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Via Email

Commissioners MacDonald, Fitch and Stanton
Mass Casualty Commission
1791 Barrington St., Suite 310
Halifax, NS B3J 3K9

Dear Commissioners:

Re: Final Submissions on behalf of the Family of Gina Goulet

Please accept the following as the Final Submissions made on behalf of the family of Gina Goulet.

"We are all here because of a loss of trust."

These are the words that were spoken by Commissioner Stanton to RCMP Chief Superintendent Chris Leather during public proceedings on July 28, 2022. Commissioner Stanton was, of course, referring to the public's loss of trust in Nova Scotia's police in the aftermath of April 18 and 19, 2020.

As citizens, we believe that police will stop people from acting on their violent, criminal intentions and protect those who are vulnerable. We assume that our police will act responsibly, timely, and effectively as a crucial part of the Canadian justice system.

Most importantly, we place our trust in police to keep us safe. We trust them to keep our family members safe. We trust them to keep our communities, and the people living in them, safe.

Amelia and David Butler had these same beliefs, assumptions, and trust placed in Nova Scotia's police to stop the perpetrator and put an end to his violent rampage through rural Nova Scotia. They thought there was no possible chance that the perpetrator would be able to travel as far as he did after murdering 13 people in the small community of Portipique the night of April 18. Their confidence in the RCMP was unwavering, until roughly 10:58 a.m. on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

On the morning of April 19, 2020, Amelia and her mother, Gina Goulet, were communicating via iMessage about updates on the perpetrator. Gina was nervous because she knew that *"He knows where I live. Fuck I hope they catch himIt makes me nervous"*.¹

Amelia continually reassured her mother that she would be safe from the perpetrator and that police would apprehend him soon. She sent her mother several texts, including: *"You will be fine where you are at, there's no way he could get that far without being caught... He would have to get across the River somehow... That is a long trek from there to your house and he would have to be able to get across the bay unnoticed. He is not going to be out where people can see him"*.²

This iMessage exchange would prove to be the last time that Amelia communicated with her mother. As Amelia and Gina were texting back and forth, the perpetrator travelled south down Highway 224 in a stolen car from the Shubenacadie Cloverleaf after injuring Constable Chad Morrison and murdering both Constable Heidi Stevenson and Joseph Webber. He made a U-turn after passing Gina Goulet's house, pulled the vehicle up through Gina's main driveway and parked in her backyard. He then entered Gina's home and shot her to death, disposed of police paraphernalia, guns, and other equipment previously used to set fire to other structures. He then stole Gina's car and continued on his way to Enfield where he was eventually apprehended more than 13 hours after Jamie Blair made the first 911 call to report the murder of the perpetrator's first murder victim, her husband Greg Blair.

After failing to locate the perpetrator on the first night of the Mass Casualty event, police utterly failed in several critical areas while responding to the events that transpired on April 19, 2020. The mistakes made cost Gina Goulet her life.

The mandate of the Mass Casualty Commission is outlined in each of the provincial and federal governments' Orders in Council, both dated October 21, 2020. In summary, your tasks as Commissioners are:

"To inquire into what happened and make findings on: the causes, context and circumstances giving rise to the April 2020 mass casualty; the responses of police, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) municipal police forces; communications between the RCMP, municipal police forces, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia, the Canadian Firearms Program and the Alert Ready program; the steps taken to inform, support and engage those most affected.

¹ iMessage Exchange between Gina Goulet and Amelia Butler, COMM0051450, P-000715, at p 2.

² *Ibid* pp 3-6.



To examine related issues including: the role of gender-based and intimate partner violence; access to firearms; prior interactions and relationships of the perpetrator with the police and social services; police actions; communications with the public during and after the event; communications between and within law enforcement agencies and other services; police policies, procedures and training.

To produce a report that: sets out lessons learned as well as recommendations that could help prevent and respond to similar incidents in the future.”³

To assist the Commission in achieving its mandate, Participant Counsel were asked to prepare final submissions on behalf of their respective clients for the Commissioners’ consideration in advance of the Commissioners’ final report.

Submissions and Recommendations of the Goulet Family

Our submissions, made on behalf of the Goulet family, focus on the following ten topics:

1. **RCMP Public Communications:** if the RCMP had provided Nova Scotians with timely, accurate warnings of the danger facing us, as the April 18 and 19 mass casualty was unfolding, with the best information available to them - correcting and adding to that information as new and more accurate or corrected information came in - Gina Goulet would not have been murdered 13 hours after Jamie Blair (the perpetrator’s second murder victim), made the first 911 call to report the murder of her husband, Greg Blair.
2. **Communications between RCMP, Truro Police, and Halifax Regional Police:** if the RCMP, Truro Police and Halifax Regional Police communicated better and worked more seamlessly and collaboratively with one another on April 19, these police agencies could have worked together to stop the perpetrator long before he reached Highway 224, and Gina Goulet would not have been killed.
3. **The Perpetrator’s Replica RCMP Cruiser:** if the perpetrator was not able to “hide in plain sight”- primarily by driving the decommissioned RCMP vehicle he purchased from GC Surplus and then used to create an exact replica of a marked RCMP car- Gina Goulet would not have been killed.

³ This condensed version of the Commission’s mandate is found on the Mass Casualty Commission’s website. See: <https://masscasualtycommission.ca/about/mandate/>.



4. **Situational Awareness of RCMP Members While Driving and Responding to Dangerous Calls:** if RCMP members were traveling two per patrol vehicle, rather than one per patrol vehicle, while responding to the Mass Casualty on April 18 and 19, 2020 the RCMP would have been far more effective in keeping the public safe, keeping themselves safe and apprehending the perpetrator sooner - and Gina Goulet would not have been killed.
5. **Psychological Autopsy:** if the RCMP focused on serving and protecting the communities they are paid to police, rather than protecting and enhancing their own reputation, that focus and attention would go a long way toward restoring the public's trust in the RCMP.
6. **Police Education and Training:** if the RCMP improved their education requirements to a lengthier and more robust program, in consideration of the evolving complications associated with the modern policing profession, members would be better equipped to handle future complex events like April 18 and 19, 2020. Additionally, if the RCMP changed their training requirements so members had better knowledge of, and proficiency in the use of, available technology, members would be better equipped to handle future events like April 18 and 19, 2020.
7. **Goulet Family Experience Post Mass Casualty:** if the RCMP implemented comprehensive policies and practices for managing active crime scenes, release of cleared crime scenes to victims' families, next of kin notifications, and family liaison assignments and support, the suffering of those losing a family member to a violent crime would not be as traumatic as it was for the Goulet family after Gina Goulet's death on April 19, 2020.
8. **Community Awareness and Communication with the RCMP:** if the RCMP and other law enforcement agencies were more aware of the perpetrator and his suspicious and illegal activities - including abusing and assaulting his spouse, abusing and acting violently towards others including his denture patients, stashing illegal firearms, illegally obtaining ammunition for those firearms, building a replica marked RCMP police cruiser, and his financial misdealings - the perpetrator would not have been able to "fly under the radar" for decades and plan and execute his murderous rampage.
9. **RCMP Culture:** if the RCMP revamped their institutional culture to properly reflect their renewed core values and Vision150, focusing especially on the values of "take responsibility" and "transparent and accountable governance", they would be able to meet the public's expectations of them as a police force.



10. **Commemoration:** the Goulet Family requests that the Commissioners consider a “Commemoration Recommendation” that will give the victims’ families a specific role in overseeing the implementation of Recommendations arising from the Commissioners’ Final Report.

On behalf of the Goulet Family, we submit that exploring these topics will assist the Commission in developing forward thinking Inquiry Recommendations that, once implemented, will result in real and substantial change. We are optimistic that implemented recommendations, in part from our submissions, will prevent a repeat of the April, 2020 Mass Casualty. Most importantly, however, we hope that the recommendations facilitate what is intended of them - to restore trust and confidence in the institutions tasked with protecting the communities they serve.

1. RCMP PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Theory: if the RCMP had provided Nova Scotians with timely, accurate warnings of the April 18 and 19 mass casualty as it was unfolding, with the best information available to them - correcting and adding to that information as new and more accurate or corrected information came in - Gina Goulet would not have been murdered 13 hours after Jamie Blair (the perpetrator’s second murder victim), made the first 911 call to report the murder of her husband, Greg Blair.

Concerning media relations and public alerting, “The RCMP has a duty to inform the public on public safety issues”.⁴ Timely and effective communication is necessary to meet this general duty in the event of a critical incident such as the Mass Casualty. A well-informed public is also safer because they are aware of potential danger in their community and may act accordingly. Most importantly, meeting this mandate demonstrates to the public that they can place their trust in the RCMP. Ensuring that the public is well informed during unfolding serious incidents promotes good public relations as the public will believe that the RCMP are reliable and transparent in their investigations.

Information on the RCMP’s communications to the public during April 18 and 19, 2020, is found in the Mass Casualty Commission’s Foundational Documents.⁵ Several facts of note from these documents include:

- on the night of April 18, RCMP chose to alert community members in Portapique by attempting to find the telephone numbers of residents in the area

⁴ SOP Media Relations for Risk Managers 2019-07-30, COMM0043156, P-002032, at p 2.

⁵ See especially: RCMP Public Communications, April 18- 19, 2020 Foundational Document, COMM0058836, P-002001, pp 6-8 and Timeline found at pp 15-19.



- in an internal RCMP computer database as the first attempt to warn the public about the perpetrator;
- the first public notification was released at roughly 11:30 p.m. on April 18 via Twitter; and
 - that RCMP realized the perpetrator was actually driving the replica RCMP vehicle shortly after 7:00 a.m. on April 19 but did not share this critical piece of information with the public until 10:17 a.m. on April 19.⁶

It should be noted, however, that Dispatch became aware of the possibility that the perpetrator was driving the replica RCMP vehicle very early into the events of April 18. Accordingly, we submit that the more accurate summary is that the RCMP did not seriously consider the possibility that these descriptions of the car provided to them were factual and accurate until nearly 9 hours after the first 911 calls, and did not disclose this information to the public until roughly 12 hours after Jamie Blair's 911 call.

