

## **Mass Casualty Commission to share detailed information throughout 2022 public proceedings about the April 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia**

**Truro and Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 11, 2022** – In 2022, the Mass Casualty Commission (“the Commission”) will begin to publicly share detailed information about what happened during the April 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia, as well as explore related issues that provide context to understand why and how the mass casualty could have happened. Public proceedings will begin in February and are expected to continue throughout much of 2022. The calendar of proceedings can be found on the [Commission’s website](#).

These public proceedings are an important next step in the Commission’s work to develop meaningful recommendations to keep communities safer in the future. Public proceedings will include remarks from the Commissioners, hearings, expert roundtables, the sharing of Foundational Documents and Commissioned Reports.

The Commission will continue to monitor COVID-19 closely, follow all public health protocols, and remain agile to complete its work. Both in-person and virtual proceedings are planned, following public health protocols. If changes to location or approach are needed, the Commission will communicate updates to ensure the public is informed.

Over the course of Phase 1 proceedings, the Commission will share a series of Foundational Documents with the public to answer the questions of what happened during April 18 and 19, 2020. There will be a significant amount of information in each Foundational Document, including timelines of events, accounts of the casualties and information about police response and witness reports.

“The public is about to receive the results of the Commission’s investigation to date through the upcoming proceedings and the Foundational Documents. These documents provide a detailed account of the information we have learned so far and walk the public through what took place on April 18 and 19, 2020. There will be a lot of information that may be emotional and challenging,” said Barbara McLean, Investigations Director. “We worked alongside Participants, family members and first responders to make sure these Foundational Documents are as accurate as possible. When the public hearings start next month, they will be shared with the public and posted on the Commission’s website.”

The Mass Casualty Commission is mandated to use a restorative approach, meaning the work of the Commission must be conducted with a principle of minimizing further harm while working to deliver answers to the public. To do this, the Commission has taken various steps, including thoroughly reviewing and redacting documents to protect the privacy and dignity of witnesses and victims, as needed. For example, this includes removing personal information like phone numbers or blurring images of children. The Commission team is also working closely with Participants, including those most affected,

families, first responders and service providers, to ensure they are prepared and well-informed before information related to them is made public.

“We are planning the proceedings with the goal of providing answers to the questions Nova Scotians have, but also keeping in mind the material we are discussing is difficult and continues to affect people across Nova Scotia, Canada, and beyond,” said Emily Hill, Senior Commission Counsel. “We encourage everyone who plans to follow the Commission’s work to consider how to prepare to receive this information. The Commission’s website explains the details of this work, what to expect, and where to find wellness supports.”

### **Public Proceedings:**

*The schedule of Commission proceedings, including dates, times, locations and information about when Foundational Documents are expected to be shared with the public, can be found [here](#).*

The Commission’s extensive 2022 public proceedings schedule will begin in February with hearings focused on the Commission’s Phase 1 work to understand what happened on April 18 and 19, 2020. During Phase 1, the Commission will share a series Foundational Documents with the public over the course of several months. The list of Foundational Documents can be found on the [Commission’s website](#).

Proceedings are expected to take place Monday through Thursday, starting at 9:30 am ADT. Most days are anticipated to end no later than 4:30 pm, although exceptions may be made. In-person proceedings are planned for the Halifax Convention Centre; the proceedings will also be available through webcast on the Commission’s website. The proceedings venue will be open to media and the public before 9:30 am for entrance and set-up. Registration in advance (including proof of vaccination) will be required and available on the Commission website. There will be a community viewing location in Truro. The use of in-person locations will be dependent on the COVID situation. If necessitated by public health guidance and restrictions, proceedings may be entirely virtual.

The first days of February proceedings (February 22 and 23) will be led by the Commissioners and Commission team members who will share opening remarks and provide information about the communities and geography of the areas most affected by the mass casualty, as well as the structure of policing and emergency services in these areas. Between February 24 and April 14, 2022, the first set of Foundational Documents will be shared publicly during the hearings.

In the spring (April/May 2022), Phase 1 hearings will continue and Phase 2 proceedings will begin. Phase 2 will explore the broader context and issues relevant to the Commission’s mandate, such as access to firearms, police and emergency responder decision-making, the support offered to those most affected, communities and first responders after the mass casualty, gender-based and intimate partner violence, and communications with the public about the mass casualty. Over the course of the Phase 2 proceedings, more than a dozen Commissioned Reports will be shared with the public (the expected list of reports can be found on the [Commission’s website](#)). Additional Foundational Documents will also be

shared with the public (the expected list of Phase 2 Foundational Documents can be found on the [Commission's website](#)).

Phase 3 work is anticipated to begin in the late summer of 2022 by inviting the public to inform the Commission's final recommendations to make communities safer (see below or visit the [Commission's website](#) for more information about the Commission's public proceedings schedule, Foundational Documents and Commissioned Reports).

### **Foundational Documents:**

Foundational Documents organize and share the large volumes of information gathered by the Commission. To date, the Commission has gathered and analyzed more than 40,000 pages of information (including investigative files, emails, notes from first responders, transcripts of police radio communications and visuals like photographs) and approximately 1,000 video and audio files, in addition to information collected through the Commission's investigations, witness interviews and site visits. You can read more about the process for establishing Foundational Documents and find the lists of Phase 1 and Phase 2 Foundational Documents on the Commission's [website](#).

### **Commissioned Reports:**

Commissioned Reports are an important part of the Mass Casualty Commission's work to explore the causes, context, and circumstances giving rise to the April 2020 mass casualty. These reports are prepared by independent report writers who have been engaged to research and explore topics and issues in the Commission's mandate (like access to firearms, gender-based and intimate partner violence, and police policies). The list of Commissioned Reports can be found on the [Commission's website](#).

### **Background References:**

[Inquiry Process Overview](#)

[Mandate](#)

[Orders in Council](#)

[Wellness supports](#)

[Foundational Documents](#)

[Commissioned Reports](#)

[Commission Calendar](#)

**About the Mass Casualty Commission:** The Commission into the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty (the "Mass Casualty Commission") is an independent public inquiry created to examine the April 18–19, 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia and to provide meaningful recommendations to make our communities safer in the future. For more information, visit [www.MassCasualtyCommission.ca](http://www.MassCasualtyCommission.ca).

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