

## 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

### VOLUME 25

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## II Appearances / Comparutions

Mr. Roger Burrill	Commission Counsel / Conseiller de la commission
Mr. Matthew MacLellan	Counsel / Conseiller
Mr. Joshua Bryson	Counsel / Conseiller
Ms. Patricia MacPhee	Counsel / Conseillère
Ms. Tara Miller	Counsel / Conseillère
Mr. Tom MacDonald	Counsel / Conseiller

**III**  
**Table of Content / Table des matières**

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>S/SGT. JEFF WEST, Sworn</b>	3
<b>S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE, Affirmed</b>	3
Examination in-Chief by Mr. Roger Burrill	3
Cross-examination by Mr. Matthew MacLellan	126
Cross-examination by Mr. Joshua Bryson	154
Cross-examination by Ms. Tara Miller	172
Cross-examination by Mr. Tom MacDonald	195
Cross-examination by Ms. Patricia MacPhee	200

**IV**  
**Exhibit List / Liste des pièces**

<b>No</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1622	(COMM0050877) MacNeil Report	192

Halifax, Nova Scotia

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 9:34 a.m.

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

**COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Hello, and welcome. Bonjour et bienvenue.

We join you from Mi'gma'gi, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

As we do every day, please join us in remembering those whose lives were taken or were harmed, their families and all those affected by the April 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia.

Through our independent investigation and public proceedings, the Commission is uncovering and sharing new and important information about what happened on April 18th and 19th, 2020. Rather than waiting until the end of our work to share what we are discovering, we continue to involve Participants and the public in our understanding of current facts as we go about our work. As we continue, we are all working towards creating the Commission's final report, which will include many more answers as well as recommendations.

This week we've been hearing from witnesses involved in the RCMP Emergency Response Team and Critical Incident Command Post. This is helping us learn more about decisions, directions and actions during the critical 13 hours of the mass casualty and immediately thereafter.

Yesterday we heard from another witness and Commission Counsel presented a very large and comprehensive Foundational Document about the RCMP Command Post, Operational Communications Centre and command decisions. This Foundational Document is now available on the website and its related source

1 materials will be posted later this week.

2 Today we will hear from two more witnesses who can provide  
3 additional factual information and important context regarding the emergency response  
4 on April 18th and 19th.

5 I will now ask Senior Commission Counsel, Mr. Roger Burrill, to  
6 introduce today's witnesses, Staff Sergeants Jeff West and Staff Sergeant Kevin  
7 Surette, both of whom are on-call Critical Incident Commanders in the province.

8 Thank you, Mr. Burrill.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you, Commissioner Fitch.  
10 Commissioners.

11 Today we will be looking into the role, as you have indicated, of the  
12 Critical Incident Commander. The purpose of this is to supplement the document,  
13 Foundational Document entitled "RCMP Command Post Operational Communications  
14 Centre Command Decisions" that was filed yesterday. And as indicated, this will involve  
15 the calling of two witnesses.

16 These witnesses will inform you of the role of the CIC, the Critical  
17 Incident Commander, and what a critical incident is and how the critical incident  
18 package is engaged and rolled out with respect to that.

19 These two witnesses were also involved on April 18th and 19th,  
20 and they will speak about their experience and their information in the matter, the  
21 subject of these proceedings.

22 So with the assistance of my friends, we hope to be able to provide  
23 you, the Commissioners, with important information that will assist you in your work.  
24 And with that brief introduction, I wish to call retired Staff Sergeant Jeff West and retired  
25 Staff Sergeant Kevin Surette forward, if you please.

26 So I'm going to direct my attention to retired Staff Sergeant Jeff  
27 West.

28 You are Jeff West?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I am.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And your last name is W-e-s-t.

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** That's an easy one for me.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And I understand, Madam Registrar, that  
7 Staff Sergeant West has expressed a willingness to be sworn.

8                   **--- S/SGT. JEFF WEST, Sworn**

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And you are retired Staff Sergeant Kevin  
10 Surette.

11                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Last name S-u-r-e-t-t-e?

13                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's right.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And Madam Registrar, retired Staff  
15 Sergeant Surette has expressed a willingness to be affirmed.

