

Public Hearing

Audience publique

Commissioners / Commissaires

The Honourable / L'honorable J. Michael MacDonald,
Chair / Président

Leanne J. Fitch (Ret. Police Chief, M.O.M)

Dr. Kim Stanton

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II Appearances / Comparutions

Ms. Rachel Young

Commission Counsel /
Conseil de la commission

Panelists / Panélistes

Ms. Alana Hirtle

Business Analyst, CBDC-NOBL and Chair
of the Rotary Cares Committee, Rotary
Club of Truro

Reverend Nicole Uzans

Anglican parish priest and chaplain with
the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves

Chief Sidney Peters

Glooscap First Nation

Ms. Mary Teed

Social Worker and Executive Director of
the Colchester Adult Learning Association

Dr. Ernest Asante Korankye

President & CEO at Asante Logistic Group
Inc.

III
Table of Content / Table des matières

	PAGE
Introducing the communities: Life in rural Nova Scotia Ms. Alana Hirtle, Panel Facilitator	2
The Structure of Policing in Nova Scotia Presentation by Ms. Rachel Young	23

IV
Exhibit List / Liste des pièces

No	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
P-000001	"The Structure of Policing" Report – April 2020	23
P-000002	Legislative brief on the structure of policing in Nova Scotia prepared by Commission counsel	24

Halifax, Nova Scotia

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 9:46 a.m.

REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND: Good morning. The proceedings of the Mass Casualty Commission are now in session with Chief Commissioner Michael MacDonald, Commissioner Leanne Fitch, and Commissioner Kim Stanton presiding.

COMMISSIONER MacDONALD: Bonjour tous le monde. Hello, everyone. Good morning. I want to first acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded lands of the Mi'kmaq. I also want to invite us all to be inspired by the memories of the lives taken, their loved ones, those injured and the communities. May that always be our motivation and inspiration as we move forward with these important hearings.

You know, one of the -- one of the things that is gratifying about living in Nova Scotia, and indeed in Canada, is that after this mass casualty and we began our work nobody really said no to us for any requests we had, and people, whether we were hiring our team members or otherwise, people were anxious to help, were anxious to step up and do what they can to help. And today is no exception. Without hesitation when we ask people, not just in Nova Scotia but outside Nova Scotia, to help us with our work, it's always a yes without hesitation because they care.

And as we discussed yesterday, next week we will begin sharing with the public our Foundational Documents, beginning with the -- with Portapique and what happened in Portapique on April 18th and 19th, 2020. And we indicated that that's not going to be easy, and we will continue to share with the public the Foundational Documents that track the timeline of events, and that will continue over the next several weeks. Following that, we will explore the context, causes and circumstances, in other words, why what happened happened, and then we will move into Phase 3, which will explore positive recommendations for change to keep us all safe.

And we thought it very important for us and for the public, we would

1 **--- INTRODUCING THE COMMUNITIES: LIFE IN RURAL NOVA SCOTIA:**

2 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Thank you, Commissioner MacDonald.

3 Good morning, and good morning. I am very pleased to be here today, and I'm looking
4 forward to the conversation we're going to have over the next hour.

5 The purpose of this community panel is to share our thoughts on
6 what it's like to live in rural Nova Scotia, what makes the people and places special,
7 what -- how we may have things in common with many of you watching today.

8 The panelists will all bring a unique perspective, as we have an
9 immigrant, we have an Indigenous leader, we have someone who grew up in the area
10 and chose to stay and we have someone who moved there for work and decided to stay
11 for the lifestyle. All live in rural Nova Scotia by choice and will have views to share as to
12 why they've elected to make it their home.

13 So it's now my pleasure to introduce our panelists, because you
14 wondered who was here. All right.

15 Chief Sidney Peters was first elected as Chief of Glooscap First
16 Nation in 2012, with a focus on building a strong community, rejuvenating culture, and
17 supporting economic development.

18 As a community leader, Chief Peters works closely with not-for-
19 profit groups, band councils, tribal councils, municipalities, and federal and provincial
20 governments.

21 Chief Peters holds diploma in agricultural modernization from the
22 Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro.

23 He has an extensive background in Indigenous housing with
24 organizations such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Native
25 Council of Nova Scotia.

26 In 2006, Chief Peters became a senior advisor on Aboriginal
27 housing with CMHC and remained in the position until 2008, when he moved to the
28 Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq as the Manager of Lands, Environment, and Natural

1 Resources.

2 Chief Peters resides in Glenholme, Nova Scotia with his wife
3 Darlene and two children, Dylan and Joecy.

4 Together with his council colleagues, Chief Peters hopes to install a
5 sense of pride in all community members inside and outside Glooscap First Nation.

6 Mary Teed is a social worker from Masstown, Nova Scotia and the
7 Executive Director of the Colchester Adult Learning Association, a community learning
8 organization that delivers literacy and essential skills programs for adults in Truro and
9 Colchester County.

10 Mary was one of the organizers of the online vigil, “Nova Scotia
11 Remembers”, that was held following the mass casualty.

12 She also co-created the Mom’s Stronger Together fundraising
13 group, which supported families over the last two holiday seasons and will be
14 fundraising to support the Heart’s Haven Memorial Park in Debert.

15 As a friend and fellow community member, Mary is committed to
16 helping our community and she truly believes we are stronger together.

17 The Reverend Nicole Uzans is an Anglican parish priest and
18 chaplain with the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. She has served in several
19 churches across northern Nova Scotia and has been active in community theatre,
20 sports, and refugee resettlement organizations in these communities.

21 She is a past Pilgrimage Coordinator with Camino Nova Scotia,
22 responsible for planning and leading multi-day walking pilgrimages in communities from
23 Annapolis Royal to Inverness. As a rural minister, she is often called upon by families
24 and community groups to lead in times of sorrow as well as celebration.

25 Her close connection with people and place has given her unique
26 insight into the histories, cultures, and spiritual wellbeing of small communities. She
27 now lives in Wolfville, Nova Scotia with her wife, the Reverend Penny Nelson.

28 And last but not least, Dr. Ernest Korankye is an astute

1 entrepreneur with colossal experience in export, import and logistics.

2 Ernest has a Doctorate degree in postharvest plant physiology from
3 Dalhousie University and over 10 years of professional and industry experience in food
4 safety and proper food handling including processing, storage and transportation.

5 He brings on board the needed direction and expertise to provide
6 well guided, quality and fast cargo handling services to our clients across the globe.

7 Ernest emigrated from Ghana in 2010 and lives in Truro with his
8 wife Anita and their two small children.

9 Welcome, panelists. All right. Let's do this.

10 So the first question I'm going to ask today I think will be for Chief
11 Sid. And it is, many Canadians choose to raise their children over generations in rural
12 communities. Please describe the sense of pride you've encountered and what it
13 means to call this region home?

14 **CHIEF SIDNEY PETERS:** Thank you very much, Alana. I just
15 wanted to say it's an honour for me to be here. I think it's important for everybody to be
16 aware of, you know, who the Mi'kmaq people and where we come from. And of course,
17 we've been here for generations upon generations for the past 13,000 years, so we
18 haven't actually left.

19 But in regards to the region, you know, we're so proud to call this
20 land, the land of the Mi'kma'ki. And like the Commissioner mentioned this morning, how
21 important it is to understand about the unceded land here, you know, that's been set
22 aside for the Mi'kmaq people.

23 And it's important to know that, you know, over the years, even
24 back in 1752, when we talked about the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and how
25 important that is even today, you know, we welcomed, you know, people to come to all
26 the shores across the province, you know, and welcomed them here to Nova Scotia.
27 And again, we continue to do that on a regular basis. And as you know, on October 1st,
28 we celebrate Treaty Day. And I think that's so important.

1 And I think the other thing to realize too is living in rural areas, it's a
2 beautiful spot, that's for sure. And the reason we're so proud of the land here, and over
3 the years, is how nice and how Mother, as nature, has provided for us over the years.
4 And we see all the natural resources that's taken and how important it is, you know, for
5 survival, and, you know, it helped a lot of our communities out, especially in the rural
6 areas. We talk about the fisheries, you know. We talk about farming, you know. You
7 know, there's so much.