At 10:01 p.m. on April 18, Jamie Blair relayed to 911 Dispatch that there was a police car in her driveway, also stating "...like there is a police car in the fucking driveway ... There is a police car ...but he drives, he's a denturist and he drives like a ... There is an RCMP... it's decked and labelled RCMP... but it's not a police officer".⁷

Then at roughly 10:30pm, the Blair and McCully children informed 911 dispatch that the perpetrator was in a police car, and that he would "ble[n]d in with the cops because he has a cop car"; they also said that the vehicle had "the cop symbol on it".⁸ These two 911 calls confirm that the RCMP were aware of the possibility of the replica RCMP vehicle from the first 911 call on April 18 just after 10:00 p.m.

It is very likely that the perpetrator would have been spotted by members of the public much earlier into his rampage had information of the perpetrator's replica RCMP vehicle been released sooner to the public. This would have saved Gina Goulet, who was the last victim nearly 13 hours after Jamie Blair's initial 911 call giving details of the car and also over 4 hours after the RCMP realized for the 'first' time that the perpetrator was indeed driving an identical cruiser to a marked RCMP cruiser.

Due to the nature and severity of the events unfolding on April 18, the RCMP Strategic Communications Unit was engaged to manage communications with the public. During the events of April 18 and 19, 2020, the preferred method of public communication by the RCMP was providing updates through Facebook and Twitter posts. Lia Scanlan has

⁶ RCMP Public Communications, April 18-19, 2020 Foundational Document, COMM0058836, P-002001 pp 6-8 and Timeline found at pp 15-19.

⁷ Transcript of recorded 911 call of Jamie Blair, COMM0003870, P-000069 at p 2.

⁸ Transcript of recorded 911 call of AD/AB, COMM0002884, P-0002884, lines 59, 63, 275-76, 279-82.



stated that this approach was informed by the Moncton Shootings of June 4, 2014, where she was also the director of Strategic Communications at the time.⁹ In her interview with the Commission, Ms. Scanlan discussed the evolution of these social media platforms into tools for public communication: “when we first had them, Twitter wasn’t basically for news and Facebook wasn’t basically for this, but they’ve evolved, so that Facebook... can be more of a public relations tool... Whereas Twitter, there’s very much an expectation... it’s breaking news, it’s relevant, it’s current”.¹⁰

The use of the RMCP information database to attempt to contact Portapique residents was clearly not an effective way to alert the Portapique residents of the imminent danger facing them. While there is unfortunately little that the RCMP could have done to stop the perpetrator as he began his rampage through the community on the night of April 18, the half hour spent on calling available telephone numbers for Portapique residents could have been used to implement a more effective public alerting strategy. This was a largely fruitless endeavour that cost valuable time. Telephone numbers in the database had not been recently updated, meaning that many residents could not be reached. Additionally, many telephones were not answered when the RCMP attempted their initial contact.¹¹ This may be a minor point, but is worth considering as a half hour spent on something more worthwhile could have made the difference for some victims of the Mass Casualty.

It has been well established by RCMP senior management throughout the Mass Casualty Inquiry that using the Alert Ready system to issue public alerts about the perpetrator was not an available strategy in April, 2020, as “That wasn’t a tool in our toolbox”.¹²

The RCMP was unaware that Alert Ready could be used for policing situations, as it had only been used in Nova Scotia for extreme weather warnings and a COVID-19 alert. However, it has become clear in the two years following the Mass Casualty, that Alert Ready is an extremely effective public alerting tool that is able to reach the public more widely and quickly than any social media platform.

In the same manner as Twitter and Facebook, Alert Ready has evolved into a policing public communications tool that the RCMP should consider invaluable. It allows for information to reach individuals at far greater speeds than Facebook and Twitter and the smartphone alerting system addresses social media shortcomings, such as the requirement to actually ‘follow’ RCMP social media platforms online, and the potential that

⁹ RCMP Public Communications, April 18-19, 2020 Foundational Document COMM0058836, P-002001, at para 29.

¹⁰ MCC Interview of Lia Scanlan, September 14, 2021, COMM0015883, P-001494, pp 10, 12-13.

¹¹ RCMP Public Communications, April 18-19, 2020 Foundational Document, COMM0058836, P-002001, at para 39.

¹² Testimony of Supt. Darren Campbell, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 55, July 26, 2022, p 68, at line 18.



RCMP posts with critical information about a dangerous event may be buried by other online posts on a user's timeline. The RCMP have made steps to learn, implement, and execute public alerts through Alert Ready since April of 2020, which is a good sign.

The issue now, however, is that it would appear that there is discrepancy between RCMP senior management as to whether an Alert would be issued today in the event of another such incident as the Mass Casualty. C/Supt Chris Leather, Supt Dustine Rodier and Commissioner Brenda Lucki all gave conflicting answers when asked whether Alert Ready would be used if a similar event occurred today.¹³ Some believed that the RCMP would issue an Alert, while others alluded to the situation dictating the necessary course of action as more was learned by the RMCP.

It is submitted that senior RCMP management must be on the same page when it comes to this crucial issue to ensure that there is a unified approach to public alerting.

Alert Ready should automatically be the first method of public alerting used in the event of a serious critical incident. When in doubt as to whether it is necessary, Alert Ready should be used out of caution to ensure that the public is kept up to date about the latest information when their safety is at risk.

An Alert allows the public to be on the lookout for a perpetrator who may be in their community. Most importantly, an Alert can assist the RCMP to re-establish credibility and restore their reputation as "an accurate and authoritative source for information" in the eyes of the public, similar to what the MacNeil Report has previously articulated.¹⁴ Again, it is submitted that RCMP senior management need to get on the same page on this topic as opposed to remaining divided on this critical issue.

Additionally, the RCMP must provide the public with timely and accurate information as the RCMP receives it, without delay. One of the most critical issues during the events of the Mass Casualty, and especially for the Goulet family, is the fact that the RCMP waited far too long to disclose to the public that the perpetrator was driving a replica decommissioned RCMP vehicle. Had this information been released closer to when the RCMP were first made aware of it by the 911 calls from both Jamie Blair and the Blair and McCully children, it is entirely possible that the events of April 19th would have unfolded very differently.

¹³ Testimony of Supt. Dustine Rodier, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 33, June 7, 2022, p 172, lines 14-27; Testimony of C/Supt. Chris Leather, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 57, July 28, 2022, p 59, lines 25-28 – p 60, lines 1-16; Testimony of Comm. Brenda Lucki, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 60, August 24, 2022, p 87, lines 23-28 – p 88, lines 1-2.

¹⁴ MacNeil Report, COMM0050843, P-001629, at p 25.



Communities would have known to be on the lookout for a suspicious police vehicle that could be travelling through their town. If this information had been widely distributed to the public, the perpetrator would not have been able to travel through main roads in local communities and he would have been apprehended long before he was able to murder Gina Goulet.

One of the main considerations alluded to by the RCMP for not issuing the perpetrator's replica RCMP cruiser information to the public sooner was that it may cause a "frantic panic".¹⁵ Additionally, the RCMP were concerned that by informing the public of the danger, they would be "making members a target" and inviting the public to participate in vigilante justice.¹⁶

Respectfully, this reasoning on both counts is unfounded. For starters, the Commission has heard during roundtables that although people may become distressed during a critical incident, "many people do not panic"; instead, they need guidance and information to ensure their own safety.¹⁷ There is also simply no evidence to suggest that members of the public would have attempted to take matters into their own hands by confronting the perpetrator themselves; if anything, alerting the public to the RCMP vehicle sooner would have likely increased public safety as many would have chosen to stay home rather than travel the roads (such as Kristen Beaton and Heather O'Brien) while others such as Gina Goulet would have sought safety in the company of family or neighbors. In addition, alerting the public would have allowed individuals to report sightings of suspicious RCMP vehicles to 911, such as the handful of individuals interviewed by the Mass Casualty Commission who indeed did see the perpetrator in his vehicle but were unaware of the significance.¹⁸

RECOMMENDATION #1 (On the Use of Alert Ready and Social Media)

That all police forces serving the citizens of Nova Scotia work together co-operatively with the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office to develop:

- (1) a standard protocol for the use of Alert Ready in Nova Scotia;*
- (2) an education program for all Nova Scotia police forces that specifically addresses the hesitation and concerns of police about the use of the Alert*

¹⁵ Transcript of Recorded Interview of Steve Halliday, COMM0019379, P-001072 at page 34. See also: Testimony of Lia Scanlon: Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 34, June 8, 2022, p 57, lines 12-24.

¹⁶ Testimony of Ret. Cpl. Jennifer Clarke, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 33, June 7, 2022, at p 40.

¹⁷ Critical Incident Roundtables, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 30, June 1, 2022, p 119, lines 19-28 – p 121, lines 1-9.

¹⁸ Highway 4, Wentworth Foundational Document, COMM0053597, P-000334.



*Ready and equally importantly, educates our police forces on their duty to warn the citizens they serve of impending danger; and
(3) an education program for distribution to Nova Scotians as to what is expected of us when an Alert is issued and how we should respond.*

This work on the use of Alert Ready by police in Nova Scotia should be overseen by, and subject to, the approval of the Public Safety Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Justice who will ensure consultation with our communities.

The protocol for use of the Alert Ready in Nova Scotia should include direction that all Alert Ready messages are simultaneously posted on Social Media sites such as Twitter and FaceBook.

2. COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN RCMP, TRURO POLICE SERVICE AND HALIFAX REGIONAL POLICE

Theory: if the RCMP, Truro Police Service and Halifax Regional Police communicated better and worked more seamlessly and collaboratively with one another on April 19, these police agencies could have coordinated to prevent the perpetrator from continuing his rampage long before he left the Shubenacadie Cloverleaf in a stolen vehicle and headed down Highway 224, and Gina Goulet would not have been murdered.

As we outlined in our final oral submissions on September 21, 2022, it has been utterly disheartening to learn about the poor relationship between the RCMP and Municipal detachments during the course of the Mass Casualty Commission, and how that may have had tragic consequences for Nova Scotians on April 18 and 19, 2020.