16                   **--- S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE, Affirmed**

17                   **--- EXAMINATION IN-CHIEF BY MR. ROGER BURRILL:**

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So gentlemen, as has become customary  
19 in these proceedings, I propose to go over a bit of your background for purposes of  
20 identifying who you are, what your experience is and then we'll move on a little bit more  
21 pointedly to a number of topics that have emerged in these proceedings. Agreeable to  
22 you?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I'll start, then, with retired Staff Sergeant  
25 Jeff West.

26                   You are retired from the RCMP after 32 and a half years of service?

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And you retired in July of 2021.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And you joined the RCMP March of  
3 1989?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand that between 1990 and 1997  
6 you were posted to the Surrey, B.C. detachment on general duties?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Between 1997 and 2003, you were  
9 posted to Salt Spring Island in British Columbia doing general duty work as well.

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

11                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and three (2003) to 2005,  
12 you returned -- well, I would say returned. You're a native of Nova Scotia, are you?

13                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

14                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes. You returned to H Division and  
15 attended the Enfield detachment doing general duty and traffic service work. Is that  
16 correct?

17                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

18                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and six (2006), you were  
19 promoted to the rank of Corporal

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

21                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and six (2006) to 2009,  
22 you were assigned to the Cole Harbour detachment in Halifax District as a shift team  
23 leader?

24                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

25                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and nine (2009), you were  
26 promoted to Sergeant.

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

28                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and nine (2009) to 2013, I



1 understand you were an Operations NCO for a watch in Halifax District.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and thirteen (2013) to  
4 2014, you took on responsibilities with the South Shore Traffic Service Division of the  
5 RCMP.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, it was the Southeast Traffic Services  
7 Unit.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. South Shore, yeah.  
9 Southeast Traffic.

10 Thank you.

11 Two thousand and fourteen (2014), you were promoted to Staff  
12 Sergeant?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and fourteen (2014), you  
15 were assigned the role and attended to the role of risk manager at the OCC in Truro?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and fifteen (2015), you  
18 were involved in the Critical Incident Commander course and you qualified for the  
19 position as a Critical Incident Commander?

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And we'll get into that a little later.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and seventeen (2017) to  
24 2020, you were assigned to traffic services -- this time I'm going to try to get it right --

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** -- as the Commander of the Northeast  
27 Nova Traffic Services?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand as well that you filled in  
2 occasionally in the role of Assistant Support Services Officer for H Div. Is that right?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, that's correct.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And then prior to your leaving in --  
5 retiring, in 2020 you took up the position of Executive NCO to the Commanding Officer  
6 at H Division. Is that correct?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So on April 18th-19th, 2020, you were on  
9 call as a Critical Incident Commander and responded to that call. Am I correct?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

11                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Now, before I get to Staff Sergeant  
12 Surette, I'm going to ask you a few questions about your training ---

13                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

14                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and then I'll do the same with Staff  
15 Sergeant Surette.

16                  You took the Critical Incident Commander course in 2015. Can you  
17 please provide us information of what that is and what the significance of that course is  
18 for your action as a CIC?

19                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Critical Incident Commander course is a  
20 course that is put on by -- through the Canadian Police College with instructors that are  
21 members of the Association of Canadian Critical Incident Commanders.

22                  The course is a two-week course that's held in Ottawa or various  
23 locations in which it is very labour-intensive with actually working through critical  
24 incident -- the actual critical incident, the program, the resources and planning and  
25 controlling a critical incident. When I say planning and controlling, there's -- the course  
26 is -- culminates with a large-scale tabletop exercise in which they bring in I say actors,  
27 but the actors are -- would be an Emergency Response Team Commander, a  
28 Negotiating Team Commander, a general duty Commander where you run through a

1 two-hour plus exercise of a critical incident basically start to finish.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And after you take that course, is it then  
3 that you become qualified to be -- act as a Critical Incident Commander?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** With that, once -- with that course, it's a  
5 pass or fail course.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Once -- if you've been successful in passing  
8 the course, once you go back to your home unit, whether it's in the RCMP or municipal  
9 policing force, because it's a course that's put on for both municipal police forces, as  
10 well as the RCMP, you're back at your home unit ---

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- and there's an expectation that you  
13 continue to be -- you fall under the Divisional Coordinator for the first I believe it's two  
14 incidents that you are required to handle. They could be planned high risk warrants. So  
15 they could be dynamic incidents that are developing. So once you come back to your  
16 home unit, there's a period where you're being -- have some oversight of the Divisional  
17 Coordinator to ensure that everything is working. Then you're ---