8 The other thing I think we should be aware, too, in regards to
9 talking about living in rural areas, as you know, the reserve creation many years ago, a
10 lot of us never had much choice where to go. It was kind of, "Here you go. Here's land
11 set aside for you." And back then they called them reservations, but we don't call them
12 reservations in our First Nations world. We call them communities, because really, the
13 majority of them are all families. And that's the important part of our communities, is
14 pretty well basically all about families. And that's what created some of our
15 communities.

16 But having said that, there's about 60 percent of us that live off of
17 reserve. For example, my parents decided to leave the reserve back in the early 60's.
18 And so I've always resided off reserve.

19 You know, but having said that, I think it was important that, you
20 know, living in the rural areas, because I decided to live in Glenholme, and part of the
21 reason for that was, of course, was for employment. And I've been living in Glenholme
22 for 35 years with my wife and my two children. I raised my two children there.

23 And I just love the rural area in a sense that it's such a community.
24 Again, it's like a big family, an extended family. You know, our children, and, you know,
25 they go and they play together in the backyard. They go to the rink and they play
26 hockey. They play baseball. They play soccer. They grow up. They go through the
27 education system, you know. And then we celebrate, you know, their graduations and
28 watch them flourish where they go, you know. But having a sense of support in local,

1 you know, and I think that's important.

2 You know, of course we have tragedies like this, but we all come
3 together when stuff like this happens, you know, as a big family, to try to help out.

4 And to be honest with you, in a lot of our First Nation communities,
5 it's the same way. You know, whenever there's a tragedy, everybody comes together.
6 We have the funeral, we have what is called a salite', where after the funeral, everybody
7 gets together, they have an auction. And with the funds that come out of that auction,
8 helps the family to pay for funeral expenses, you know, and pay for food, and try to help
9 support the children that might have been lost.

10 But, you know, again, it's a real honour for me to be here.

11 And, you know, living in a rural area, so nice to wake up in the
12 summer after you've mowed your grass, you smell the grass, you know, you hear the
13 birds and see the sun, you know, and watching the children just play and watching them
14 grow, and it's not a real fast pace.

15 So I just wanted to say I just love living in a rural area and I think it's
16 a great spot. Thank you.

17 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Thank you, Chief.

18 Mary, have you got anything you might want to add on to that?
19 You've been a country girl your whole life.

20 **MS. MARY TEED:** Sure. And I guess just following up with what
21 you said, Chief Sid, you know, from people who have always been here to the people
22 who came by choice, or quasi-choice, depending how far back we go, but I chose to live
23 in Masstown, which is 22 kilometres away from Portapique, where this horrible
24 massacre began.

25 And also, I think you're right, people choose to come to these rural
26 communities because it's home. It has a sense and a feeling of home and, as you said,
27 family. Sometimes we leave, sometimes we come back, but we always come home
28 because there's no greater feeling than to be at home.

1 And in regards to why we're here, the massacre that took place
2 really got in -- you know, and COVID, got in the way of rural communities doing the
3 things that we normally do, which is, you know, you go to your neighbour, you go to
4 your friends, you make a casserole, you have a function where you're raising some
5 funds and gathering people together. And we didn't get to do that.

6 So it is great to be a part of a small rural community, but I think we
7 do need to recognize there's been a stall that's made things extremely difficult.

8 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Thank you. Excellent.

9 The next question I think I'm going to tackle, it is; what are some of
10 the unique characteristics of the communities in this region?

11 Well, I would challenge that all the rural communities in Nova
12 Scotia are unique in their own way, but this part of Nova Scotia is interesting because
13 we have both mountains and ocean and we have the Bay of Fundy, which has the
14 highest tides in the world. Google that.

15 It's a place where, you know, growing up we didn't lock our doors,
16 you didn't lock your cars; you knew who your neighbours were and you trusted them. I
17 hope that we still live in that place now.

18 You wave at people on the road when you're driving; people you
19 don't know, you wave. You say hello to strangers on the sidewalk when you're walking
20 downtown. It is a friendly, welcoming place.

21 There's definitely a slower pace, including the internet service.
22 Cannot deny that; there are some challenges as far as technology goes when you get
23 outside the city. But I think the slower pace is what a lot of people are looking for. It's
24 not so hurried. You know, there's jokes about rush hour and you see birds on the
25 shoreline because that's as busy as it really gets.

26 The other thing that I really love is directions by landmark, and we
27 talked about this on the way up in the car. It's kind of funny because, you know, you
28 might have moved to the area and someone will say, "You turn left at that property

1 where the old Carter barn used to be, burned down 20 years ago.” Okay. Then you
2 have to find out where that was because you weren’t here when the Carter barn burned.
3 So it is unique. You don’t give directions in kilometres or even sometimes how long it
4 takes to get there, but it’s landmarks, like the only -- Nicole’s got a good, actually,
5 example of this one so I might toss it to Nicole to finish my thought.

6 Your lights.

7 **REV. NICOLE UZANS:** Sure, sure. About landmarks. When we
8 first moved into the area, so one of the challenges was to find housing. There was no
9 rental market but some local folks convinced folks with an Airbnb to do a longer-term
10 rental.

11 So we got directions to go there. It was, “Turn at the flashing light.”
12 And other directions this was coming up, “Oh, it’s past the flashing light.” The flashing
13 light. What’s going on here? And then realize that the flashing light is the only traffic
14 signal for at least 50 kilometres in any direction. It’s a pretty important landmark.

15 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Pretty important landmark, yeah, exactly.
16 And it’s what everybody can relate to in that sense.

17 Have you got any other thoughts, Nicole, on the uniqueness?

18 **REV. NICOLE UZANS:** Certainly one of the things I’ve noticed
19 about these communities, again, driving down the road, the place name, sometimes it’ll
20 change every five or 10 kilometres. And that’s not just about a name. There’s a kind of
21 a hyper-local character about these communities where there would be -- there would
22 be history keepers and elders in each of those very, very small communities who know
23 a specific sense of identity to that community, which may just be a collection of a few
24 houses along the highway.

25 But, also, in the larger communities, that identification with place
26 there’s upsides and downsides to it. There’s a sense of pride about it but there can also
27 be a sense of rivalry, a real noticing locally who’s getting what resources, which can be
28 official resources, services and whatnot, but it can also be just personal contributions of

1 people who are living in those very small areas.

2 And so a lot of awareness and a certain guardedness as well about
3 not always wanting to have to go to the next community for your services or resources.

4 I think those are important notes.

5 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Good thought. And we've also talked about
6 how families identify very specifically from one community to another and you might be -
7 - Mary, help me. You might be the Teeds from ---

8 **REV. NICOLE UZANS:** Belmont.

9 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** --- Belmont, versus the Teeds from
10 Masstown. And when people ask, it's "Who are your people?" Basically, "Where are
11 you from? Oh, you're that family; you're that branch of the family." And I there's, I think,
12 again, a sense of pride and maybe a little bit of competition between the branches as
13 well. So it is interesting.

14 **MS. MARY TEED:** We also had that conversation. Most of us
15 didn't know each other prior to being asked to participate. And so Chief Sid is from
16 Glenholme, which is a hop, skip, and a jump to Masstown. And somebody made the
17 mistake and said he was from Masstown. Like, "No, no, he's from Glenholme."

18 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Because that matters; that matters. Exactly.
19 Excellent. Thanks, folks.

20 All right, Mary, I'm going to direct this next question to you. What
21 are some of the ways our region embodies the word, "Community" through sports and
22 activities?

23 **MS. MARY TEED:** Okay. And I think this is a question that's near
24 to me. As Alana said, I was one of the organizers with the online vigil.

25 And, again, small communities, when bad things happen, we come
26 together and we were in the early stages, scary stages of COVID, and so nobody could
27 come together. And a group of strangers from the community got together and said we
28 have to do something. And I was amazed that almost overnight, this online vigil took

1 life, and was really just meant to be the online version of how we give love and support.
2 And I was -- again, you know, thousands and thousands and thousands of people
3 participated in one way or another and virtually we came together to say we care, we're
4 sorry, we want to be helpful. And at that time that was the only way that we could do
5 that.

