years, offered weekly draws for \$100 gift cards between Sept. 26 and Nov. 28.

In addition, police service employees who donated to the United Way were entered into grand prize draws. Those five prizes included three days off, two days off, one day off, and two prizes of a half day off.

When Saunders was asked why employees need to be incentivized with time off, he replied: “Shame on you if you’re going to turn a good news story into a bad news story.”

Pushed to elaborate, Saunders dismissed the reporter, saying “you’re trying too hard to make something out of nothing.”

The cost of the taxpayer-funded incentive ranges between \$4,000 to \$8,000 or more, including the cost of the lost wages, the \$1,000 cash for draws and possible overtime to replace an officer being given extra time off. That cost would vary depending on the police employee’s salary.

(Global News)

Dec 12 2016

NEWMARKET - The greying of the York Regional Police force means taxpayers are facing years of potential tax hikes to replace retiring officers.

“We will be challenged to maintain the presence of officers in the community as a result of unprecedented retirements that we face over the next five years. Between 1984 and 1990, this organization doubled its size and now there are more than 300 members set to retire on or before 2021,” Chief Eric Jolliffe told regional councillors during a police budget presentation.

“Quite simply, our organization isn’t built to sustain this pace of retirements and we need your help to ensure that we continue to provide adequate, effective of policing here in York Region.”

The force will face a similar retirement crunch beginning in 2034 as a result of hires between 2003 to 2008, Jolliffe said.

The force is unique when it comes to retirements because it takes 18 months to recruit and train rookie officers needed to be in place when veteran officers retire, he said.

The department is looking to hire 21 new officers next year, which is close to double the previously planned level of hiring, and it also wants to spend \$1.8 million to hire in advance of upcoming retirements, treasurer Bill Hughes has said, adding some revenue from the provincial government will help to offset the costs.

(Newmarket Era)

Dec 12 2016

An RCMP officer has been found partly responsible for an accident that happened after the Mountie engaged in the pursuit of a vehicle in Surrey.

Const. Peter Leckie has been held 15 per cent liable for a collision that injured a passenger in a van in August 2010, according to a ruling by B.C. Supreme Court Justice Ron Skolrood.

Tarun Roy, the driver of the vehicle being pursued by Leckie, was found 85 per cent to blame in the collision that injured Mean Joo Kweon, the passenger in the van.

The judge concluded that the police pursuit began when Leckie heard Roy rev his engine and then squeal his tires.

When Roy passed through the intersection while driving a 2010 Nissan Maxima, he accelerated and Leckie accelerated after him, attempting to close the distance.

Roy saw the marked police vehicle behind him and panicked, said the judge.

Skolrood found that Leckie, who had been an on-duty officer for about eight months at the time of the incident, believed Roy was trying to evade him and activated his lights and sirens and initiated a pursuit.

Turning right onto Fraser Highway from 96th Avenue, the Maxima struck the left side of a 2002 Chevrolet Venture van. Kweon, a UBC student at the time, was a passenger seated behind the driver of the van and asleep.

After the collision, Kweon was found bleeding and unconscious and was rushed to the hospital. Roy, who was driving a demonstration vehicle from the car dealership where he was working as an assistant manager, fled the scene on foot and was not apprehended.

“Based on these findings, I am satisfied that Constable Leckie owed a duty of care to other motorists when he initiated the pursuit and that he breached the standard of care by failing to properly assess the risk of pursuing Mr. Roy into the corner on 96th Avenue and by failing to terminate the pursuit despite the obvious dangers that it presented,” said the judge.

At trial the RCMP argued that there was no causal link between the conduct of Leckie and the accident but the judge said he disagreed.

“There was no reason for Mr. Roy to enter that turn at such a speed except for the fact that he was being pursued by Constable Leckie and was engaged in a misguided attempt to escape,” said the judge.

“Had Constable Leckie not initiated the pursuit, or had he terminated it well before the vehicles approached the turn, the accident likely would not have occurred.”