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. In terms of standardized training  
19 though, after you've attended the Critical Incident Commander Course, ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- is there any additional standardized  
22 training on a continuing education basis to maintain that role or that position?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There is a requirement for and an  
24 expectation of continuing education as you move through the program. Is it  
25 standardized? No. It's dependent on the divisional, your unit. In this Division, we have  
26 a training plan. While I was involved, we had a training plan each year where there's an  
27 expectation that all our Critical Incident Commanders, and we've had range from four to  
28 eight Critical Incident Commanders in this Division, where there's a training plan in

1 place where there's -- to ensure that there's ongoing training throughout the year and it  
2 can be anything from in-house training to obtaining seminars and conferences outside  
3 of this province or -- and online learning as well. So that's ---

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So that's done locally through H Div?  
5 The ---

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And who actually accredits it, that  
8 training, or controls the quality of the training?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Usually within our Critical Incident Program  
10 here, Critical Incident Commander Program, we have a Divisional Coordinator. Okay.  
11 One of the roles of the Divisional Coordinator is to ensure that their ongoing education  
12 and training is in place. That has been filled by various members within the program.  
13 It's off the side of your desk responsibility. S/Sgt Dan MacGillvray initially was -- when I  
14 joined the program, he was a coordinator. I took over as coordinator from S/Sgt  
15 MacGillvray during my time as a Critical Incident Commander.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So as a Divisional Coordinator then,  
17 would you have responsibility for standard control of the training program locally?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. We work as a team. It's very team  
19 centric program with our Critical Incident Commanders as to identifying training  
20 opportunities, what best suits the current needs and requirements of the program. And,  
21 like I say, goes with training opportunities, webinars -- seminars. Also with exercises.  
22 We do a lot of exercises with the Canadian Armed Forces doing exercises to kind of  
23 bring our program together, all our assets.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You mentioned the Canadian Association  
25 of Critical Incident Commanders?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It's the association -- it's ACCIC.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** AC ---

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Association of Canadian Critical Incident

1 Commanders.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm. And do they have a role in  
3 controlling and/or quality control of training, education, for Critical Incident  
4 Commanders?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The main role they play is with the course,  
6 the Critical Incident Commander's Course.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The instructors are from -- for that --  
9 instructors for that course come from the Association of Canadian Critical Incident  
10 Commanders. They maintain the facilitator, the adjunct instructor core cadre for that  
11 program.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Let me just move on then. We are  
13 all aware of the tragic 2014 Moncton incident. And I wonder if you could tell me whether  
14 there has been any additional training, protocols, arrangements, since 2014 initial  
15 critical incident training responses or anything of that nature that you're familiar with in H  
16 Div?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not that I'm familiar with. I joined -- became  
18 part of the Critical Incident Program in 2015.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you. I understand there  
20 are, in April of 2020, there were six Critical Incident Commanders on call in Nova  
21 Scotia? Is that right?

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not on call. There -- we have a compliment  
23 of six Critical Incident Commanders within the Division/province at that time.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. So as total, there were six ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- Critical Incident Commanders and you  
27 were on call once out of every three weeks? Is that correct?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. The system we had set up, we'd

1 always have two Critical Incident Commanders on call. So it was basically a three-week  
2 rotation that we were on call.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** One week on, two weeks off?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two on call all the time?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, two on call all the time, and it wasn't --  
7 it's not a primary/secondary type set up. We have two on call that are available.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Who coordinates the on-call basis  
9 for the program?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** During that time, that was one of my roles as  
11 the Divisional Coordinator.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you. I just want to ask you  
13 a few more questions about training and then I won't -- I'm not trying to ignore you,  
14 S/Sgt Surette, ---

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** All right.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- but we'll get to you in a minute here.

17 In your role as a staff sergeant and your supervisory functions with  
18 RCMP, are you able to give us any advice about the familiarity you would have or  
19 ongoing continuing education with some of the significant tools that the RCMP would  
20 use? In particular, the CIIDS system and the MWS system with respect to mobile work  
21 stations.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well having worked in this Division since  
23 2003, I do have a good understanding of mobile workstation in the sense that I used it in  
24 my day-to-day policing as an operational police officer on traffic services, as well as my  
25 role in Halifax District as a general duty supervisor ---

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- team leader.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So I have understanding of it. I

1 understand through the MWS there's mapping available and communication link.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Would you have been involved in  
3 a supervisory role of training towards general division or general duty members with  
4 respect to these particular tools?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Are you aware of any structure  
7 available within the RCMP in your supervisory role as to continuing education or  
8 ongoing education with respect to these tools?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe there is, but I don't know what it  
10 would be.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Fair enough.