Petty feuds between the RCMP and Municipal Police agencies strained relations in the time leading to the Mass Casualty, with relations becoming even worse after April, 2020. We continue to witness police forces pointing fingers at each other and assigning blame to one another in the aftermath of the Mass Casualty. There is far too much at stake, in terms of public safety, for all of our police forces in this province not to resolve their differences immediately and learn to work effectively together. This should not be an option, but the priority for police reform in Nova Scotia, and more broadly in Canada.

By the morning of April 19th, the RCMP were well aware that they were dealing with a critical incident of a magnitude never seen before in Nova Scotia. What they did not know was where the perpetrator was, whether he had left Portapique, or even if he was still alive. The perpetrator continuously resurfaced throughout the early to late hours of that morning, and the RCMP, time and time again, took a reactive approach while trying to



apprehend him. A proactive approach by contrast would certainly have involved looping other municipal police detachments in, sharing what the RCMP knew with other police chiefs in the province – and particularly those in neighboring jurisdictions, and coordinating targeted searches of possible areas where the perpetrator could be, including strategic containment areas of local communities and roadblocks.

Instead, the RCMP chose to continue the search for the perpetrator on their own. They created tunnel vision for themselves in the process, failing to ask for assistance from other Municipal detachments and, in the case of Truro Police Service, outright declining the assistance offered. The RCMP did not share information with other police forces, choosing instead to leave them in the dark as the perpetrator continued his rampage through rural Nova Scotia, apparently heading toward Truro and Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM).

We now know that C/Supt Chris Leather was offered the services of Truro Police to help locate and apprehend the perpetrator. However, C/Supt Leather decided to turn them down instead of taking Truro Police Chief MacNeil up on his offer, thereby utilizing every available resource to stop the perpetrator. C/Supt. Leather's response at 10:00 AM on April 19th to an email from Truro Police Chief David MacNeil offering the support of Truro Police was as follows: "Thanks Dave. It sounds like we may [have] the suspect pinned down in Wentworth. Will be in touch".¹⁹ Unfortunately C/Supt. Leather did not get back in touch with Chief MacNeil. Moreover, C/Supt Leather had no reason to believe that the RCMP even had the perpetrator 'pinned down in Wentworth' to begin with, and later confirmed that the information he gave to Chief MacNeil was incorrect.²⁰

We also now know that shortly after C/Supt. Leather sent that misleading and incorrect information to Chief MacNeil, the perpetrator drove straight through the main road of Truro in his decommissioned RCMP vehicle.²¹ What C/Supt. Leather, and the rest of the RCMP by extension, did not tell Chief MacNeil and the Truro Police was that an RCMP cruiser was spotted by witness Mary Ann Jay at the scene of Lillian Campbell's murder in Wentworth at roughly 9:35 a.m. that morning, heading south towards Truro.²²

The RCMP Operations Manual chapter on "Police and Public Safety-Backup" outlines RCMP policy to "ensure the health and safety of its members by providing back-up"²³. The term back-up in the context of this chapter "refers to an urgent response by on-duty or off-duty RCMP members **and/ or operational peace/ police officers from other**

¹⁹ Email FW: Assistance, COMM0001788, P-004008.

²⁰ Testimony of C/Supt. Chris Leather, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 57, July 28, 2022, p 25, lines 22-28 – p 26, lines 1-8.

²¹ Truro Police Service – April 19, 2020 Foundational Document, COMM0058837, P-001919, at para 8.

²² Highway 4, Wentworth Foundational Document, COMM0053597, P-000334, at para 20.

²³ OM Police and Public Safety- Backup, COMM0040308, s 1(1).



accredited law enforcement agencies” (emphasis added).²⁴ Additionally, the chapter states that “back-up will be required when responding to high risk incidents involving, but not limited to, domestic disputes, the potential for violence, armed suspects, emotionally disturbed individuals, or suspects fleeing the scene of a crime”.²⁵ The chapter goes on to say that it is the responsibility of the District Commander/ Delegate to request back-up from outside the district, whether it is specialized resources or simply additional officers, when “necessary to ensure public and police safety”.²⁶

The “Police and Public Safety- Backup” chapter clearly outlines that the RCMP should have requested back-up from other municipal detachments in Nova Scotia early on in their response to the perpetrator, and at a minimum on the morning of April 19th hours before he was apprehended. The RCMP were responding to a high risk incident that involved a domestic dispute, serious violence that had already occurred with a potential for more to come, a suspect that they knew was armed and emotionally disturbed, and who was fleeing multiple different crime scenes.

In other words, by the time the morning of April 19th arrived, the RCMP were aware that the Mass Casualty event was a combination of every single situation that is outlined as an example of a high risk incident requiring back-up as per RCMP policy. The complete and utter failure not only by the RCMP to follow their own procedures, but in particular for C/Supt. Leather to turn down the offer of assistance from Truro Police Service in the manner that he did that morning, were major contributing factors to compromising public and police safety and clear violations of this policy. The RCMP did not have the situation under control nor were the RCMP remotely close to apprehending the perpetrator. They needed all of the resources available to them on this day and Chief MacNeil was owed the courtesy of a warning and a full briefing on the danger headed his way.

However, the RCMP’s failures should not be the only focus under this section. The Halifax Regional Police’s decision to stay within their own borders also deserves attention. In April of 2020, HRP had the largest Emergency Response Team (ERT) in Nova Scotia. The HRP ERT members on duty the night of April 18 and 19 were tasked to perform various jobs in HRM related to the perpetrator at the request of the RCMP, including checking his Portland Street property and bringing Lisa Banfield’s siblings to safety.

The HRP ERT team were well aware of events unfolding in Portapique that night as they were listening to the Colchester Radio. They sought permission from management to call in more ERT members but permission was denied.

²⁴ *Ibid* s 1(2).

²⁵ *Ibid* s 1(3).

²⁶ *Ibid* s 5(5).



The HRP management decision was in direct contrast to the position of ERT members, who felt strongly that they needed to be deployed to help their fellow municipal and provincial police officers. Cst. Brooks, the 1 Watch ERT Lead during the Mass Casualty event, stated in an email that HRP ERT knew shortly after midnight on April 19 that this was “the biggest event in Nova Scotia history and that we should be staging in Truro to assist”.²⁷

Cst. Brooks’ email goes on to report that at about 1:30 a.m. on April 19th, Sgt. Robinson of the HRP said that a decision had been made by management and that “NO more ERT members were being called out.”²⁸ Cst. Brooks also states that “it seemed like to ERT members that management were just counting on the perpetrator being deceased at the scene.”²⁹

So, instead of having every available ERT member responding to the Mass Casualty event, the number of bodies actively attempting to apprehend the perpetrator was less than half of the total amount available in the province. It is not a stretch by any means to assume that had the Halifax Regional Police deployed their ERT members to respond to the Mass Casualty event, as those ERT members knew they should be doing and staging in Truro to assist, the perpetrator would likely have been apprehended far earlier than late morning on April 19th.

It is very upsetting for the Goulet family to think about what could have been prevented on the morning of April 19th had the RCMP reached out to Truro Police in a timely manner to update them on the accurate, important information that they knew and to request for their assistance. Even more than the RCMP’s communications failings in regards to not utilizing Truro Police, the fact that HRP effectively refused to assist in locating and apprehending the perpetrator during the Mass Casualty event is particularly upsetting to our clients. Hwy 224 is very close to the border of HRP’s jurisdiction. Containment areas or roadblocks set up around Hwy 224 could have made all the difference that morning.

Our police are public servants. Their job is to serve and protect the public. While many of our police officers in the province did exactly that on April 18 and 19, we have outlined two specific examples important to our clients where the poor relationship between police forces negatively impacted their ability to serve and protect the public. Gina Goulet could have been saved on the morning of April 19 had the RCMP and HRP put aside their egos and made the safety of Nova Scotians their first priority.

²⁷ Email from Cst Brock Brooks dated April 27, 2020, COMM0056691, P-002221, pp 1-2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*



RECOMMENDATION # 2 (Communications between RCMP, TPS and HRP)

The Goulet Family asks the Commissioners to consider making the following recommendation as a first step in addressing the relationship and communication obstacles between Nova Scotia's policing agencies.

The Goulet Family submits that this recommendation will serve as a clear statement to all police forces in Nova Scotia that Nova Scotians demand better from our police and demand change so that our policing resources are fully utilized to keep our communities safe:

- 1. Recommend that Nova Scotia have one Emergency Response Team, with sufficient members to populate sufficient shifts or teams needed to effectively serve and protect a province the geographical size of Nova Scotia with a population the size of Nova Scotia's population.*
- 2. Recommend that the Nova Scotia Emergency Response Team be comprised of equal members of RCMP members and Municipal police officers.*
- 3. Recommend that command and training of this province wide Emergency Response Team rotate every 5 years, rotating between the RCMP for 5 years and the Municipal Police forces for 5 years (which in Nova Scotia would mean either Halifax Regional Police or Cape Breton Regional Police given that they are the only 2 other police forces in Nova Scotia who have their own ERT team).*

In addition, the Goulet Family asks the Commissioners to consider the following recommendations:

- 4. RCMP and municipal detachments shall proactively communicate and collaborate with one another in the initial stages of a critical incident to ensure direct and substantial involvement of all impacted or potentially impacted police agencies, keeping communication lines open throughout the incident and updating one another as better information from the ground becomes available.*
- 5. RCMP and municipal detachments clearly identify a designated member who is specifically tasked to communicate with the other detachments during a critical incident; in the event that one detachment contacts the "wrong member", the individual contacted must provide a timely response by referring them to the correct designated member.*



3. THE PERPETRATOR'S REPLICA RCMP CRUISER

Theory: if the perpetrator had not been able to “hide in plain sight”- primarily by driving the decommissioned RCMP vehicle that he purchased from GC Surplus and then used to create an exact replica of a marked RCMP cruiser - Gina Goulet would not have been killed.