Kweon suffered multiple fractures to her pelvis, injuries which were initially totally disabling. She also suffered soft tissue injuries to her neck and shoulders.

In a ruling posted at the court’s website Monday, the judge awarded her a total of \$442,702 in damages. That includes \$175,000 for pain and suffering, \$165,000 for loss of future earning capacity, \$75,000 for past wage loss, \$24,000 for cost of future care and \$3,702 for special damages.

(Vancouver Sun)

Dec 12 2016

OTTAWA - A study done for the federal government suggests that a separate system for sentencing aboriginal offenders might reduce the disproportionate number of indigenous people behind bars.

The study by an Oxford University criminology professor says a more radical approach is needed since past attempts have failed to address the swelling number of incarcerated indigenous people.

Julian Roberts’ research says the Canadian justice system relies more on custody for punishment relative to other western nations.

The federal auditor general recently noted that while indigenous people make up about three per cent of Canada’s adult population, indigenous offenders account for 26 per cent of all people in federal custody.

Prime Minister Trudeau has said he would like to see a reduction in the rate of incarceration of indigenous Canadians.

One option that Roberts’ study offers is a separate, stand-alone sentencing code for indigenous offenders.

Another proposal would be to craft aboriginal-relevant sentencing principles and avenues tailored to indigenous communities and cultures.

TORONTO - A lawyer charged with fraud and money laundering related to dealings he had with top executives of a police union is appealing his suspension.

In a notice to the Law Society appeal panel, Andrew McKay asks that findings made in November against him be set aside.

"The hearing panel erred in concluding that there was strong evidence of the lawyer's involvement and active participation in a fraudulent scheme based only on untested hearsay allegations," McKay says in the notice. "The appellant has no discipline history and enjoys a reputation for honesty and integrity."

The panel suspended McKay's licence last month pending outcome of the criminal proceedings against him, a process that could take years.

Following a 19-month investigation, the RCMP charged McKay and four others in June with fraud over \$5,000 and laundering the proceeds of crime. While the criminal process unfolds, the courts ordered the Law Society of Upper Canada to put its disciplinary proceedings against him on hold.

McKay frequently represented police officers in criminal and discipline matters, including those with the Ontario Provincial Police. Three of his co-accused were former top executives with their union, and the fourth owned a travel business.

The allegations against them essentially are that they set up a travel agency and one of the police association brass ordered employees and outside lawyers to use its services - worth about \$400,000 a year.

The other allegation turns on a consulting company they set up in 2014 - PIN Consulting Group - which was to be paid \$5,000 a month by the police association for advice on travel, investment and real estate although it apparently provided no services. McKay, who the panel said had no professional experience or expertise in the investments, travel or consulting business, was its only employee.

"The alleged offences, if proven, would raise serious questions about the lawyer's integrity and honesty," the panel said in its decision. "There was a significant risk of harm to the public confidence in the administration of justice and in the legal profession if the lawyer was not suspended."

While the panel found his professional record had been unblemished and acknowledged the hardships of a suspension, it said it had no choice but to protect the public interest.

McKay, who is in his mid-50s, was an officer with the Toronto police and became a detective constable before leaving for law school in 1987.

In his notice of appeal, he argues the suspension was unreasonable and that his family relies on his income from practising law.

He also argues that the panel made "adverse findings" against him because he didn't testify at the hearing or make any apologies.

He also takes issue with the finding that PIN "seems to have been created for the express purpose of diverting funds" from the Ontario Provincial Police Association.

McKay argues other "respected" lawyers would be able to supervise his practise to minimize any risk he might pose and maintain public confidence in the system.

Dec 12 2016

VANCOUVER - British Columbia's health minister says he has taken the "extraordinary measure" of enacting a ministerial order to support the creation of overdose prevention sites.