6 So the online vigil and then the Nova Scotia Remembers legacy
7 that just kept conversation going, and certainly hoping that families and those most
8 impacted were listening and looking at those stories and carrying the support.

9 And then there was the Portapique Build-Up. You know, once upon
10 a time Portapique was, you know, this thriving little community where all kinds of
11 activities took place, and the closer -- you know, the further people got away, you know,
12 moving into Truro and beyond, it was just a building there. And a group of people came
13 together and pulled that back to life.

14 The Heart's Haven Memorial Park that's underway in Debert. The
15 life that's coming out of that; I'll just give you one example. There was -- in a small local
16 community, baseball once upon a time was a big thing with the adults, and one of the
17 gals from the community said, "Let's do a baseball tournament. Hopefully this summer
18 we'll be able to come together and play sports." And within an hour, the entire
19 tournament was completely filled, sold out, and, you know, now they're looking for more
20 fields to play in to support community. That's small-town Nova Scotia.

21 A group of my friends and I pulled together, having motherless
22 friends, and inspired by them and in honour of the mothers that were taken from us in
23 April of 2020, Moms Stronger Together and our whole purpose is to support family, and
24 support communities.

25 So individually, collectively, organizations, groups, that's the kind of
26 support and activities that happen in small-town Nova Scotia.

27 And I also want to continue to bring it back; you know, why us?
28 Why now? We're here because of a horrible tragedy that took place and I do want to

1 say that, you know, when we came together, we -- there was an elephant in the room
2 amongst us and we all said, you know, "Why me? Why us? Why now?" And all of us, I
3 think our first question was; what is the impact of this; you know, my speaking, your
4 speaking going to have on the people that were closest to this tragedy? And I have a
5 friend who was greatly affected and I said to myself, "I need to go speak to that person."
6 And I drove by his house three times before I could stop.

7 And I have to go back to the COVID thing; we're stalled. You know,
8 normally, you know we would have bumped into each other, probably, you know, 40, 50
9 times in the community; at a baseball game or a hockey game. And, you know, we
10 would have said those things; "I'm sorry for your loss. I hope you're doing okay." But
11 two years later, it's as fresh as it was the day it happened.

12 So that's a big impact on our small communities that just want to
13 come together and be together.

14 Having met these folks as well, I just want to, I guess, finally say,
15 you know, community is family.

16 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Thanks, Mary.

17 Ernest, have you got anything you'd like to add to that?

18 **DR. ERNEST KORANKYE:** Yeah, thanks Alana.

19 For me, whenever I think about community, I -- it takes me back
20 home, Ghana, because that's where I was born, raised, knew everything about a
21 community. You knew everybody in the area. The kids you played with, you knew their
22 mom, dad. You knew their sibling. Everybody knew each other. You could be called
23 up any time and sent on an errand by anybody because you all lived together. So when
24 I moved to Truro, 12 years ago, I looked for that as a sense of community. And -- and
25 to be frank with you, I found that, and that is why I still live in Truro. The sense of
26 community, people coming together, and always the time to support each other, and
27 that is really comforting for me and my family coming from our own backgrounds of
28 knowing what a community is.

1 And to just give examples of what I went through, not knowing
2 anybody in the community, to grow into be part of that community hugely is that when I
3 came in, young African boy, 25 years, looking to get my master's degree, landed at the
4 Halifax Airport, but drove to Truro, didn't know anybody in the town, nobody, zero. And
5 luckily, there was a family that took me in, not knowing much about me. Basically, let
6 me live in their basement for two years, paying less to nothing, to be with them. And
7 you could only find that in a -- in a rural community.

8 And again, for my church family, everybody was willing to support.
9 So I'll go to church, everybody was wondering, who are you? They wanted to know who
10 you are, so you get to tell your story over and over, not because they -- they despise
11 you. They're just curious to know you so that they can relate and be with you in most
12 times, and we spent a lot of time in our pastor's church -- church and home, cooking,
13 playing music, and basically living together. An example again is when this tragedy hit,
14 you could see that sense of community in Truro and around, people coming together to
15 support, a proud member of the rotary club, and once it happened, everybody was
16 willing to come together, contribute, to build a community again. And that can only be
17 found in the rural community. And -- and so it gives you that sense of responsibilities,
18 that sense of coming together, living together, and helping each other through the times
19 of difficulty. And you can only get that in the rural communities.

20 And so for you that have always lived in a city, I would say come
21 visit, and -- and you be surprised. You would -- everybody wants to know you. You will
22 know everybody by name, and your family, and -- and that is unique in -- in -- in rural
23 communities. Yeah, that's what I like, yeah.

24 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** That's great. Thanks, Ernest.

25 All right. So the next question I'm going to direct to Nicole. Why
26 might people leave urban areas to live in a rural setting, and what are some of the
27 adjustments they might experience?

28 **MS. NICOLE UZANS:** Okay. So following up on Ernest's

1 comment there of if you're from an urban place come visit or come to stay, and I -- and I
2 wonder actually how that's going to work out, because I think there are a lot of -- a lot of
3 opportunities in rural places of particular sorts. Chief Sid was talking about the
4 importance of the land, the extraordinary beauty, and that just -- it can't be described,
5 and it's enough to change people's lives. You know, I think of -- of artists of my
6 acquaintance who had been living in New York City, but because of the quality of life in
7 this part of Nova Scotia, made that move. Still do a lot of their work out of New York
8 City but are living in their Nova Scotia. People move from very different ways of life to --
9 to go after the ideals of, you know, back your livestock, or having -- having some woods
10 out back where you can build a dirt bike trail for your grandkids, or finding one of those
11 sort of falling down old houses in rural Nova Scotia that you can -- you can learn
12 renovation skills and put your hands to building a place of your own. Comes with
13 challenges. There's no doubt about that. The -- I think people who come to rural areas
14 and stay appreciate the privacy, appreciate the spaciousness. You can stand on your
15 doorstep and see the Milky Way. But if people haven't experienced that before, that can
16 be terrifying as well, the depth of the darkness on a winter's night that starts at about six
17 o'clock. In the downtown of whatever village you're in, it's -- it's empty and it's dark, and
18 -- and that can be -- that can be kind of foreboding. So but anyway, there is that -- that
19 sort of spaciousness and privacy, as well as this theme that keeps coming up, that draw
20 of community.

21 I'll describe -- when we were looking to buy a house, there was one
22 for sale by owner, and we happened to know the owner a little bit. And he took us
23 through the house and -- and then a few days later, we wanted to see the house again.
24 He said, "Here's the key. Go through the house as many times as you want. Bring
25 whoever you'd like to -- to see it. If you decide you're going to buy the house, then you'll
26 keep the key, and if not, you'll give it back." That level of trust only comes about
27 because we knew a lot of people in common, and -- and had that -- that sense of
28 accountability that comes from that. But there's a flip side to that. I think a lot of people

1 who -- who come to a rural area have an experience like going into a community
2 breakfast at a church or a community hall, and every head in the room swivels towards
3 you, and then everyone turns back to their own meal and the company they came with.
4 So there's this sense that there's always more people talking about you than talking to
5 you. And that takes some getting used to, and I think about that has particular
6 permutations for -- for -- for people -- young people who are growing up in the villages.
7 Always having a lot of people knowing your business might not be what you want when
8 you're a teenager. So there's -- yes, there's that familiarity. It also comes with a lot of
9 relational work.

10 And I guess just one last example that I'll give in that regard is
11 around -- is around grief. Any grief, normal grief that happens when someone --
12 someone in your life dies, and then having to face the people who know you, who want
13 to talk about that, who want to know how you're doing, but it can be -- it can be
14 daunting. In rural places, one of the biggest markers that there's a transition in the
15 process of grief is can you go to the grocery store again, knowing that you're going to --
16 you're going to know people, you're going to run into people there, maybe half the
17 people in the store, and can you face those conversations that come when you're at that
18 really tender and -- and vulnerable place in your grief. So it comes from a place of care,
19 but it does -- it does introduce lots of challenges, that level of interpersonal connection.

20 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Absolutely.

21 **MS. NICOLE UZANS:** Yeah.