The Mass Casualty Commission has taken an extensive look into how the perpetrator was able to acquire uniforms, equipment, and parts to build a replica RCMP cruiser that looked identical to a real RCMP cruiser. Of particular importance is the availability of decommissioned RCMP vehicles to the general public through GC Surplus. We know that this was the primary means of access to police paraphernalia for the perpetrator, and that it would have been essentially impossible for him to acquire a decommissioned RCMP cruiser but for this federal government online auction site. The perpetrator's replica RCMP cruiser was also the main tool in his arsenal that allowed him to travel undetected around the province, as members of the public and quite likely even some RCMP themselves believed that he was a legitimate RCMP officer when he passed them.

It is our position that fundamental changes are required concerning the sale of decommissioned RCMP vehicles to the general public. Specifically, we submit that the sale of decommissioned RCMP vehicles, both marked and covertly marked, should be entirely prohibited as the risk to public safety is too high to justify the cost recovery from auctioning off these vehicles. Instead these vehicles should be destroyed and sold for scrap metal and parts.

To be clear, we take no issue with the RCMP selling other vehicles that are not considered “frontline” RCMP marked or covertly marked cruisers. Our focus rests with vehicles commonly used by active duty members who are the first responders to incidents day-to-day, and/ or those that are typically considered RCMP patrol cars.

As a direct result of the mass casualty and the aftermath of uncovering more information, the Goulet family, and the general public more broadly, feel a general sense of concern, unease, and a loss of trust in the RCMP and all RCMP symbols. The fact that a member of the public had the ability to restore a former RCMP vehicle to the point that it was mistaken for a legitimate RCMP cruiser is incredibly alarming. It is even more disturbing that he was able to do this fairly easily by all accounts, due to the accessibility of RCMP cruiser parts and a lack of concern or awareness of the possible uses the perpetrator intended for his replica RCMP cruiser. We now also know that the perpetrator's ability to ‘successfully’ complete this project was one of, if not, the, main contributing factor to an unprecedented violent rampage that had never before been witnessed in Canada.



On June 2, 2022, the Commission heard from Max Liberatore, an employee of GC Surplus. Mr. Liberatore previously stated to investigators that his formal role was a “GSSPS”, describing that he “basically run[s] the warehouse” with a coworker.³⁰ He testified on a number of topics related to selling decommissioned RCMP cars generally in addition to his personal experience with the perpetrator in the course of his employment. Of particular note were his comments that GC Surplus takes “everything that belongs in the federal government... when they’re done with them”, and that the standard preparation procedure for sale is to remove RCMP decals and anything remaining in the car.³¹ However, he had previously observed traces/ outlines of decals remaining on a vehicle after it was prepared for auction and subsequently sold and recalled a separate instance where a decommissioned vehicle was sold with an attached push bar.³² Additionally, Mr. Liberatore’s testimony gave the impression that there was no real concern about questioning the reasons behind why customers bought what they bought, or how many vehicles they bought. He recalled that “people come in to buy cars for lots of reasons”, and that he had never considered the possibility of suspicious purchases.³³

On June 20, 2022, the Commission heard from RCMP Constable Nick Dorrington. Cst. Dorrington discussed how he considered RCMP vehicles with what he described as “subdued markings” to be a third type of car along with marked and unmarked RCMP vehicles. He stated that these vehicles have “no colouring to the markings”; this is so the public cannot easily identify them on the highway.³⁴ These cars otherwise look the exact same as any other marked RCMP cruiser.³⁵ Cst. Dorrington also commented that decommissioned vehicles have the RCMP coloured markings removed and that typically, although not always, the pinstriping along the bumpers are taken off as well.³⁶ (emphasis added)

Mr. Liberatore’s comments are concerning, particularly in the context of what Cst. Dorrington has stated on the record. Mr. Liberatore’s testimony indicates that there is either no real procedure for preparing former RCMP vehicles to ensure that they are not misidentified for an RCMP police car once sold; or if there is, that procedure is not consistently followed by GC Surplus staff. Cars that are sold after prepared at the auction house, according to Cst. Dorrington, can then be easily mistaken as legitimate RCMP

³⁰ MCC- Investigations- Transcript of Recorded Interview of Max Liberatore, COMM0056211, P-001307, pp 3-4.

³¹ Testimony of Max Liberatore, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 15, April 25, 2022, p 37, lines 1-4, and p 38, lines 24-28 – p 39, lines 1-8.

³² *Ibid* pp 65, 60.

³³ *Ibid* pp 41, 72.

³⁴ Testimony of Cst Nick Dorrington, Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 38, June 20, 2022, p 90, lines 1-28 – p 91, lines 1-7.

³⁵ *Ibid* at p 91.

³⁶ *Ibid*.



vehicles both by members of the public and even RCMP officers. Vehicles may also have additional equipment attached to them even after they are prepared for sale, such as in the case of the vehicle with the push bar that Mr. Liberatore stated was previously sold. Mr. Liberatore's testimony also indicates that staff are lackadaisical about who is purchasing these decommissioned cars, and for what reason. GC Surplus employees should exercise extreme caution when preparing and selling former police equipment and tools, and it is clear that this did not occur in the years leading up to the events of April 18 and 19.

It is also important to balance the benefits of selling decommissioned RCMP police cars, both marked and covertly marked, with the inherent danger to the public that comes with their widespread availability. We have learned that the perpetrator paid a total of only \$21,596.81 for four decommissioned RCMP Ford Taurus cruisers from GC Surplus, including the car that he turned into a replica RCMP cruiser and drove on April 18 and 19, 2020.³⁷

Average sales of RCMP vehicles from auctions have not been made available to the Commission, nor the cost of running the venues responsible for their sale. It is evident based on this that the financial value is not nearly enough to warrant the inherent dangers to the public that come with their sale, as additionally illustrated by both Mr. Liberatore's and Cst. Dorrington's testimonies. An insignificant amount of money such as what a decommissioned police car is worth at an auction house should pale in importance to the threat that widespread availability imposes on the public's general wellbeing. \$21, 596.81 less expenses is not worth trading for the possibility of losing 22 more lives in the future.

One final topic concerns a comment made by Deputy Commissioner Brennan during his oral testimony to the Commission. In the course of describing a meeting about the sale of decommissioned RCMP vehicles that was recorded in his notes, Deputy Commissioner Brennan alluded to an opinion he held that a member of the public could just as easily recreate an RCMP police vehicle by purchasing a white car from a car lot than if they were to buy a decommissioned RCMP cruiser from GC Surplus. The Deputy Commissioner was clear that the meeting he had was not about selling what he called "frontline vehicles", but the message was still there.

We have two comments regarding this. First, this assertion is simply untrue and a foolish analogy masking the gravity of this situation. Taking away Mr. Liberatore's statement that decommissioned RCMP vehicles were previously sold with decals or police equipment still in them, the simple fact that these cars were formerly RCMP vehicles, used for everyday service, is what makes them markedly different from a regular white car available for purchase on any car lot. The decommissioned RCMP cars have

³⁷ Police Paraphernalia Foundational Document, COMM0055715, P-000808, paras 120-121, 124-125.



modifications specified for the RCMP and are customized for the day- to- day rigours of policing in ways that make them distinguishable from a stock vehicle from the same car manufacturer. In other words, these cars are much easier to use to create a replica RCMP vehicle from, and creating a narrative that they are no different from any run of the mill white vehicle is both dangerous and incredibly irresponsible.

Second, after all that happened on April 18 and 19, 2020, the public now knows that it is entirely possible to recreate an RCMP vehicle so effectively that it even fools RCMP members. Is it truly the RCMP's wish to put themselves in the position of having another member of the public mimic the perpetrator and rebuild a decommissioned RCMP vehicle, with cars that can be traced back to them?

RECOMMENDATION #3 (On the sale of decommissioned RCMP vehicles)

1. *That the temporary moratorium on selling decommissioned RCMP cruisers, specifically, marked RCMP cruisers and covertly marked RCMP cruisers, become a permanent moratorium.*
2. *And that the federal government be permitted to dispose of decommissioned marked RCMP cruisers and decommissioned covertly marked RCMP cruisers by destroying them and selling them for scrap metal and parts.*

4. SITUATIONAL AWARENESS OF RCMP MEMBERS WHILE DRIVING AND RESPONDING TO DANGEROUS CALLS

Theory: If RCMP members were traveling two per patrol vehicle, rather than one per patrol vehicle, while responding to the Mass Casualty on April 18 and 19, 2020 the RCMP would have been far more effective in keeping the public safe, keeping themselves safe and apprehending the perpetrator sooner - and Gina Goulet would not have been killed.

We learned during the Public Hearings that most RCMP members were traveling alone in their vehicles the night of April 18 and morning of April 19, 2020 – one RCMP member per police car – and that is the norm for rural RCMP policing in Nova Scotia.

During the Mass Casualty response, RCMP members have testified that they were traveling at very high rates of speed, well in excess of the posted speed limits (roughly 180 km/hour to 200 km/hour), to get to Portapique as quickly as possible.³⁸

³⁸ Testimonies of Cst Stuart Beselt, Cst Adam Merchant, and Cst Aaron Patton, Public Hearings Transcripts, Volume 9, March 28, 2022, p 38, lines 21-23.



In addition to the task of driving safely to the scene of the 911 call, members were required to focus on:

- using their radios to receive critical information from Dispatch;
- using their radios to convey critical information to Dispatch;
- using their Mobile Work Stations to figure out where they were going, possibly figure out where other member vehicles may be located, and to review background information about the incident they were responding to; and
- observe their surroundings including watching other pedestrian and vehicular traffic and being alert to possible relevant information related to the 911 call they were responding to.

The submission of the Goulet Family is that we are asking too much of our police officers when responding to dangerous calls, and particularly those involving the presence of firearms, if we continue to have only one police officer per vehicle. In today's world, especially given the technological tools available and necessary to effective policing, public and police safety demands two officers per vehicle – one to drive and one to do all other tasks needed for effective policing.

This arrangement would also ensure better initial responses to emergency incidents. Two officers per vehicle responding to an incident ensures additional officer safety and that there is always back-up on hand. This would allow officers to be more confident while in the field and in dangerous situations, which in turn directly impacts the public's safety as it directly relates to the effectiveness of the police to stop threats within communities.