Terry Lake says the order gives provincial emergency health services and regional health authorities the ability to provide overdose prevention treatment as necessary on an emergency basis.

He says the order was enacted on the advice of provincial health officer Dr. Perry Kendall and will last for the duration of the opioid-related public health emergency.

Several overdose prevention sites were established in B.C. last week, including three in Vancouver and one in Prince George, with more planned for Victoria and Surrey this week.

The sites allow people to inject illicit drugs while monitored by trained professionals equipped with naloxone, but B.C. says it's not skirting a law that requires federal approval to open a supervised-injection site.

Dec 12 2016

TORONTO - An Ontario police officer who claimed he "murdered" two people in separate encounters was cleared of any wrongdoing on Monday, after the province's police watchdog found he had been in a state of medical distress when he made his frenzied claims.

The Special Investigations Unit said it had to reopen its files on two separate fatal police interactions after a Brantford Police Service officer walked into a station at 4:45 a.m. one day in December 2014 and insisted on discussing the deaths that had taken place years ago.

"The subject officer was in a state of medical distress when he attended the BPS headquarters," the SIU concluded in a lengthy statement released Monday. "His continuous discussions with the officers present was disjointed and characterized by religious and paranoid delusions."

SIU Director Tony Loparco said the officer repeatedly said he had "murdered" two men and claimed he had lied to the SIU during the oversight body's original investigations into their deaths.

"Given the enormity of these claims, the SIU immediately commenced an investigation when we were notified," Loparco said.

"After a thorough review of all of the available evidence, I have concluded that there are insufficient grounds to believe that a criminal offence has been committed in relation to the deaths."

The officer was admitted to a health-care facility on the day he made his claims, the SIU said. While at the facility, he made further comments of a similar nature to other officers who visited him, it said.

Dec 12 2016

ST. LOUIS - A former St. Louis police sergeant was ordered Monday to spend a year and a day in federal prison for stealing more than \$80,000 from the organization for black police officers that he once led.

Darren Randal Wilson, 42, was sentenced in St. Louis three months after pleading guilty to all nine counts of wire fraud he had faced in an indictment.

As the Ethical Society of Police's president in 2013 and 2014, Wilson had access to bank account funds made up primarily of members' dues. Prosecutors say Wilson used the money on a side business promoting nightclub comedy shows. He was indicted in April 2014.

Wilson was suspended from St. Louis' police force last year.

As part of his guilty pleas in September, Darren Randal Wilson acknowledged he abused his position of public and private trust. He agreed to an \$80,934 judgment against him and to surrender his law enforcement certification. He can no longer work in law enforcement or seek employment in the field.

Besides the prison time, he also was sentenced Monday to three years of post-prison supervised release.

Dec 12 2016

OTTAWA - Health Minister Jane Philpott and Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale announced a series of legislative changes today that will speed up the process for opening safe injection sites.



"This is a crisis that is complex, it's multi-dimensional," said Philpott.

The government said in a statement that the existing National Anti-Drug Strategy would be replaced with a "more balanced approach" called the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy. The new strategy "restores harm reduction as a core pillar of Canada's drug policy."

That new strategy would also put drug policy back under the Health ministry and away from the Justice department.

"It will reframe problematic substance use as the public health issue that it is. It will return the lead on the Canadian drugs and

substances strategy to the minister of health rather than the minister of justice," said Philpott.

To facilitate the change the Liberals introduced Bill C-37 in the House of Commons earlier today. The bill would support the strategy by amending the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Customs Act and the Proceeds of Crime and Terrorist Financing Act.

The Liberals have long supported the expansion of safe injection sites as a means of harm reduction for addicts, but have been slowed in approving new sites by legislation brought in under the Conservatives.

The Respect for Communities Act, introduced in 2015, requires 26 criteria to be met before the federal government can begin considering a new safe injection site - or "safe consumption site," as they are called by the federal government, in an effort to reflect a variety of methods for ingesting drugs beyond intravenous injection.