22 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** And I think one of the things that we still
23 hold onto is that term "come from away," which doesn't have the best connotation really.
24 You're -- you are separate, you are different, you are from somewhere's else if you are
25 a come from away, and I think we really need to start shifting our mindset on that.
26 We've chosen to come here by choice, so we are here by choice, not come from away.
27 And until we get better at that differentiation, I think there will always be a little of that
28 kind of, you know, heads turning at the community breakfast because you are different,

1 because you're not of here. But if we think of it more as here by choice, then hopefully
2 people will start to feel a bit more welcome as well.

3 **MS. MARY TWEED:** I think when people are at those functions,
4 and we look at you, and then we whisper, really what we're saying is we're trying to find
5 your connection. So we might say something like, "Nicole's okay because her great-
6 great grandfather used to live here."

7 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Right. Right. Who are your people.

8 **MS. MARY TWEED:** Yeah.

9 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Yeah, who are your people. Chief Sid, have
10 you got anything you'd like to add to that one?

11 **CHIEF SIDNEY PETERS:** Well, I think, you know, in regards to
12 living in the urban centre, sometimes it -- it can get lonely living in the urban centres as
13 well. You know, you don't know anybody. You don't know your neighbour. You don't
14 know who's in the apartment down below, and you're -- you're walking the streets and
15 people are looking at you, or not paying attention to you. But in the rural areas, you
16 know, as the panelists has (sic) talked about, how important it is people will say hi to
17 you, you know, whoever it is. It's nice to say, oh, yeah, you know, the builder supplier,
18 you see him at the store, you see him at the ball field, or whatever. It's the same thing
19 with your doctor, lawyer, whoever it might be, and your teacher, and so it -- it's nice that
20 way. But I -- you know, even in the -- the Mi'kmaq world, it's so important about culture,
21 tradition, and heritage and stuff. When you're in the urban centre sometimes you don't
22 have that and it's unfortunate. So that's why sometimes we get a lot of young people or
23 whatever starting to find it difficult in urban centres. They want to come back because
24 they need that, you know, they need that sense of belonging and, you know, in the
25 spiritual world, you know. I mean, that's really important in our communities.

26 But again, there's 60 percent of our people that's living off reserve,
27 not everybody in urban centres, you know. But having said that, we've got -- Canada's
28 a big place, Nova Scotia's a big place. There's lots of opportunities. But it's only as

1 good as you make it, it's only as good as you participate, you know. And part of that is
2 a sense of belonging. And everybody does their share, you know, in the community.

3 And people -- like I said, some people are plumbers, electricians or
4 whatever and let them do what they can do and, you know, kind of share, share all the
5 resources and the wealth that's there.

6 And to me, again, that's a sense of belonging and, you know, taking
7 -- you know, thinking of everybody as working together. That's how it works, and to be
8 a family.

9 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Excellent.

10 All right. Wow. Ernest, I've got a question for you now. What's it
11 like to own and operate a business in this region?

12 **DR. ERNEST KORANKYE:** Well, interesting I get to talk about
13 business. It could take a whole day.

14 But I would say that the key thing -- and I don't want to suggest that
15 it's different -- so different in the rural communities than the cities. The fundamentals of
16 business are fundamentals of business. You have to make profit, right.

17 But when you live in a community where you know everybody,
18 where you know the guy that is coming to work, you know his brother, his -- his sister,
19 everybody, there is -- it brings a different level of huge responsibility on you not just to
20 make money, but to take care of people. It gives you that pride.

21 So I would say that mostly when it comes to business for me is
22 about the pride and the joy that I get in participating in the community that I live in.

23 There's a lot of talk about choice to live in a rural community. For
24 business, you have to make a choice where the business is, right. We're into logistics.
25 And everybody asks me, "So why Truro?". I get that question a lot.

26 But my answer is, "Why not Truro?". That's -- that's all I've known.
27 That's my home, that's my community, so if I -- if I'm to put millions of dollars into the
28 community or into the economy, I will want to do it with the people that I know best,

1 right.

2 So that is very, very important for the success of the business.

3 If you're running a business in the rural community, you have no
4 choice than to be hands on. I'm involved in my business. I'm always there because I'm
5 enjoying the process with the people that I know, and all that helps in be able to grow
6 the business.

7 Another way is that Bible says to whom much is given, much is
8 expected. So with my previous comment on what Truro and the community have given
9 to me, I have that sense of responsibility to give back to that community, my experience,
10 my ability to be able to grow with the -- with the company is really something that I enjoy
11 doing.

12 There is definitely struggles to run business in a -- in a small
13 community which comes back to labour, right. As much as you enjoy doing it with the
14 people, there isn't much people there, right, so you have to come up with creative ways
15 to keep people. It's not like you can just let that person go and another person comes
16 through the door because that person that is leaving is going to talk to the next person
17 and everybody knows who you are if you're not doing the right work.

18 So you have to be creative. You have to be involved with the
19 things that are going on. You have to know people.

20 I have, I would say, part of my team members that do know my
21 kids. Their kids come to our home and have playdates, have sleepovers. So you do
22 those things that is way outside the workplace to be able to keep that core and be able
23 to succeed.

24 So for me, business is family. We have a lot of employees and
25 most of them I know everybody by name, I know their relation. And the key thing in the
26 community when it comes to business is that you see a lot of generational experience,
27 so there's a lot of businesses that are surviving or that are still in business not because
28 of the profit-making. It's been there for years. There is a long lineage.

1 The great-grandfather was doing it, it came to the dad, the son has
2 taken on. That pride, that sense of responsibility to be able to continue that
3 generational input into the community. So it gives you that comfort, that stability within
4 the community, and I enjoy that process and building a future with the community as
5 well. Yeah.

6 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** And we're happy to have you here.
7 Absolutely.

8 You mentioned challenges, though, and labour market certainly is
9 one of them. It's tough to find people. And then in our region where there's no public
10 transportation, it's also tough to get people there because not everybody has a car. Not
11 everybody can afford a car or their spouse, you know, takes the car to Halifax for work.
12 So it's not just finding the right people, it's finding the right people and getting them
13 there.

14 And then you add on childcare issues and it is a challenge to find
15 and retain employees, so not just finding people. It's finding the right ones and making
16 sure that they can -- they can work and that you can help them to thrive in that position
17 as well.

18 **DR. ERNEST KORANKYE:** Just to give another example when it
19 comes to transportation in rural communities, so a couple of my managers, so what they
20 do is that if an employee, I mean, whoever they are they don't have a source of
21 transportation, they go from house to house to take them to work. They feel they need
22 to do that.

23 I mean, I don't know a business -- it's a small business that we run,
24 so I see that to be creative of even the managers to do that because they feel they have
25 that sense of responsibility to get those people to work. And they help each other to get
26 everybody around and be able to make it to work. Yeah.

27 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Yeah, absolutely.

28 I mean, I'm fortunate to work with small businesses in my day job,

1 the one that pays me, not my Rotary full-time job, which is the other one I do, but it is. I
2 work for the Community Business Development Corporation. We have -- there's ACOA
3 offices, there's this Nova Scotia Business Inc. We've got a very active Chamber of
4 Commerce and the Regional Enterprise Network, so there are a number of business
5 supports in the Truro-Colchester area as well, which I think helps with some of those
6 challenges. And certainly we get to work with entrepreneurs on a daily basis and, you
7 know, the Canadian economy is built on small businesses, small and medium-sized
8 businesses, so it's exciting to see these new things happening in our area and the
9 different types of businesses that are -- that are operating.

10 Anybody else have a thought on this topic?

11 **MS. MARY TEED:** Thinking about communication and internet
12 along the West Colchester communities, which is very troubling, and in many places
13 non-existent, so I think, you know, that's a big issue in the rural communities as well.

14 **MS. ALANA HIRTLE:** Absolutely. And even sometimes in town
15 or in the city, too. We do have some technology challenges here, and since we've all
16 been on Zoom meetings for the last two years, it's been -- it's been both a blessing and
17 a curse some days because you have to turn your camera off because otherwise you
18 don't hear anything because it sounds so badly.