The Goulet Family asks the Commission to consider how the events of April 18 and 19, 2020 could have unfolded differently had there been two police officers in the vehicle rather than one in the following scenes:

A.) In the Overnight in Debert Foundational Document we learned that a witness on Station Road observed a police cruiser with flashing lights traveling quickly southbound on Station Road late at night on April 18.³⁹

Two to three minutes later this same witness saw a cruiser that looked like a cop car traveling northbound at about 70 km/hr – the flashing lights were not activated and it had its regular headlights on.⁴⁰ This was very likely the perpetrator, leaving the chaos and destruction in Portapique that he created.

Shortly after that this same witness reported hearing a siren and saw the red and blue flashing lights from another police vehicle driving south at a high rate of

³⁹ Overnight in Debert Foundational Document, COMM0051979, P-000214, at para 11.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*



speed.⁴¹ GPS data indicates that the witness may have seen Constables Cheesman and Blinn.⁴²

Neither Constable Cheesman nor Constable Blinn reported seeing the perpetrator drive past them on Station Road the night of April 18, 2020 as they sped toward the Portapique 911 call.⁴³

The Goulet Family submits that a passenger in each of the Cheesman and Blinn police vehicles may well have observed the rather suspicious marked RCMP car driving in the opposite direction without flashing lights or siren and traveling relatively slowly.

B.) In the Highway 4, Glenholme Foundational Document, the Commission learned that Corporal Peterson passed the perpetrator on Hwy 4 on the morning of April 19 at approximately 9:47 a.m.⁴⁴ The perpetrator had just driven away from Wentworth, after murdering Lillian Campbell, and was headed south on the same road (Hwy 4) towards Truro in his replica decommissioned RCMP cruiser.

Corporal Peterson was headed north and this sighting was very significant as it was the first time that an RCMP member came face to face with the perpetrator during the Mass Casualty event.

By the time Corporal Peterson confirmed with Dispatch that he had just passed the perpetrator and then turned around to apprehend the perpetrator – it was too late. The perpetrator had already pulled into the Fisher residence further south on Hwy 4, pulling into the long driveway and then parking behind the Fisher home, thereby evading Corporal Peterson.⁴⁵

Based on the evidence given by Corporal Peterson in his MCC interview, the Goulet Family submits that it is clear that this RCMP member would have felt safer and more confident and likely would have made different decisions at this critical juncture in the Mass Casualty event – had he not been alone in his patrol car when he encountered the perpetrator on Hwy 4.⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid* at para 13.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Highway 4, Glenholme Foundational Document, COMM0053596, P-000361, at para 26.

⁴⁵ *Ibid* at para 31.

⁴⁶ For Cpl. Peterson's interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, refer to: MCC- Investigations- Transcript of Recorded Interview of Rodney Peterson, COMM0018365, P-000413.



C.) After driving through the town of Truro on the morning of April 19, the perpetrator continued on Willow Street as it turned into Highway 2 traveling south.⁴⁷ As the perpetrator approached the Shubenacadie Cloverleaf, he turned left on Gays River Rd just before Hwy 2 crosses the Shubenacadie River.⁴⁸ There he shot and wounded Constable Chad Morrison, who mistakenly believed the marked RCMP cruiser approaching his parked RCMP cruiser was Constable Heidi Stevenson.⁴⁹

Constable Morrison was badly injured but able to escape, driving south then west on Hwy 2 via the Shubenacadie Cloverleaf exit ramp.⁵⁰ While chasing Constable Morrison, the perpetrator veered left and collided with Constable Stevenson who was approaching from the on ramp from Hwy 2 northbound to continue on Hwy 2.⁵¹ Constable Stevenson and the perpetrator exchanged gunfire, the perpetrator was wounded but was able to murder both Constable Stevenson and Joseph Webber before setting both his replica RCMP cruiser and Constable Stevenson's RCMP cruiser on fire.⁵²

It is the submission of the Goulet Family that had there been two officers in each of the Morrison and Stevenson RCMP cruisers, the Shubenacadie cloverleaf scene would have played out very differently and the perpetrator would likely have been apprehended by Constable Morrison and his partner before the perpetrator crossed the Shubenacadie River...and before he reached the home of Gina Goulet. First, the officers would have known the perpetrator was not one of them, and the initial confusion leading to Cst. Morrison's injuries would not have occurred; second, the officers would have been in an advantageous position to stop the threat since they would have two officers together to engage the perpetrator.

D.) At the Enfield Big Stop on the morning of April 19, 2020, there is no question that all Nova Scotians are extremely grateful that Constable Craig Hubley and Constable Ben MacLeod were traveling together in an RCMP cruiser and were able to finally stop the perpetrator.

It is the submission of the Goulet Family that the presence of both of these highly trained officers meant that the perpetrator was stopped, without further injury or death to the public and the police.

⁴⁷ Truro Police Service – April 19, 2020 Foundational Document, COMM0058837, P-001919, at para 8.

⁴⁸ Shubenacadie Foundational Document, COMM0053830, P-000556, at para 7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid* paras 6-7.

⁵⁰ *Ibid* at para 8.

⁵¹ *Ibid* at para 9.

⁵² *Ibid* paras 10-11, 13-14.



To be clear, it is not our intention to criticize the response of Officers who encountered the perpetrator on April 19th and failed to initially identify him. We simply contend that two officers per vehicle would have increased the likelihood of noticing the perpetrator, as one officer could focus on driving and the other officer in the passenger seat could do everything else – using the radio and the Mobile Work Station and keeping an eye on their surroundings.

RECOMMENDATION #4 (Two in a police vehicle for public and officer safety)

1. *RCMP officers travel two in a vehicle, instead of one in a vehicle, whenever they are responding to a dangerous situation, particularly when the presence of firearms is likely.*
2. *Call signs are placed on the roof of RCMP vehicles so that they are easily identifiable by helicopters.*

We acknowledge the practical challenges of implementing these recommendations: namely, funding and resource allocation. However, if these issues could be resolved so that our police travel two in a vehicle whenever responding to a dangerous situation that would result in greater capacity, safety, and effectiveness in that police response.

We submit that additional funding is not the only answer. Rather this could be an opportunity to pivot limited police resources to policing and to knowledge and information sharing and away from social services such as mental health calls and intoxication/addiction calls.

The Commission has heard the recommendation that the use of mobile mental health units (comprised of mental health professionals, paramedics and one police officer if needed for safety) be expanded. In our oral submissions we suggested that the Commissioners consider recommending sobering centres be set up so that as a society we stop criminalizing addiction issues and thereby wasting valuable police resources.

The responsibility and resourcing for mental health calls should rest primarily with the Nova Scotia Health Authority. The responsibility and resourcing for setting up and running sobering centres should rest with the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission.

5. PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTOPSY:

Theory: if the RCMP focused on serving and protecting the communities they are paid to police, rather than protecting and enhancing their own reputation, that focus would go a long way toward restoring the public's trust in the RCMP.



The RCMP prepared a Psychological Autopsy dated June 3, 2020.⁵³ The Commission retained Dr. Kristy Martire and Dr. Tess Neal to prepare a two part expert report to examine the validity of the Psychological Autopsy.⁵⁴

Dr. Martire and Dr. Neal gave their expert opinion on what factors should be used by the Commission to evaluate the rigour and value of a psychological autopsy or behavioural profile.⁵⁵ These experts opined that the Psychological Autopsy prepared by the RCMP had fairly low levels of compliance with the accepted best practices for preparing such reports.⁵⁶

The Federal Department of Justice as a Participant in this Commission suggested that the purpose of the Psychological Assessment prepared by the RCMP was for internal use "...to provide some information, some insight to, in this case, the policing agencies, about the whys, to the extent they can be determined...".⁵⁷

The Goulet Family submits that the RCMP Psychological Autopsy was far from a neutral expert report, that it was very self-serving, and that the intention of the document was to defend the reputation of the RCMP in their response to the Mass Casualty not for internal use to assist or further the investigation in any way.

This is clearly evident from the email sent on June 23, 2020 by Matt Logan, a Criminal Psychologist with the RCMP and one of the authors of the Psychological Autopsy, to senior RCMP management and a member of the Strategic Communications team wherein he states:

"Good Morning My Friends,

As I listen to and read pieces like the one I just read, I realize that we are letting the arm-chair quarterbacks out there dictate what is true. I think Darren did a great job setting a tone for "getting more answers" to the public. Now we have Leo Knight talking about protecting the buffalo and McLeans pushing some ex-members ideas of "Undercover Scenario with Wortman".....

I have turned down the News people since I was there but I wonder if it's time for a full release of the Psych Autopsy and/or open discussion with a media person deemed to be positive or at least unbiased about RCMP actions.

Let me know if I can help."⁵⁸

⁵³ Summary of Source Document: Psychological Autopsy dated June 3, 2020, COMM0021142, P-003714.

⁵⁴ Rigorous Forensic Psychological Assessment Practices – Part 1, COMM0058934, P-003479. See also: Rigorous Forensic Psychological Assessment Practices – Part 2, COMM0058935, P-003480.

⁵⁵ COMM0058934, P-003479 at p 10, para 8.

⁵⁶ Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 53, July 22, 2022, p 41, lines 18-19.

⁵⁷ *Ibid* p 56, lines 9-10, and p 73, lines 1-6.

⁵⁸ Email from Matt Logan to A/Comm Bergerman, C/Supt Gray, Supt Campbell, Cindy Bayer ad C/Supt Leather dated June 23, 2020, COMM0052315, P-004146.



RECOMMENDATION #5 – Psychological Autopsy and, more generally, the management of RCMP reputation

1. *That the RCMP dismantle their “Strategic Communications unit”, and focus instead on the job of policing and rebuilding the trust of Canadians by their actions and good police work rather than marketing and strategic communications.*

6. POLICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Theory: if the RCMP improved their education requirements to a lengthier and more in-depth program, in consideration of the evolving complexities of today’s policing world, members would be better equipped to handle future complex events like April 18 and 19, 2020. Additionally, if the RCMP changed their training requirements so members had better knowledge of, and proficiency in the use of, available technology, members would be better equipped to handle future events such as April 18 and 19, 2020.