The 26 application criteria will be repealed entirely, Philpott said. Bill C-37 would instead require those wishing to set up a safe injection site, to meet five benchmarks:

Demonstration of the need for such a site to exist. Demonstration of appropriate consultation of the community. Presentation of evidence on whether the site will impact crime in the community. Ensuring regulatory systems are in place. Site proponents will need to prove appropriate resources are in place.

The Customs Act will also be changed to allow mail weighing 30 grams or less to be inspected to help fight the influx of opioids - something that currently requires the Customs and Border Services Agency to obtain consent from the sender or the addressee, Goodale said.

"We also need to tighten and toughen our borders here at home and that's what this bill will do," said Goodale. "All incoming packages will be inspectable if there are reasonable grounds to be suspicious."

(CBC News)

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 13, 2016

Dec 13 2016

BRANDON, Man. - A western Manitoba school division's entire bus fleet will be equipped with surveillance cameras to deter unruly student behaviour and catch drivers who fail to stop when students are getting on or off the vehicles.

Trustees with the Brandon School Division voted yesterday to install interior and exterior cameras in all 43 vehicles at a cost of just under \$150,000.

Each bus will be outfitted with five cameras -- four to monitor what's going inside and one to capture what's happening outside.

The systems have already been installed

in two of the division's buses.

The move comes after the City of Brandon installed eight cameras on each bus that operates the city's 10 regular transit routes as a measure to deter criminal activity.

(CBC, Online Out)

Dec 13 2016

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. - Abbotsford's police chief has sent a letter asking for help from the parents of young men whom officers believe are involved in a violent gang conflict.

The Abbotsford Police Department says it has dedicated a wide array of resources to the Townline Hill conflict, which it says has been a top public safety priority since 2014.

The department says Chief Bob Rich's letter is an "earnest attempt to change the direction of the conflict and the lives of those involved."

In the letter sent in English and Punjabi, Rich says two gangs are fighting over who gets to sell illegal drugs in the city and so far five people, including an 18-year-old, have been murdered.

He tells parents their son's life is in "critical danger," and if their child stays involved in gangs he is at serious risk of being killed and his actions are causing other people's deaths.

Rich says he is sorry that parents are in this situation and police are not blaming them, but want to talk to them about what they can do about it.

Dec 13 2016

TORONTO - An organization that has helped exonerate more than 20 Canadians wrongfully convicted of serious crimes is getting a funding shot in the arm.

Attorney General Yasir Naqvi says Ontario will give Innocence Canada \$275,000 a year for three years.

In addition, the Law Society of Upper Canada has agreed to chip in 25-thousand dollars a year.

In September, Innocence Canada said it was being forced to stop taking on new cases and was laying off some staff.

It now says it will resume taking on new projects but still needs to find more money.

Innocence Canada used to be known as the Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted and has helped exonerate 21 innocent people since 1993.

Dec 13 2016

FREDERICTON - The Fredericton Police Force is getting a new, light-armoured vehicle to use in the capital city, but it was denied a request to hire more officers in the latest Fredericton budget.

Fredericton councillors approved the city's \$113.2-million budget for 2017 on Monday evening.

The budget set aside nearly \$350,000 so the Fredericton Police Force could add a "armoured rescue vehicle" to its operations.

The police force didn't get everything on its budget wishlist.

The Fredericton Police Force had also requested \$440,000 to hire two new officers and several civilian positions.

Police Chief Leanne Fitch said council's decision to refuse funding for additional officers and staff was disappointing.

"The last four years certainly have been a challenge, particularly for our frontline staff," said Fitch.

Fitch said the force averages around 10,000 overtime hours a year.

"We lost 10 police positions over the last four years but we increased civilian positions ... I expect going forward we're going to see the need for more resources, not less."