19 Yeah, that's certainly -- I know they're working on that, but it does
20 have its challenges in that sense.

21 All right. Well, those were our questions, folks.

22 So what I heard overwhelmingly from everybody was, you know,
23 there's the extraordinary beauty of the land in Nova Scotia. It is stunning and I was born
24 and raised here, and there are times I'll go for a drive and the beauty when I come
25 around a corner just takes your breath away. We're so fortunate to live here and it truly
26 is an amazing place.

27 There's privacy. Community is family. Community is family. I love
28 that idea, and it's so true. And it's people coming together to support one another is

1 what you do. And you do it because it's just the right thing to do. You may not know
2 your neighbour that well, but in a time of need, you pull together, you buy the 50/50
3 ticket, you bake the casserole, you show up.

4 That's what you do; you show up. We have a responsibility to help
5 one another, and we do. And everybody does share.

6 And I think, at the end, what that -- what that really all comes down
7 to is relationships. It all comes down to relationships, and we care about one another.
8 And that's what makes a community strong.

9 So with that, Commissioner, I will pass it back to you.

10 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Yes, thank you.

11 Thank you so much, panel. Very, very helpful. You seem to gel up
12 there and seem so relaxed, which is gratifying, but I'm sure it took courage as well for
13 you to come up and share your perspectives and we greatly appreciate that. Not just
14 your expertise, but your experience.

15 And it was helpful, I think, to have the perspective, your
16 perspective, on the impact of the mass casualty, again, from the rural community
17 perspective and an important perspective on the sense of loss, just, for example, the --
18 if life in rural communities is based upon relationships, and perhaps less so in urban
19 centres, then the impact of COVID would certainly be different than things like that are
20 important for us to have an impact on.

21 But again, repeating a little bit what I said at the introduction, it's
22 important for us, and I think for the public and all involved, to have a keen perspective
23 on those communities, not just in Nova Scotia, but similar communities across this
24 country, how this casualty would have, I wouldn't say unique, but an important and
25 perhaps different impact because it's -- these are rural communities, as opposed to
26 urban centers. And that's an important perspective for us to have.

27 So on behalf of the Commissioners and everyone involved, thank
28 you so very much for stepping up, as I said, as everyone has so kindly done, and we

1 really greatly appreciate it.

2 We'll take a brief -- sorry, and Commissioner Stanton wanted to say
3 something as well.

4 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** That's okay. Sorry. I wasn't
5 planning to speak, but I just wanted to address something that you said, Mary, why us,
6 why now? And I just think it's really important for people to remember that while this
7 inquiry has been at the forefront of people's minds here for obvious reasons, most of
8 Canada hasn't had it front of mind, and this week is to really prepare people for all that
9 is going to be coming and to ensure that people are aware, across the country, that the
10 pain is very real here, it's still ongoing, and that there is a need to understand the ways
11 in which the questions that we've been asked to answer in our Terms of Reference are
12 going to mean, as a federal and provincial inquiry, that there are recommendations that
13 will be made that will have implications for communities all across the country. And so
14 to remind people that the communities here are reflected across the country is
15 important, but also the importance of the rural context with respect to, and some of the
16 things that you touched upon, the internet connectivity, the distances between places,
17 how dark it is at night. The kinds of factors that you are aware of because you live in
18 these places are very, very helpful for people who are unfamiliar with this topography
19 and geography and these communities to understand. But also that sense of
20 community.

21 We also think it's so important for people to think of these
22 communities as more than just what happened in April 2020. And it's -- I just want to
23 thank you, because I think you've beautifully expressed that truth. And so I'm grateful
24 and I just wanted to thank you for being here today. It does take courage to come and
25 speak and it really is much appreciated. So thank you.

26 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** And thank you so much,
27 Commissioner Stanton.

28 So we'll take a brief break. And as I mentioned yesterday, when

1 we return, Senior Counsel, Rachel Young, will describe the structure of policing in Nova
2 Scotia for us.

3 So thank you again, Panel, and thank you, everyone. We'll take a
4 brief break.

5 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. The
6 proceedings are now on break and will resume at 11:00 a.m.

7 --- Upon breaking at 10:37 a.m.

8 --- Upon resuming at 11:01 a.m.

9 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Welcome back. The
10 proceedings are again in session.

11 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, ladies and
12 gentleman. As promised, we will now ask Senior Commission Counsel, Rachel Young,
13 to -- with the assistance of a technical report, to describe the structure of policing in the
14 Province of Nova Scotia.

15 Ms. Young, thank you.

16 **--- THE STRUCTURE OF POLICING IN NOVA SCOTIA**

17 **--- PRESENTATION BY MS. RACHEL YOUNG:**

18 **MS. RACHEL YOUNG:** Thank you, Chief Commissioner
19 MacDonald.

20 Bonjour. Good morning, Commissioners, Participants, people of
21 Nova Scotia and Canada.

22 I'm Rachel Young, one of the Senior Commission Counsel. And
23 part of my role is to present the evidence on the parts of the Commission's mandate to
24 do with policing.

25 Madam Registrar, before I begin, I'd like to file two public exhibits,
26 which the Participants have seen.

27 First, there's a report entitled "The Structure of Policing in Nova
28 Scotia in April 2020". For the lawyers in the room, that's Document ID number COMM-

1 0040450 and the supporting materials.

2 **--- EXHIBIT No. P-000001:**

3 The Structure of Policing in Nova-Scotia – April 2020

4 And secondly, a legislative brief on the structure of policing in Nova
5 Scotia prepared by Commission counsel. And that's COMM-0043125 and its
6 supporting materials.

7 **--- EXHIBIT No. P-000002:**

8 Legislative brief on the structure of policing in Nova
9 Scotia prepared by Commission Counsel

10 These have been supplied in electronic form. These are going to
11 be made publicly available on the Commission's website within the next day or so.

12 This is what's in these exhibits. "The Structure of Policing" report
13 provides an understanding of how policing was designed to function in Nova Scotia at or
14 about the time of the April 2020 mass casualty incident. The legislative brief provides
15 the legal framework for policing in Nova Scotia at the time of the mass casualty in April
16 2020.

17 I will be drawing on information from both of these documents
18 during this presentation.

19 This morning-heard about the communities and settings where the
20 mass casualty events took place from wonderful panelists who live in the area.

21 Before we get into the details of the events next week, I want to
22 supply some context about what policing actually looks like in rural Nova Scotia. People
23 might be coming to this Commission with different levels of understanding of which
24 police forces do what in Nova Scotia and in Canada.

25 Most people know that it was mainly the RCMP who responded and
26 investigated the mass casualty, but why the RCMP? In what capacity?

27 The goal of this presentation is to answer these questions and
28 some others that people might have.

1 For example, how many RCMP members worked in the counties
2 where the events happened? Why did the New Brunswick RCMP and Halifax Police
3 assist the Colchester County RCMP and not more of nearby Truro and Amherst
4 Municipal Police Departments.

5 Getting a sense of what police forces were located in the area, with
6 about how many members, will help those participating in and following the Commission
7 to understand several things to follow later in these proceedings, and in the
8 Foundational Documents, and in other Commission reports.

9 The focus of this session is this report that the Commission, it's a
10 technical report, now Exhibit 1, called "Structure of Policing in Nova Scotia" by Barry
11 MacKnight, it sets out how policing was organized in Nova Scotia at the time of the
12 events.

13 Barry MacKnight is a consultant who is a former municipal police
14 officer and leader. He was Chief of Police of the Fredericton Police Force in New
15 Brunswick and he has worked for the RCMP.

16 He's worked with other police forces to share intelligence on
17 criminal activity in order to combat organized crime.

18 He's been accountable to civilian oversight bodies to explain police
19 conduct and expenditures. He's acted as a liaison between the police and
20 municipalities.

21 We're not calling Mr. MacKnight to testify today because the
22 Commission is not asking him to add anything beyond what's in his report. They've
23 asked me to highlight what's in it in order to show how it fits in to the rest of the
24 Commission's work.

25 Mr. MacKnight's report is simply intended to be a description for an
26 audience not necessarily familiar with policing. The Commission did not ask him for an
27 expert opinion or to delve into controversial areas, nor to evaluate the policing services
28 that were provided.