One of the topics of focus during the Mass Casualty Commission has been on the antiquated, paramilitary education model used by the RCMP to train their cadets in Depot. It is the position of our clients that higher educational and training standards would have prepared RCMP Officers to better respond to April 18 and 19. At the very least, more comprehensive education would likely have better reinforced best practices, ensuring that existing policies were followed and that basic mistakes were less likely to be made during the Mass Casualty Event.

The Finnish model of policing, which the Commission heard about from Dr. Kimmo Himberg on June 1 and 2, 2022, appears to be the gold standard for police education and training. In Finland, police officers are required to complete a three year program from the country’s Police University College.⁵⁹ This education emphasizes theory, practical content, values, and attitudes while also involving police with research currently underway to further engage future officers.⁶⁰ Approaching police education this way allows for Finland to account for a complicated spectrum of “skills and knowledge needs” present in today’s policing.⁶¹

Future Canadian police officers should not be educated as if they are going to war. Instead, they should be educated and trained for their specific societal role: to effectively police the communities they serve. RCMP must do away with their current educational

⁵⁹ Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 30, June 1, 2022, p 4, lines 20-22, and p 5, lines 6-8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid* p 5, lines 8-9.

⁶¹ Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 31, June 2, 2022, p 92, lines 13-15.



model in favour of a new program that is more comprehensive and lengthier, focusing less on paramilitary training in favour of community policing values and attitudes.

We concur with the many previous Participant submissions, and the ones that we anticipate will be filed on October 7, that our police officers require more education and better training before they are sent out into local communities. Modern day policing is a complicated job that requires higher educational and training standards than what is currently offered. The RCMP- mandated six months of training is grossly inadequate.

The Goulet Family submits that Canada must follow Finland's example and develop a specialized university policing degree, and that the Mass Casualty Commission should consider recommending standard education and training for all police officers in Canada, regardless of policing agency or jurisdiction. This may be the only way to effectively address what has been consistently referred to as the toxic RCMP culture and other ingrained issues such as discriminatory over-policing and systemic under protection of minority communities.

RECOMMENDATION #6 – Police Education and Training

1. *RCMP raise their education standards to a lengthier and more comprehensive university degree program.*
2. *RCMP raise their technology training standards so that officers have more in-depth knowledge of and proficiency in the use of available technology.*
3. *In addition, with respect to the use of technology, the RCMP should have access to 24/7 tech support to augment their own knowledge and proficiency in the use of technology.*

7. GOULET FAMILY POST TRAGEDY – SUPPORTS FOR VICTIMS' FAMILIES

Theory: if the RCMP followed or implemented comprehensive policies and practices for managing active crime scenes, release of cleared crime scenes to victims' families, next of kin notifications, and family liaison assignments and support, the suffering of those losing a family member to a violent crime would not be as traumatic as it was for the Goulet family after Gina Goulet's death on April 19, 2020.

It is clear that the Goulet family were at best neglected, if not mistreated, by RCMP in the aftermath of the Mass Casualty.



First, none of the Goulet family members ever received a formal next-of-kin notification from the RCMP after the RCMP determined that Gina Goulet had been murdered by the perpetrator. Although David and Amelia Butler were the first on scene and David Butler reported the crime scene to the RCMP shortly thereafter, he did not say that he knew for certain whether or not Gina was deceased.⁶²

Second, the RCMP failed to notify any of the Goulet family members when Gina Goulet's property was no longer an active crime scene, opting instead to abandon the property once they concluded their investigation. Since the property was abandoned, there was no RCMP member to arrange a walk-through of the home with Gina's family to report on what the RCMP believed happened in the last few minutes of Gina's life.

And lastly, the RCMP failed to inform the Goulets where Gina's body had been moved before the RCMP abandoned the property.⁶³

The approach taken by the RCMP in their treatment of Gina's daughter and son-in-law was not only inconsiderate and plainly unprofessional on its face, but also contrary to several internal policies that are outlined further below in this section.

The Butlers were left to gather the information and assistance they needed largely by themselves. They found that the RCMP took a reactive, not proactive, stance when it came to information sharing. Amelia and David had to hunt down an RCMP member in Milford to learn that they were now responsible for securing Gina's property.⁶⁴ David secured the property with help from a family member with no additional follow up from RCMP, purchasing "no trespassing" signs to put around the property in an effort to keep people away.⁶⁵

Additionally, it is well documented that the inside of Gina Goulet's home was still a mess after it was "released" to Amelia and David. After the property had been "cleared" by police, the Butlers recounted seeing smashed glass and blood on the front deck, and the couple found a bullet casing and a "chunk of lead" that were not discovered by RCMP during the course of their investigation of the crime scene.⁶⁶

The Butlers were left to make their own arrangements to have the crime scene cleaned and were not told that their insurance would cover the professional cleaning cost.⁶⁷

⁶² Next of Kin (NOK) Notifications Summary for April 19th -20th, 2020, COMM0002938, P-000339, at p 2.

⁶³ Information Seeking from Families and Next of Kin Notifications Foundational Document, COMM0058972, P-002222, paras 329-331.

⁶⁴ *Ibid* at para 331.

⁶⁵ Support Services for Survivors, Families, and Communities Foundational Document, COMM0059120, P-002346, paras 195-196.

⁶⁶ *Ibid* paras 197, 201.

⁶⁷ *Ibid* at para 197.



Constable Wayne Bent stated he “felt badly” that the Butlers were forced to clean the house themselves; while this is a nice sentiment, it does little to mitigate what occurred.⁶⁸

Lastly, Constable Bent was originally assigned as the sole family liaison for most of the victims’ families. His primary responsibility in this role was to convey information to and from every deceased and surviving civilian victim’s family.⁶⁹ In contrast, Corporal Sharan Sidu was assigned as the family liaison for only Constable Chad Morrison, while both Constable Randy Slawter and Corporal Ron Robinson were assigned as family liaisons for only Constable Heidi Stevenson’s family.⁷⁰ The fact that Cst. Bent was in charge of 21 victim’s families as their family liaison was not known by either David or Amelia when they first spoke to him after the mass casualty.⁷¹

We have heard throughout the public inquiry proceedings about various issues concerning the family liaison officer at the time of the mass casualty. Many, including the Goulet family, believe that assigning one family liaison for almost all of the 22 murdered victims’ families was inadequate to provide proper support services.⁷² Despite any good intentions, Constable Bent was in over his head and not equipped for the workload of managing all of the civilian victims’ families in a trauma- informed manner, nor should it have ever seemed plausible that one officer could have done so to begin with.

Constable Bent’s dealings with the Goulet family were irresponsible and hastily thought out, with little regard for the professional standards of an RCMP officer responding to directly impacted victims of a massive tragedy.

The RCMP has policies in place to deal with next of kin notifications, which set out RCMP obligations/ best practices for these areas. The chapter “Human Deaths” in the RCMP Operating Manual outlines the officer responsibilities when notifying a deceased victim’s family of their relative’s death. Specifically, under this section, members are to “arrange for notification of next of kin as soon as possible”; in addition, they must “make certain the member performing the (next of kin) provides information on the resources and services available to assist the next of kin, e.g. Victim Services, or a Chaplin”.⁷³

RCMP members are encouraged to use the Next of Kin Death Notification checklist when breaking the news to a deceased victim’s family about their death. The checklist includes:

⁶⁸ *Ibid* at para 197.

⁶⁹ *Ibid* at para 60.

⁷⁰ *Ibid* paras 62, 61.

⁷¹ *Ibid* at para 198.

⁷² Examples of commentary on this issue include: Family Interview Summary- Family of Gina Goulet, COMM0049600, P-000719, at p 9; Supt Darren Campbell: Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 54, July 25, 2022, p 14, lines 1-10; C/Supt Leather: Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 57, July 28, 2022, p 90, lines 1-17.

⁷³ Human Deaths, COMM0039885, P-002294, ss 3(1)(2)- 3(1)(3).



“Planning:

- Members should, depending on the circumstances of the death, collaborate with the coroner before any notification of next of kin, to ensure that positive identification has been made and that the notification will not interfere with any ongoing coroner’s investigation.
- **Notification of NOK should be done as soon as possible.** (emphasis added).
- Identify and verify the legal NOK to be notified, (e.g. spouse, parent, or legal guardian).
- Verify the victim’s full name, age (if known), and relationship with the family members being notified.
- **Know the location of the victim and the process for family members to see the victim and/ or make arrangements to recover their loved one.** (emphasis added).
- Know the contact information of the victim services in your area.

Notification:

- Introduce yourself.
- Confirm the identity of the person with whom you are speaking and their relationship to the victim.
- Ask to come inside and ask or encourage family members to sit down. Provide a one-sentence statement to prepare the family for the news... Provide notification immediately following your prepared statement.
- Provide family members with the details of when, where, and how the death occurred.
- **Provide family members with the current location of the victim, and the process to make arrangements to see and/ or recover the victim.** (emphasis added).
- Advise family members of the medical examiner’s or coroner’s contact information.
- Answer all questions honestly. Provide only information that you know to be true and that you can release.

After the Notification:

- Be prepared to repeat information to both the NOK and family members.
- Be prepared for any type of emotional or physical reaction.
- Do not leave family members alone. Ask if you can call anyone for them, and wait until that person arrives.”⁷⁴

⁷⁴ OM – App 41-3-1 -Next of Kin Death Notification Checklist, COMM0040046, P-002295, pp 1-2.



Concerning victim services, the RCMP has a “recommended” policy for best practices and roles/ responsibilities.⁷⁵ Before discussing this policy, we submit that changing this language from “recommended” to “**required**” should occur for all RCMP policies.