(CBC News)

Dec 13 2016

OTTAWA - Key recommendations of the federal task force on legalization and regulation of cannabis, which released its final report Tuesday:

- Set a national minimum age of purchase of 18, allowing provinces and territories to harmonize it with their minimum age for buying alcohol.

- Apply comprehensive restrictions to advertising and promotion of cannabis and related merchandise.

- Require plain packaging for cannabis products.

- Prohibit any product deemed to be "appealing to children," including ones that resemble familiar food items and those packaged to look like candy.

- Set a maximum amount of THC - the active ingredient in cannabis - per serving and per product.

- Prohibit mixed products, for example cannabis-infused alcoholic beverages or cannabis products with tobacco, nicotine or caffeine.

- Introduce public education strategies to inform Canadians about cannabis risks.

- Use revenue from cannabis as a source of funding for administration, education, prevention, research, enforcement and treatment.

- Implement a "seed-to-sale" tracking system to prevent diversion and enable product recalls.

- Allow provinces and territories to regulate wholesale distribution of cannabis, and permit provinces and territories, in close collaboration with municipalities, to regulate retail sales.

- Avoid co-location of alcohol or tobacco and cannabis sales, wherever possible.

- Allow dedicated storefronts with well-trained, knowledgeable staff, located appropriate distances from schools, community centres and public parks.

- Permit a direct-to-consumer mail-order system.

- Allow personal cultivation for non-medical purposes with a limit of four plants per residence and a maximum plant height of 100 centimetres.

- Maintain criminal offences for illicit

production, trafficking, import and export.

- Implement administrative penalties (with flexibility to enforce more serious penalties) for contraventions of licensing rules on production, distribution, sale.

- Extend current restrictions on public smoking of tobacco products to the smoking of cannabis products and to cannabis vaping products.

- Inform the public about the dangers of cannabis-impaired driving, with special emphasis on youth.

- Invest in research to better link THC levels with impairment and crash risk.

- Maintain a separate medical access framework to support patients.

(Source: "A Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada")

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2016

Dec 14 2016

PETERBOROUGH - The Ontario Civilian Police Commission (OCPC) has dropped 10 of the 11 allegations it had against Mayor Daryl Bennett, meaning the mayor is again allowed to serve on the police services board.



It's not clear whether he'll return to the board, although he didn't rule it out at a press conference on Wednesday. Bennett said he spent \$485,000 of his own money to defend himself.

He said he may have legal recourse to recoup some of that money, now that the OCPC's findings have been dropped.

But he said he's not as concerned about the money he lost as he is about the disruption it caused when he was removed from the police board by the OCPC.

He said it's not right to remove an elected official who was questioning "the status quo" (ie: Bennett questioned the police budget in 2011, which spurred a dispute over money).

"It was an organized attempt to get me out of the way," he said.

The OCPC held a lengthy quasi-judicial hearing into the allegations in 2014.

Bennett was found guilty of all 11 allegations against him, and he was told he could never serve on the police board again.

But the mayor was prepared to appeal that to divisional court (a "real court" with a "real judge", he says). The OCPC has dropped its findings in response.

One allegation sticks: Bennett agrees that he made "disparaging" remarks about Police Chief Murray Rodd, the police force and the

police board.

During that dispute over the police budget, Bennett called Rodd "unprofessional" and said it was "an embarrassment" that the chief had made the sunshine list, for example.

The OCPC's original ruling against Bennett stated that he had no right to say anything to "bring disrepute to policing" (Bennett had argued he had a right to free speech).

Bennett said on Wednesday he did say those "disparaging" things - but he wasn't about to apologize. "I stand by all my comments," he said on Wednesday.

He said his "first duty" was to serve the city, and that he doesn't think the OCPC should be able to "push elected officials away."

One of the allegations that was dropped is that Bennett shared confidential police documents with city council.

Another was that he'd tried to negotiate directly with Rodd over the police budget for 2012 (it was argued that he should have been negotiating with the police board, instead).