1 I'm going to summarize and situate this report today, knowing that
2 not everyone will have time to read it.

3 The Participants have already had a chance to review it, but those
4 who are interested in knowing more details, will soon be able to read the report
5 themselves online.

6 Today, I'm going to touch on the structure of policing in Nova Scotia
7 and Canada, what police resources were available in 2020, and how police agencies
8 collaborate with each other and talk to governments.

9 Learning the structure of policing as it was in 2020 will put into
10 context these facts that are to follow. You can expect to hear next week details of the
11 police response to the events, and that will be coming at you in a lot of detail, so this will
12 help set up understanding who was who. It will help understand which police officers
13 and governments were the key decision makers and why as the events unfolded. This
14 is going to be relevant not just to next week's description of events, but also in April
15 when we have panels and we dive into the police critical incident response and
16 communications. These issues will come up in Phase 1, when we talk about how
17 different police forces communicated with each other, so interagency collaboration and
18 interoperability; in Phase 2, whether they communicated as they should have and in
19 Phase 3, whether police communications can be improved in the future.

20 Today's presentation will also help understand later evidence about
21 how provincial government decisions impact policing in Nova Scotia. How many police
22 officers were and need to be trained, in what skills, and why? Who governs and
23 oversees police forces?

24 Let's start with an overview with policing in Canada, and Nova
25 Scotia, in particular. So there are 11 police agencies in Nova Scotia, the RCMP, and 10
26 municipal agencies. The staffing numbers given here are approximate for 2020, and
27 would have fluctuated for various reasons, including the pandemic. The biggest police
28 agency is the RCMP with over 1,400 employees, and the smallest is Annapolis Police

1 Service with 4. The total number of 10 municipal police forces combined is less than
2 that of the RCMP; it's 1,200 employees.

3 About half the population of Nova Scotia is policed by the RCMP,
4 but people are policed by the RCMP in one or more of its three different roles. The
5 RCMP wears three hats in all of Canada. It is the federal police force, it can be a
6 provincial or territorial police force and it can also be a municipal police force for a given
7 area. No matter which role it's in, the RCMP can and does communicate and work with
8 other police forces in order to gather and share intelligence and enforce the law.

9 Part of the Commission's work is to understand these relationships,
10 and we will be hearing more about the relationships between different forces and even
11 between different parts of the RCMP.

12 Canada-wide, the RCMP is the federal police force in all of Canada,
13 as set out in the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act*, regardless of whether it serves
14 also as the provincial police force in a given province. The RCMP always investigate
15 certain types of crimes in all provinces and territories, such as large-scale drug
16 trafficking crimes, crimes against national security, cyber crime and terrorism offences.

17 This federal policing role is not the role it was playing during the
18 mass casualty events. Although federal RCMP resources may have been involved in
19 the response, but they would have been assisting as backup for the RCMP acting as
20 provincial police.

21 Provincially, provinces are responsible for policing standards. In
22 Nova Scotia, this responsibility to ensure an adequate and effective level of policing is
23 set out in section 5 of the *Nova Scotia Police Act*. An excerpt laws on this point is put
24 together in the short legislative brief that I have filed that's Exhibit 2 now.

25 Provinces can decide whether to form their own police forces or to
26 contract with the RCMP to be their provincial police force. In reality, only Ontario and
27 Quebec have their own exclusive provincial police forces. Newfoundland and Labrador
28 also has a provincial force, but it shares provincial policing responsibilities with the

1 RCMP. All other provinces, including Nova Scotia, have the RCMP as their provincial
2 police force.

3 Section 27, and following, of the *Nova Scotia Police Act*, give the
4 province the option to establish a provincial police service, to be known as the Nova
5 Scotia Provincial Police. Section 31 of the *Police Act* says that:

6 "The Provincial Police shall provide policing services
7 including: (a) crime prevention; (b) law enforcement;
8 (c) assistance to victims of crime; (d) emergency and
9 enhanced services; and (e) public order
10 maintenance."

11 So these are the things that the RCMP is obligated to provide Nova
12 Scotians.

13 The Province of Nova Scotia has an agreement with the federal
14 government setting out the provincial police services that the RCMP will provide. This
15 contract is called the Provincial Police Service Agreement or PPSA. This agreement is
16 currently halfway through a 20-year term, which runs from 2012 to 2032. This
17 document is one of the documents quoted in the Structure of Policing Report, so it will
18 be publicly available on the Commission's website as part of Exhibit 1. It's interesting to
19 note that the RCMP is not actually a signatory to this agreement.

20 The RCMP division for all of Nova Scotia is called "H" Division, and
21 it is headquartered in Halifax. The size of local RCMP detachments varies depending
22 on the size of the local population.

23 At the municipal level, although the *Police Act* makes the province
24 responsible for policing standards and gives the option to create a police force, it makes
25 municipalities responsible for providing police services. Municipalities can decide
26 whether to have their own forces or to contract with the province for those services, and
27 municipalities here would include counties.

28 Section 35 of the *Nova Scotia Police Act* states that:

1 "Every municipality is responsible for the policing of
2 and maintenance of law and order in the municipality
3 and for providing and maintaining an adequate,
4 efficient and effective police department at its
5 expense in accordance with its needs."

6 Secondly, that:

7 "In providing an adequate, efficient and effective
8 police department for the purpose of subsection (1), a
9 municipality is responsible for providing all the
10 necessary infrastructure and administration."

11 And section 35(3) says:

12 "For the purpose of subsection (1), the service
13 provided by a police department shall include: crime
14 prevention; law enforcement; assistance to victims of
15 crime; emergency and enhanced services; and public
16 order maintenance."

17 So you'll notice those are the same services that a provincial police
18 force has to provide, that if a municipality does it they have to provide. So those are
19 services that you'd expect the police to provide, such as investigating suspected crimes
20 under the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

21 Section 36 of the *Police Act* gives Nova Scotia municipalities
22 options to decide what police force they want. Municipalities can form their own
23 municipal police department, they can agree with another municipality to use their police
24 department, or they can agree with the RCMP that it can be their municipal police force
25 or it can discharge this responsibility by any other means as long as it's approved by the
26 provincial Minister of Justice.

27 Indigenous communities can enter tripartite or three-way
28 arrangements between themselves and the federal and provincial governments. And in

1 Cape Breton, there's a four-way arrangement involving the Cape Breton Police as well.
2 The *Police Act* allows for the appointment of Aboriginal Police Officers.

3 So there are different cost-sharing percentages for municipal
4 policing depending on the size of the population, and those are detailed in the PPSA
5 and in the Structure of Policing Report, and I won't go into detail on that now.

6 In a nutshell, the size of the community affects the options for
7 policing. The fact is that very small communities often do not have the tax base to
8 support their own municipal police force.

9 Under the PPSA, policing in communities with a population of fewer
10 than 5,000 people is paid 30 percent by the federal government and 70 percent by the
11 provincial government. The province then bills back the municipality for the policing
12 service. This 70/30 provincial split is the most common policing cost breakdown in
13 Nova Scotia.

14 As you can gather, there are realities, there are economies of scale
15 involved in using the large RCMP service to police rural areas or small municipalities as
16 described in some of the documents cited in the Structure of Policing Report.

17 Not just in Nova Scotia, but in all of Canada, most of the policing of
18 rural areas is done by the RCMP. In a country the size of ours, it is simply not possible
19 to have large numbers of officers at all times in areas that are sparsely populated. The
20 sheer distances involved mean that it will take officers time to travel to calls.

21 The RCMP tries to estimate how to staff departments --
22 detachments, rather, across Canada by using a model called the General Duty Police
23 Resourcing Model, or GDPRM.

24 As explained in the report, the GDPRM looks at the distribution of
25 occurrences of people calling the police and call priorities, so how serious or urgent
26 those calls are, in each area and looks at the detachment's historical data as well as
27 factors such as travel times, shift schedules and available back-up in trying to figure out
28 what the optimal number of police members in that area would be to have on a regular

1 basis. This is not a one-time decision. It's reviewed frequently. There have been a
2 number of policing reviews over the years in Nova Scotia and the province and
3 municipalities actively consider, on an ongoing basis, whether police services are
4 sufficient and they do have the ability to adjust staffing accordingly.