In the RCMP Operation Manual’s “Victim Assistance” section, the Victim Services program is stated as being “critical to the preservation of peace and prevention of crime. It is an integral part of the prevention and reduction of victimization and potential re-victimization and is an obligation to the RCMP”.⁷⁶ The policy goes on to say that “members, victim services coordinators or victim services personal should provide victims with access to information regarding the CVBR, e.g. resource contact information, websites, pamphlets, cards, brochures”.⁷⁷ Member’s responsibilities under the policy include to “inform victims of the services provided by Victim Services and make an offer for referral using a referral script”, and to “document on the operational file when victim services has been offered and whether the victim accepted or declined”.⁷⁸ Supervisors or Detachment Commanders should “provide members with information about the victim services programs or VSOs available in the area”; “when reviewing operational files, confirm that victim services referrals have been made where applicable and appropriately documented on the file”; and, “where a victim services referral should have been made and has not been indicated on the operational file, follow-up with the member to ensure a referral is made and properly documented on the file”.⁷⁹

Under the RCMP Operation Manual’s section entitled “Scenes of Crime”, first responders must “protect the scene by establishing a perimeter, restricting access (e.g. police barrier tape) to areas where there is the potential to record or recover evidence”.⁸⁰ Additionally, “for investigations of suspicious deaths, the scene should remain under police control pending the results of an autopsy”; “the Major Crime lead investigator and/ or the team leader will be responsible for releasing the scene, in consultation with Forensics Identification Services employees”.⁸¹

Constable Bent indicated in a previous statement that at the time of the mass casualty event, the RCMP had not adopted the practice of cleaning properties before their release to families.⁸² There is no available RCMP policy indicating otherwise.

⁷⁵ Policies Relevant to Highway 224 FD, COMM0059580, at p 8.

⁷⁶ OM – ch 37 6 Victim Assistance, COMM0039877, s 2(4).

⁷⁷ *Ibid* s 2(5).

⁷⁸ *Ibid* ss 4(1)(1), 4(1)(3).

⁷⁹ *Ibid* ss 4(3)(1)- 4(3)(3).

⁸⁰ OM – ch 35 3 Scenes of Crime, COMM0039876, s 6(18).

⁸¹ *Ibid* ss 6(2)- 6(3).

⁸² Support Services for Survivors, Families, and Communities Foundational Document, COMM0059120, P-002346, at para 197.



Adherence by the RCMP to the next-of-kin related policies outlined above would have improved the Goulet family's experience, in a variety of ways. We can reasonably assume that David and Amelia, or another Goulet family member, would have received a formal next-of-kin notification if the RCMP had followed the Next-of-Kin Notification Checklist. This would presumably have occurred in the immediate aftermath of the mass casualty, as the checklist states that members should do this as soon as possible. Members would have also explained to the Goulet family that Gina's body had been taken to the Medical Examiner's office, the RCMP had provided their contact information to the Medical Examiner and the Medical Examiner would be in contact with them when Gina's body had been examined and was ready to be released to them.

The Goulet Family submits that even if the RCMP had acted in accordance with their written policies, it would not have been enough to sufficiently mitigate the horrific experience that the Goulet family endured. Accordingly, further policy changes and additions are needed.

First, David Butler never should have been left to secure Gina's property by himself, without so much as a notification from RCMP that doing so was now the responsibility of Gina's family. Additional provisions for crime scene securing and handoff policies are sorely required to ensure that private properties are adequately locked down to prevent unwanted intruders, and that the RCMP formally notifies the relevant parties when a crime scene is no longer active. Members should remain at the scene until family arrives to complete the handoff, instead of abandoning a property before they can get there. This would ensure both that the no longer active scene remains secure and that RCMP are actually notifying family that they need to respond to the property to take over.

It is also unclear whether or not RCMP have adopted the practice of cleaning crime scenes before handing them off to a victim's family members in the time after the mass casualty. Regardless, this is something that a policy should address so that it is not simply an undocumented RCMP 'rule of thumb'. Not only should family members not be responsible for cleaning formerly active crime scenes for re-traumatization reasons, but it makes far more sense from a practicality standpoint for RCMP to be responsible for this in the event that evidence not previously found is discovered in the course of cleaning a property. It provides members with the opportunity to 'double-check' they have not missed any important evidence, such as in the Goulet family's case.

To put it bluntly, the family liaison service offered to the Goulet family was completely inadequate. It did not properly serve to alleviate their stress, grief, or concerns as they grappled with the aftermath of the Mass Casualty. A more problematic aspect of the family liaison job is that it leaves an RCMP member responsible for matters that their skill sets as police officers are not suited for. RCMP members are best suited to handle policing matters.



The role of family liaison should be structured in a way that allows assigned RCMP members to focus on policing-related work, primarily to first notify next of kin and provide updates to family members concerning an investigation.

A family liaison should refer families to other resources, such as Victim Services, to handle matters that their professions are better suited for. Examples of these tasks include inquiring where a victim's body was moved, where and how to see or recover it, assisting next of kin with reaching out to other family members, and coordinating with a family to find additional mental health and grievance resources that can assist in the immediate and long-term aftermath of losing a loved one. Policy for family liaison positions must clearly reflect this by making liaisons solely responsible for policing-related matters. Any tasks outside of this sphere are best left to professional experts who are trained to handle other areas previously left to the family liaison position.

On this topic, the Commission should consider commentary from Roundtable participants who have called for a 'family navigator' of sorts, for "a coordinated one-stop help and direction" to assist with guiding through a family's immediate needs and trauma.⁸³ This role for victims' families might fit within a similar model to the Victim Management Response framework that is currently being implemented by Toronto Police Service.⁸⁴

Lastly, implementing policy to account for situations where more liaisons are needed for victims' families is required. This must allow for accommodating the particular needs of families; in other words, not focusing on ratios of liaisons to victims that are grounded in numbers or volume. Flexibility and fluidity is needed for this part of the policy. Perhaps it is decided from the beginning that a family might require more than one liaison, such as what was decided in the case of Cst. Stevenson's family. Perhaps assigning an additional family liaison later, such as with the McLeod family, also occurs. The policy must reflect examples such as these to account for the fact that family dynamics are different in every situation. Assigning resources should also be in coordination with a family liaison supervisor, who would likely be in the best position to assign additional resources given that they would be receiving routine updates from all family liaisons in a particular case.

The RCMP has already identified the need to use specialized services as opposed to policing resources under Vision150. In particular, one of Vision150's action commitments is for the RCMP to "seek out alternative policing approaches that address local needs and integrate community, health and social services".⁸⁵ Vision150 goes on to say that "whether it relates to responding to persons in crisis, adapting to the use of technology in

⁸³ Testimony of Susheel Gupta: Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 62, August 29, 2022, p 100, lines 10-15.

⁸⁴ For a brief overview of the Toronto Police Service's Victim Management Response, see: Testimony of Cst Danielle Bottineau: Public Hearings Transcript, Volume 62, August 29, 2022, pp 53-57.

⁸⁵ This action commitment is found under the website link for "Improve accountability, transparency, and conduct" on the RCMP's website: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/change-the-rcmp/improve-accountability-transparency-and-conduct>. Accessed 5 October 2022.



crime, or dealing with the ever-growing complexity of major investigations in a connected world, it is crucial that police organizations look at new ways of working and take advantage of opportunities to leverage other community services to meet modern needs".⁸⁶ This supports the assertion that specialized resources are needed for dealing with victims in non- investigation roles, such as Victim Services.

One final part of the Goulet post-tragedy experience was a notice to appear for Jury Selection served to Rick Goulet (Gina Goulet's younger brother) less than a year after the Mass Casualty took place. The notice directed Rick to appear for jury selection on March 27, 2021, and that the case in question would commence on March 31, 2021.⁸⁷ Rick applied to be excused from the process, but later received a voicemail telling him that he either needed to send supporting documents proving 'hardship' or appear for jury selection.⁸⁸ It was only when counsel for the Goulet family sent a letter to the Honourable Michael J. Wood explaining Rick's exceptional situation that he was finally excused.

Rick should never have had to go through the ordeal of applying to be excused from jury selection after losing his family member in the Mass Casualty event. The fact that his lawyer needed to step in and correspond with the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia to ask that he be excused, less than one calendar year after the events of April 18 and 19, is simply an appalling oversight on behalf of the provincial court system. Rick was put in the completely ludicrous position of having to prove that he had experienced undue hardship after being directly impacted by the worst mass shooting in Canadian history. He was already grieving and stressed, and this situation brought additional anxiety. Throughout the process of attempting to excuse himself from jury selection, Rick imagined the possibility of appearing as a jury member for a murder or another violent crime.⁸⁹ The trauma from an experience such as this was entirely avoidable from the beginning.

Allowing family members time and space to grieve their loved ones is not only in line with trauma- informed processes, but basic empathy for those who have lost loved ones. Family members of victims should have automatic exemptions from obligations like jury duty in the aftermath of tragedy, to not re-traumatize them after already experiencing a situation such as the Mass Casualty event. They should certainly not be put in a position like Rick was - forced to prove that serving on a jury would be too hard for them given their circumstances.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Letter to the Honourable Michael J Wood from Jane Lenehan dated March 17, 2021, at p 1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid* at p 2.



RECOMMENDATION #7 – Support for Victims’ Families

1. *RCMP ensures that their officers understand how to follow policies already in place for areas including handling crime scenes, next of kin notifications, and family liaison assignments and support.*
2. *RCMP develops, implements, and follows policies for areas including handling crime scenes, next of kin notifications, and family liaison assignments and support to address policy gaps.*
3. *A Family Navigator position be developed to act as a coordinated one-stop help and direction contact to assist with guiding through a family’s immediate needs and trauma*

8. COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF THE THREAT POSED BY THE PERPETRATOR

Theory: if the RCMP and other law enforcement agencies were more aware of the perpetrator and his suspicious and illegal activities - including abusing and assaulting his spouse, abusing and acting violently towards others including his denture patients, stashing illegal firearms, illegally obtaining ammunition for those firearms, building a replica marked RCMP police car, and his financial misdealings - the perpetrator would not have been able to “fly under the radar” for decades and murder 22 Nova Scotians on April 18 and 19, 2020.

The Foundational Documents “Police Paraphernalia”, “Firearms”, “Violence in the Perpetrator’s Family of Origin”, “Perpetrator’s Violent Behavior Towards Others”, “Perpetrator’s Violence Towards His Common-Law Spouse”, and “Perpetrator’s Financial Misdealings” paint a picture of an individual with a long standing reputation in his community as being a dangerous person.