(Peterborough Examiner)

Dec 14 2016

EDMONTON - Edmonton's police chief is backing plans to develop a province-wide policy on street checks.

And Rod Knecht says the Edmonton Police Service re-worked its own street check policy earlier this year.

He shared his views in a statement provided to CBC News this week, following a year-end interview.

"I think it is a great idea that all Alberta police services have the same policies with respect to police checks," said Knecht, noting that is currently not the case.

"I would suggest the government, after some public consultations will be looking at a single street check policy for the province that does not negatively impact on community policing and interacting with the public."

Knecht met with Alberta Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley last week to talk about the street check issue, he said.

Last month, CBC News learned the province has set up a working group to develop provincial guidelines for street checks. Consultations with community groups will begin in the new year, said Ganley's office.

Figures provided by Edmonton police show officers conducted an average of 26,000-plus street checks per year between 2011 and 2014.

The stops have increasingly come under fire by a variety of critics who say they violate human rights and disproportionately stop people of colour.

Calgary police recently overhauled its police stop system, with the aim of providing greater public accountability and transparency.

Andy McGrogan, president of the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police and chief of the Medicine Hat Police Service, said the provincial working group studying the issue was set up last February.

It arose out of inquiries in Ontario that

led to new regulations on street checks, he said.

(CBC News)

Dec 14 2016

WINNIPEG - The Winnipeg Police Service is making a bigger push to give officers better mental health awareness training.

The WPS has partnered with ProTraining, a company that provides such training to focus on de-escalation and preventing violent encounters in police interactions.

A big part of the training involves role-playing exercises, placing officers in life-like situations.

Dr. Yasmeen Krameddine says they then get feedback on how they did and what they could improve.

Officers will also take a 90-minute online program that teaches de-escalation, communication and empathy strategies.

Right now, officers that will be doing most of the training are currently getting trained, and then all 1,500 officers will take part in the program over the next two years.

What they had previously done did meet accreditation standards, but Deputy Chief Gord Perrier says that after conducting a review of training earlier in the year, they felt that more could be done.

"Our program was a pure, academic program," he says. "It does serve citizens well, particularly vulnerable people and those that are in crisis. There's still an academic phase which reminds people of their initial training, which brings new information that we may know about mental health to the forefront, tests it in a scenario, and then there is a debriefing session."

(CJOB)

Dec 14 2016

RICHMOND - Richmond city council has approved hiring 11 more police officers, but questions remain as to whether the RCMP can deliver on its request.

"We never seemed to have filled up our full complement" of officers from last year, said Coun. Derek Dang, speaking to Richmond RCMP Supt. Rennie Nasset during a drawn-out discussion at a city council meeting Monday evening at Richmond city hall.

At issue is the fact Richmond is presently authorized to have 214 officers on duty and a base budget for 203, but only has 189 active members, with an additional 18 on modified duty or administrative leave.

The lack of officers has sparked criticism among some councillors.

Coun. Dang questioned whether the RCMP is providing Richmond with adequate staffing levels.

Council had approved 12 new officers last year, however the city has yet to see all of them in uniform.

Nasset insisted the RCMP will deliver on that request by the end of this month. He said the RCMP will have another year to deliver

the additional 11 officers, plus three municipal staff members, come 2017.

Council approved the new staffing levels at an additional cost of \$2.3 million.

As a result of the understaffing, Dang expressed concerns about the amount of money the city is paying in overtime to the detachment. He cited a recent CBC News report that notes the RCMP is spending roughly \$150 million each year in overtime (nation-wide), resulting in stressed-out officers as a result of lack of staff.

"You have people operating (with) stress and not at capacity and this isn't a service to the community," said Dang.

Nesset acknowledged overtime payments are a concern, but downplayed the impact of officers ending up on long-term disability.

Another issue raised by Coun. Bill McNulty is the perception that Richmond is only receiving new recruits and losing experienced officers to fields elsewhere.