5 The report talks about provincial and municipal police resources,
6 and it also explains that the day-to-day reality is that these officers work closely together
7 in their overlapping areas of jurisdiction. They know each other, especially in small
8 communities. RCMP members who are acting as provincial police, for example,
9 sometimes might share a building and work side by side with officers who are acting as
10 municipal police. For example, that's the setup in Antigonish.

11 In addition to dividing up police responsibilities the way I've talked
12 about with federal, provincial, municipal governments or whether they are federal,
13 provincial or municipal police forces, which in some places is all the RCMP, police
14 forces also need to interact with each other based on the types of crimes they're fighting
15 or the investigative resources they need. As we know, crime crosses boundaries, so
16 police forces in different jurisdictions have to share information and share skills to help
17 each other out.

18 Nationally, one solution to this is that the federal government
19 provides what's called National Police Services across Canada. This includes programs
20 that are administered by the RCMP and it was originally started as a way to combat
21 organized crime, which is carried on across provinces and international boundaries.
22 Now, this National Police Services program includes organizations that target specific
23 types of crimes like the Canadian Fraud Centre and the Canadian National Firearms
24 Tracking Centre. And they provide assistance about 70 percent of which is actually
25 outside the RCMP, so the National Police Services is not the same thing as the RCMP,
26 necessarily.

27 For types of crimes that occur at the border, including smuggling
28 and human trafficking, the Canada Border Services Agency works with the law

1 enforcement agencies for the area nearest the relevant border. So again, of course,
2 they need to share information and give each other a head's up about what they know
3 could be coming or what is suspected to be going on.

4 Locally, if the criminal offence is one that the RCMP has expertise
5 in investigating, such as large-scale drug trafficking operations, municipal police might
6 ask the RCMP to take the lead on an investigation or to participate in Joint Forces
7 Operations, which are called JFOs.

8 Those are the ways that police agencies divide responsibilities
9 focused on different types of crimes.

10 Another way they divide responsibilities is by types of crime-fighting
11 tools to share expertise or resources as needed. For example, not every police force
12 has a K9 Unit, so they can call each other to ask to borrow them if the situation requires
13 it.

14 There are RCMP provincial members in positions that benefit the
15 municipalities, too. These are called centralized provincial resources and shared
16 positions, which are jobs like those of intelligence analysts who support front-line
17 policing by providing them with intelligence about suspected crimes. These positions
18 are funded by the province and the municipalities are not charged back for their work.

19 On an ongoing basis, there are integrated units where the RCMP
20 works with a municipal police force on an ongoing basis. This could be either for types
21 of crimes such as street crime or geographical areas that are closely connected such as
22 the Halifax Regional Municipality.

23 For occasional help, rural communities have access to specialized
24 investigative services such as Forensic Identification Services from the RCMP as their
25 provincial police force.

26 For many years, the RCMP provided assistance to municipal police
27 agencies with specialized services the municipalities don't have, like Forensic
28 Identification Services or Major Crime Units. This is different than the National Police

1 Services I mentioned a moment ago. Here, we are talking about informal assistance.
2 It's not written in the PPSA explicitly, just the provincial police force helping out the
3 municipal police with tools they need as needed on a local level. It could be about a
4 specific case or investigating a specific person.

5 The PPSA gives the Nova Scotia Minister of Justice the authority to
6 direct the RCMP as the provincial service to help on a, quote, "temporary basis". Some
7 of these arrangements are formal and written down. For example, the Amherst Police
8 Department has an agreement with the RCMP for membership in the Cumberland
9 Integrated Street Crime Enforcement Unit. But some of these arrangements are
10 informal such as an informal agreement between the RCMP and the Amherst Police
11 Department for mutual back-up on high-risk calls for service.

12 The municipal police forces, which are small in Nova Scotia, have
13 been accustomed to this informal assistance and, typically, it is paid for by the province
14 and not charged back to municipalities. However, as explained in the report, there has
15 been some indication from the RCMP that this arrangement may not be sustainable,
16 and that further discussions between the RCMP, the Province, and the municipal police
17 forces need to take place to clarify whether these informal arrangements will continue,
18 and whether they need to be formalized.

19 So what we're interested here, when -- what happens when there's
20 more officers required to respond to a call than there are in place. Obviously, they need
21 to call for backup. The RCMP has policies in place to call for backup from within the
22 RCMP and from other law enforcement agencies.

23 From within the RCMP, backup can come from members outside
24 the area, outside the detachment, even outside the province. It can come from RCMP
25 members who are serving as federal members, not provincial; people who are on-call in
26 case they're needed; and after that, off-duty members would be called in.

27 Before multiple officers are called for backup, the RCMP has to
28 assess the risk involved in the incident. So we'll be hearing more about all of that, of

1 course, during these proceedings.

2 If we -- we're going to look at geography of Nova Scotia soon, and
3 so if you look at the maps, due to simple geography and the police division of labour
4 that I've just described, it may be that municipal police officers are closer physically than
5 other RCMP officers, but this does not mean that they will be the ones to back up the
6 RCMP.

7 In order for a municipal police force to be able to help in an area
8 policed by the RCMP as provincial police, the RCMP would have to tell it that backup
9 was needed and ask for that help.

10 Having seen how policing responsibilities get assigned and shared,
11 we're going to look now at how these resources are on the ground in rural Nova Scotia.

12 The Structure of Policing Report filed as Exhibit 1, goes through the
13 approximate numbers of police officers for each force and detachment in Nova Scotia in
14 2020. And I won't go through the whole province today; I'm just going to highlight the
15 staffing of Colchester County and Halifax Regional Municipality area police agencies, in
16 order to give an idea of the available resources in those areas.

17 I would also note that in addition to police officers from these two
18 areas, officers from RCMP division "J" Division in New Brunswick attended as backup
19 during the mass casualty.

20 So we're now going to have a look at some maps to get situated.
21 And you will be hearing about first responders from these areas starting next week.

22 We're now looking at a map of East Hants, Colchester, and
23 Cumberland Counties. This rural area, highlighted in light green on the map, and this is
24 where the mass casualty events were concentrated.

25 Each of these three counties is policed by the RCMP as a
26 provincial police force, and there's red dots on the map and each of those dots is an
27 RCMP detachment.

28 However, you can see that within this area there's also -- there's

1 two blue dots, and those are municipal police departments, the municipalities of
2 Amherst and Truro; Amherst is at the top of the map there.

3 To the southwest, East Hants District RCMP has two detachments,
4 in Upper Rawdon and Enfield, and one satellite office, Mount Uniacke, with a
5 complement of 25 police officers and four civilian employees assigned to both
6 detachments.

7 Colchester District RCMP is comprised of three detachments; Bible
8 Hill, Stewiacke, and Tatamagouche, and one satellite office, with 35 officers and eight
9 civilian employees, most of whom work in Bible Hill.

10 Sipekne'katik First Nation RCMP has 11 police officers and one
11 civilian.

12 Millbrook RCMP is a single detachment with a complement of
13 seven police officers and one civilian employee.

14 To the north, Cumberland County District RCMP has five
15 detachments with 34 officers and six civilian employees.

16 In Colchester County is the Town of Truro, which has its own
17 municipal police service, the Truro Police Service. It is not far from the Bible Hill
18 Detachment of the RCMP; you can see the blue dot close to the red in the middle of the
19 map. And the RCMP's jurisdiction covers the rural area around Truro. The Truro Police
20 Service has about 36 officers and 15 civilian employees.

21 The Town of Amherst is in Cumberland County, near the Amherst
22 Detachment of the RCMP; so, again, you can see how close the blue and red dots are
23 there. And the RCMP's jurisdiction covers the rural area around Amherst. The Amherst
24 Police Department has about 24 police officers and 10 civilian employees.

25 So that gives you a sense of the boots on the ground, so to speak,
26 as they were in 2020.

27 Halifax Regional Municipality has the same boundaries as Halifax
28 County, and is policed by two agencies.

1 Halifax District RCMP provides provincial police services to the
2 rural areas in the HRM. And here you can see Halifax County in light green on the map,
3 which is the same thing as the HRM geographically, and it has the seven Halifax District
4 RCMP detachments, where the red dots are shown, including “H” Division headquarters
5 in Halifax.