The RCMP has several policies currently in place that are relevant to community awareness. The RCMP Operational Manual [OM] chapter called “First Response Investigations” asserts that “a thorough first response to all investigations is crucial to solving offences in a manner that ensures public safety”.⁹⁰

The chapter goes on to outline the role of members during an investigation, including that “a continual risk assessment must occur in accordance with the principles of the Incident Management Intervention Model (IMIM) when responding to a complaint and/ or attending a scene”, and that the member attending the call must make detailed notes.⁹¹ Additionally, for investigations that may involve “grievous bodily harm, death and/ or incidents

⁹⁰ OM – ch. 1(1) First Response Investigations, COMM0039855, P-004082, s 1(1).

⁹¹ *Ibid* ss 2(1), 2(3).



indicating criminal activity that jeopardize public safety have been reported” the responding member is required to:

- “Depending on the type of investigation, make contact with the complainant, either by phone or in person;
- Determine the nature of the reported incident as well as the location and any potential witnesses;
- Complete neighbourhood inquiries at the location of the offence, not only for eyewitness evidence, but to confirm there are no other victims;
- Obtain sufficient details from the subjects on the scene to assess investigative requirements;
- Consider the use of applicable support units; and
- Contact the complainant before concluding the file or justify on the file why notification of the complaint was not possible”.⁹²

This same policy also lists the various responsibilities for Supervisors, including:

- “Confirm that all calls are responded to according to the urgency and priority of the call for service.
- Provide the necessary support and guidance to responding members.
- Confirm that the detail of investigations are properly and thoroughly documented.
- Verify that the complainant has been contacted and updated before concluding the file.
- Confirm that all urgent calls for service are prioritized and followed up at the earliest opportunity”.⁹³

Finally, the Unit Commander’s responsibilities under the policy are to “confirm that members adhere to the above- noted investigational standards through supervision, file review, and the Unit Level Quality Assurance (ULQA) process”.⁹⁴

The RCMP’s Operations Manual describes the requirements for notetaking by members attending a call. It states that “Members must make written and/ or electronic notes, as soon as practicable, in order to prepare accurate, detailed, and comprehensive notes articulating observations made and actions taken during the course of their duties”.⁹⁵ Notes taken while attending a scene “should thoroughly describe the details of the

⁹² *Ibid* ss 2(2) – 2(2)(6).

⁹³ *Ibid* ss 3(1), 3(2), 3(3) – 3.4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid* ss 4(1), 4(2).

⁹⁵ OM – ch. 25(2) Investigator’s Notes, COMM0039868, P-004083, s 1(2).



occurrence and answer: who, what when, where, why, and how”, and “should be factual and descriptive enough to explain decisions made”.⁹⁶ Commanders or Delegates should also “consider using the Unit Level Quality Assurance (ULQA) National Review Guide, Investigator’s Notebooks, to verify compliance and quality of note- taking”.⁹⁷

The RCMP’s Operations Manual also states that members responding to emergency calls are required to exhaust “all investigative avenues” to determine whether further assistance or investigation is appropriate for the situation.⁹⁸ It cautions members that “it is not sufficient to take the word of a person at the location that there is no emergency”.⁹⁹

We submit that these policies should have allowed for RCMP officers to follow best practices with little deviation while investigating calls concerning the perpetrator, prior to the Mass Casualty event. Further, these policies should have prevented basic investigational mistakes that were made by officers as detailed in the Foundational Documents. Similar to our discussion in other sections, policy is ineffective if not adhered to. The RCMP must ensure that its members act in accordance to RCMP policies as they carry out their policing duties.

RECOMMENDATION #8 – Community Awareness of the Threat posed by the perpetrator

- 1. The RCMP ensure that their officers understand how to follow policies already in place for areas including attending, investigating, and following up on calls.*
- 2. The RCMP develop, implement, and follow policies for areas including attending, investigating, and following up on calls to address existing gaps in policy.*

9. RCMP CULTURE

Theory: if the RCMP revamped their institutional culture to properly reflect their renewed core values and Vision150, focusing especially on the values of “take responsibility” and “transparent and accountable governance”, they would be able to meet the public’s expectations of them as a police force.

One of the ‘mantras’ adopted over the course of the Mass Casualty Commission is the famous Peter Drucker quote that says that “culture eats strategy for breakfast”. Simply

⁹⁶ *Ibid* ss 3(1), 3(3).

⁹⁷ *Ibid* s 4(3)(1).

⁹⁸ OM ch 37(14) Assistance to General Public – 911 Calls. COMM0039941, s 2(1)(3)(1)(1).

⁹⁹ *Ibid*.



put, the culture of an institution always determines success regardless of how effective the institution's strategy may be.

This topic is vast and perhaps best captured by The Honourable Justice Bastarache in his report "Broken Dreams Broken Lives" when he states that:

"One of the key findings of this Report is that the culture of the RCMP is toxic and tolerates misogynistic and homophobic attitudes amongst its leaders and members.... A change in the culture of the RCMP is essential. This report concludes that change cannot come from within the RCMP but must be initiated from external sources."¹⁰⁰

Justice Bastarache's comments clearly articulate the need for RCMP leadership positions to be filled by individuals brought in from outside the organization. Leaders who work their way up through the RCMP's ranks cannot initiate, nor follow through, with creating substantial change as they are products of a toxic organizational culture and have become blinded to the damage it can inflict as a result of their own promotion and success inside it. This type of indoctrination impedes any meaningful progress towards righting internal wrongs.

It is impossible not to draw parallels between this situation and the Hockey Canada scandal currently in the news. Hockey Canada is yet another example of toxic organizational culture. As more is learned about Hockey Canada's inner workings, the Prime Minister recently stated "it boggles the mind that Hockey Canada is continuing to dig in its heels".¹⁰¹ The Minister of Sport went one step further saying that "since the leaders of Hockey Canada are holding on to their jobs, the voting members need to clean the house" and that "we're witnessing an organization that seems to be more interested in protecting themselves and their jobs than protecting the public".¹⁰²

For these reasons, the Goulet family submits that the only logical way forward for the RCMP begins with the resignation of Brenda Lucki as Commissioner, effective immediately after the Mass Casualty Commission's final report is released. A new candidate from outside the RCMP but with the experience of leading a police organization of similar size and capacity must be appointed as her replacement.

¹⁰⁰ Broken Dreams, Broken Lives: The Devastating Effects of Sexual Harassment on Women in the RCMP, COMM0058301, P-003648, at p 1.

¹⁰¹ Hockey Canada's response to scandal 'boggles the mind,' says Trudeau, posted Oct 5, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/hockey-canada-st-onge-clean-house-1.6606780>.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*



RECOMMENDATION #9 – RCMP Culture

1. *Looking further into the future, the Goulet family submits that a new approach to appointing the Commissioner of the RCMP is needed to accommodate the possibility of selecting a qualified candidate outside of the organization.*

This new process could look similar, for example, to how Supreme Court of Canada judges are appointed: an independent advisory board creates a short list of candidates that are a mix of RCMP senior management and those who are not – but who have similar, transferable skills and experience - and giving the Governor in Council the choice of the best available candidates from a broader range of applicants. The independent advisory board must be made up of all relevant stakeholders including communities who have been traditionally “over policed” and “underserved”.

The process must also include a public hearing for the candidates to allow for increased civilian oversight of the RCMP.

2. *The Goulet family further proposes that the Commissioners recommend that the Federal Government, in consultation with impacted stakeholders, conduct an institutional review of what modern policing could and should look like in Canada.*
3. *The final aspect of this recommendation is that the Federal Government identify metrics for assessing positive cultural change and direct the RCMP to annually report on their progress in making positive cultural changes to their organization. Such metrics may include:*
 - *RCMP ability to attract and retain high quality recruits suitable to modern policing;*
 - *Increase in community trust in the RCMP;*
 - *The establishment of an independent complaints process which can be triggered initially with an anonymous complaint – and then the decrease over time of complaints made;*
 - *Proof that the RCMP has cooperated fully with future Inquiries and Reviews and left disclosure redactions to the discretion of the Inquiry or Review counsel in consultation with the RCMP; and*
 - *Examples to show that the RCMP is capable of public acknowledgment of mistakes made.*



10. COMMEMORATION

The Goulet Family requests that the Commissioners consider a “Commemoration Recommendation” that will give the victims’ families a specific role in overseeing the implementation of Recommendations arising from the Commissioners’ Final Report.

Amelia Goulet, on behalf of the Goulet Family, has provided the Commission with a photograph of Gina Goulet and a written tribute to Gina’s life and legacy that they hope will be included as part of a Commemoration section in the Commissioners’ Final Report.

It is the belief of the Goulet Family that all of the families of those murdered and injured on April 18 and 19, 2020 share a common bond – and that bond can best be described as an unwavering desire that necessary changes will

- (a) be identified by the Commissioners in their Final Report;
- (b) the body or institution responsible for implementing those changes will be identified in the Final Report; and
- (c) the changes will be implemented by our federal and provincial governments

so that no other family has to experience the gut wrenching and life altering, pain and devastation that they have endured since Gina was murdered on April 19, 2020.

The Goulet Family believes that the most fitting tribute to Gina and to all Nova Scotians murdered and injured during the Mass Casualty is the inclusion of the following “Commemoration Recommendation” in the Final Report:

- that an Implementation Committee be struck to oversee and monitor the status of the MCC recommendations;
- that this Committee be comprised of equal representation from the following three interest groups: (1) the families of those murdered or injured on April 18 and 19, 2020; (2) the Phase 2 participants of the MCC; and (3) the Canadian and Nova Scotia governments;
- the body or institution assigned to implement a recommendation be required to report on the status of the recommendation annually – and if no action has been taken then an explanation must be provided;
- the reporting noted above will be published on the MCC website in an easy tracking format such as a Chart
- each change will be accompanied by a reasonable timeline for implementation
- consequences for failure to implement will be considered – such as funding implications



- A facilitator, who has developed a rapport with the families (such as Maureen Wheller, the MCC Community Liaison Director), be funded by the federal and provincial governments to meet with the families and assist them in choosing a representative for this Implementation Committee and working together to assist and provide directions to their family representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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