"I'm hoping Richmond loses its tag that we're a good spot for promotion. I'd like to see our officers stay here and be a part of the community," said McNulty.

Nesset said the RCMP attempts to promote within the detachment.

Also at issue is whether or not the RCMP is paying its officers well enough in order to retain them.

Nesset cited an instance where one Richmond Mountie left for the Vancouver Police Department to earn \$20,000 more per year. He said the RCMP does provide better benefits to offset the wage gaps vis-a-vis municipal forces.

"Sounds like you have to have a lot of kids with crooked teeth to make up for 200 grand a year," interjected Coun. Alexa Loo.

Council is also cognizant of potential unionization talks within the RCMP. The City of Richmond claims it is prepared for increased costs. It has already accounted for a 2.7 per cent increase to wages this year.

In April, council decided to keep the RCMP after reviewing whether or not to create a municipal force.

(Richmond News)

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 15, 2016

Dec 15 2016

OTTAWA - The federal government secretly gave RCMP security officials the authority to tap telephone calls without court oversight during the Cold War, newly unearthed archival documents show.

The surveillance program, codenamed "Picnic," began as an emergency effort during the Korean War, but federal agencies collaborated with telephone companies in 1954 to continue the wiretaps, says Dennis Molinaro, who teaches history at Ontario's Trent University.

Molinaro's research indicates the RCMP security branch was listening in on the embassies of East Bloc countries, "certain unfriendly organizations" and individuals sus-

pected of disloyalty.

Molinaro believes the documentation he has uncovered with the help of tenacious staff at Library and Archives Canada helps flesh out how the RCMP surveillance of Canadians took place and implicates federal politicians and bureaucrats in making it happen.

The issue of when - and how easily - police and intelligence services should be allowed to intercept personal communications continues to play out today, fuelled by former U.S. spy contractor Edward Snowden's revelations of widespread surveillance.

"We can't evaluate where we're going next - or even where we are in the present, accurately or effectively - if we don't know where we've been," Molinaro said in an interview.

As hostilities in Korea unfolded, the Liberal government of Louis St-Laurent issued two dozen orders-in-council in the early 1950s under the Emergency Powers Act, Molinaro notes in a draft chapter on the episode from a forthcoming book.

Many of the measures were mundane, but order-in-council 3486, passed on July 4, 1951, was withheld from publication. St-Laurent would later describe it to the House of Commons simply as a measure that concerned the combined security of Canada and its NATO partners.

The secret order-in-council authorized the RCMP's Special Branch to tap telephones - a power the government wished to preserve even after the truce in Korea, Molinaro says.

Senior Privy Council Office adviser Peter Dwyer suggested entrenching and broadening the authority through an amendment to the Official Secrets Act.

This posed a problem in the mind of Paul Pelletier, assistant secretary to the cabinet. In a November 1953 letter to Stuart Garson, justice minister at the time, he said such an amendment would attract unwanted attention. He felt the most "effective smokescreen" would be a series of amendments to ensure the real goal - wiretapping phones - would be "more or less successfully beclouded."

The government eventually settled on amending section 11 of the Official Secrets Act as the statutory basis for wiretap warrants presented to telephone companies by the RCMP commissioner or his deputy, without judicial scrutiny.

"How long the program continued and how large it grew is not known," Molinaro writes.

Though Library and Archives staff helped him piece together elements of the story, Molinaro's attempts to locate order-in-council 3486 have proven futile. Archivists found evidence that Norman Robertson, the Privy Council chief of the day, was told to "retain" the order and keep it in a security "vault" somewhere in the halls of government, he writes.

Molinaro has filed a complaint with the federal information commissioner in a bid to dislodge the text.

"We have a long way to go in terms of accessibility to information for researchers," he said. "This is a problem when you're trying to write history."

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DISPATCHES

**PROMOTIONS
RETIREMENTS
RECOGNITION**

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