6 The blue dot is the Halifax Regional Police municipal police
7 headquarters. So this shows you how the jurisdictions and where people are working
8 really overlap.

9 As explained in the report, which is now Exhibit 1, in 2020 the
10 Halifax District RCMP in the rural and suburban areas around the city had about 138
11 police officers, plus 45 assigned to integrated units, and 37 civilian employees.

12 The Halifax Regional Police, the municipal police agency for the
13 urban core of the HRM, so that’s Halifax, Dartmouth, and Bedford, and the communities
14 extending from Bedford to the Sambro Loop, has 532 police officers and 275 civilian
15 employees. So, clearly, Halifax Regional Police is by far the biggest municipal police
16 agency in Nova Scotia.

17 The Commission will be hearing more about how the Halifax District
18 RCMP and the Halifax Regional Police have divided labour over the years on an
19 ongoing basis, and they work together now; and that’s described at page 50 and
20 following of the report.

21 So, actually, depending on where a person is in the HRM or what
22 the call is about, if they call 911, it could be the RCMP or the Halifax Regional Police
23 who answer that call.

24 To finish our overview of how policing works in Canada and Nova
25 Scotia, it’s important to understand how police agencies work when they’re not in the
26 middle of dealing with emergencies. These are relationships between people and they
27 affect how people react when there is an emergency.

28 Police agencies interact with each other and with all levels of

1 government; federal, provincial, and municipal, on an ongoing basis, and they do look
2 for ways to combine forces and to consider how to communicate with each other during
3 investigations.

4 These dynamics are discussed in the second half of the Structure
5 of Policing Report, starting at page 55, in a section called, “Interagency Collaboration:
6 Government Relations, Integrated Policing, and interoperability.

7 Police forces do not govern themselves. They’re subject to civilian
8 oversight and governance.

9 In Nova Scotia, as explained in the report, the *Police Act* creates
10 different entities for governance and oversight. There’s the Serious Incident Response
11 Team, or SiRT, and that is to provide oversight of policing by providing an independent
12 investigation of serious incidents involving police in the province. That’s at section 26A
13 and following in the *Police Act*.

14 The *Police Act* creates regulations which set out a system to deal
15 with complaints of police misconduct by municipal officers. Complaints start by being
16 reported to the agency in question, but then people can appeal to the Police Review
17 Board if they’re not satisfied with that decision.

18 The Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner is provincially
19 funded and can investigate complaints and support the Board.

20 Municipal boards of police commissioners, which are to provide
21 civilian governance over municipal law enforcement and crime prevention are created in
22 section 44 and following of the *Act*.

23 When the RCMP is the municipal or provincial police force, that is
24 overseen by civilians through police advisory boards, which are created at section 57
25 and following of the *Act*.

26 So those are different tools where civilian people interact with the
27 police to keep an eye on what they’re doing.

28 At the federal level, the RCMP is governed by the federal *RCMP*

1 *Act.*

2 The Commission of the RCMP operates and manages that force.

3 Under Part VI of the *RCMP Act*, if a civilian has a complaint about
4 an RCMP officer, the civilian has to start by bringing the complaint to the RCMP itself.
5 Then, if not satisfied with how the RCMP resolved it, the complainant can seek a review
6 by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, or the CRCC, which is an
7 independent agency created in 1988 by Part VI of the *RCMP Act*.

8 All police agencies in Nova Scotia are represented by the Nova
9 Scotia Chiefs of Police Association in dealing with local and provincial governments and
10 through the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police at the national level.

11 These are not intelligence gathering bodies and they do not have
12 operational roles.

13 In terms of ongoing operations, the Commission will be hearing
14 about how the RCMP is in regular contact with the Public Safety Division of the Nova
15 Scotia Department of Justice on the topics of policing standards, training, audits,
16 community-based crime prevention initiatives, and administering the PPSA.

17 The *Police Act* gives the Provincial Department of Justice the ability
18 to conduct audits of police forces. And these have been done over the years. They're
19 not mandatory. But they haven't been done consistently over the years.

20 Policing standards have not been updated in Nova Scotia since
21 2003, although efforts are currently underway to do so.

22 The province also plays a key role in police communications in that
23 it administers both the emergency 9-1-1 service and the Alert Ready service, which is
24 through the Department of Municipal Affairs.

25 The Commission will be hearing about how the RCMP did or did
26 not interact with the provincial government during the course of the events. We will
27 learn how those systems work and how they might be improved.

28 The police radio system in Nova Scotia allows for some shared

1 channels, but all of the different police agencies that you've heard about are not
2 automatically able to hear others.

3 Police agencies are able to share intelligence with each other and
4 day to day policing information. They can share local police records via a portal,
5 through databases such as CPIC, which you may have heard of, the Canadian Police
6 Information Centre for criminal records checks and so on, and there's the Criminal
7 Intelligence Service of Canada, Nova Scotia, and other provinces, which also provides a
8 way that police forces can share intelligence about suspected crimes.

9 In terms of police training, the RCMP has its own standards and
10 programs for cadets, it has its own college, and it has its own training all the way up
11 through a member's career.

12 For municipal police forces, some training is offered by the
13 Provincial Department of Justice directly, some is done internally within their municipal
14 force, or by attending courses put on by other forces, including the RCMP, or there are
15 police colleges, such as the Atlantic Police College.

16 So the various forces do train each other, they combine for joint
17 training, or they attend provincial police colleges. And this is described in the report and
18 we will be hearing more about that over the coming months.

19 In conclusion, I trust that this presentation has given you an idea of
20 who does what in policing in Canada.

21 The hope was that now you have some context for the facts you'll
22 hear next week about which police agencies and detachments the various first
23 responders were coming from, who they were getting their information from, who was
24 assisting them, and why.

25 You should also have a sense of some of the areas that are going
26 to be discussed further in the coming weeks and months, including what information or
27 assistance the local RCMP may have been getting, and if not, why not.

28 Thank you, Commissioners, and everyone.

1 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you so much, Ms. Young.
2 And thank everyone here for their participation and engagement, and everyone who
3 may be following online.

4 Consistent with the approach for this week, we are attempting to
5 set the stage for what will be the presentation of the timeline beginning in Portapique on
6 April 18th and 19th, 2020. And we will begin that on Monday, this coming Monday.

7 Senior Counsel, Roger Burrill, will be presenting the Foundational
8 Documents on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the three first Foundational
9 Documents involving Portapique. And beginning on Wednesday, and then Thursday, of
10 course, we are looking forward to hearing from counsel for the various participants on
11 their response to whatever other evidence ought to be called *vis a vie* the Portapique
12 documents, if I may refer to those. So we look forward to that as well.

13 And unless, Commissioners, I'm missing anything, I again repeat
14 our thanks and our engagement.

15 I think it's important for me to say this at the end of every day, next
16 week will be much more challenging, obviously, but we do have mental health supports
17 with references on our website, but here at the Convention Centre, we have, and will
18 continue to have, mental health people there for all of you to assist in any way we can.
19 And that's something we will continue throughout the public proceedings.

20 So again, thank you all for your participation, for your engagement.
21 We hope that this week was helpful in terms of framing the important work we have to
22 do, and I would like to say we have to do together, collaboratively, so that we can get
23 the answers people deserve and the recommendations we all require.

24 So thank you again, everyone, and we will break until Monday
25 morning. Thank you.

26 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. Lunch will
27 be served shortly. And the proceedings are adjourned until Monday, February the 28th,
28 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

1 --- Upon adjourning at 11:47 a.m.

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CERTIFICATION

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9 I, Dale Waterman, a certified court reporter, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an
10 accurate transcription of my notes/records to the best of my skill and ability, and I so
11 swear.

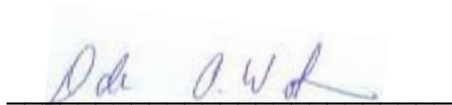
12

13 Je, Dale Waterman, un sténographe officiel, certifie que les pages ci-hautes sont une
14 transcription conforme de mes notes/enregistrements au meilleur de mes capacités, et
15 je le jure.

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19 Dale Waterman, ICDR/ICDT

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