12 I'm going to ask Retired S/Sgt Surette similar questions, but let's  
13 first establish who Retired S/Sgt Surette is.

14 I understand that you retired in August of 2021 after 35 years  
15 service? Is that correct?

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You joined the RCMP in 1986? You then  
18 were a general duty member in three Newfoundland Detachments, Holyrood, Port aux  
19 Basques, and St. John's between 1986 and 1993? Is that correct?

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I also understand that this is the time  
22 when you began striking your apprenticeship with the Emergency Response Team in  
23 Newfoundland?

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand between 1993 and 1997,  
26 you were a member of the only full-time RCMP Emergency Response Team in Canada  
27 at the time in Ottawa? Is that correct?

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So that was working out of the Ottawa  
2 Detachment?

3                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Out of Ottawa, yes.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Thank you. You were trained  
5 specifically in a particular task with the Emergency Response Team?

6                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And what was that?

8                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I became trained as a sniper.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. October of 1997, I understand you  
10 transferred to H Division, to the Yarmouth Town Detachment?

11                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand that in 2002, you were  
13 promoted to corporal?

14                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and three (2003), you were  
16 promoted to sergeant?

17                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And I understand from 2003 to 2006, you  
19 took on duties as the Barrington Detachment Commander in Southwest Nova Scotia?  
20 Is that right?

21                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

22                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and six (2006) to 2008,  
23 you took on responsibilities as the Yarmouth Rural Detachment Commander? Is that  
24 correct?

25                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

26                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And 2008 to 2000 -- sorry, you were then  
27 promoted to sergeant in 2000 and -- staff sergeant.

28                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Staff sergeant. Yeah. Two thousand



1 and eight (2008).

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and eight (2008). And you  
3 took on roles as the Detachment Commander for the Yarmouth Town Detachment? Is  
4 that right?

5 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's correct.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Am I correct to say that in 2014, you were  
7 appointed as the District Advisory Non-Commissioned Officer, the term we've referred  
8 to earlier as the DANCO?

9 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that was for Southwest Nova?

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And your responsibilities were then for  
13 supervising and overseeing six detachment county areas in the Southwest Nova  
14 District? Is that right?

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Correct.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Two thousand and ten (2010), you  
17 became a member of the Critical Incident Group in H Division after attending the Critical  
18 Incident Course that was discussed by S/Sgt West?

19 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Correct.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. And on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, you  
21 were on call as a Critical Incident Commander and you attended, eventually, the Great  
22 Village Fire Hall as the, I'm going to call it the second or associate Critical Incident  
23 Commander? Is that correct?

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's correct.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. I'm going to ask you a little bit  
26 more like I did S/Sgt West about some training circumstances. You actually took the  
27 Critical Incident Commander Course in 2010?

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Correct.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And do you agree with S/Sgt West with  
2 respect to his description of the course and its programming?

3                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. What upgrading or continuing  
5 education would a critical Incident Commander need to take, or take in order to remain  
6 qualified as a Critical Incident Commander?

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't want to be repetitive. Everything  
8 Jeff said, I agree with. We also do exercises where we tried to get at least one large-  
9 scale scenario done per year. So we had our quarterly meetings, we had our  
10 conferences, webinars, seminars. We would also, at our quarterly meetings, I think it's  
11 important, we would hash out every call we'd had in that previous quarter, so we all had  
12 a good understanding, make sure we're on the same page with everything that had  
13 transpired, lessons learned, so continue with development from that perspective. And  
14 then the large-scale scenarios, there was an attempt to make sure we all had a part in  
15 that once a year, to make sure we were staying fresh with our thing. That was  
16 divisionally imposed by our own group. It didn't always happen that way, but we try our  
17 best to make that happen.

18                   And I think it's worthy of note that, as a Critical Incident  
19 Commander, we have no full-time Critical Incident Commanders in the division, so it  
20 was always something that we were doing above and beyond our substantive role.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand that. I get the sense, and  
22 correct me if I'm wrong, that the Association of Critical -- Canadian Critical Incident  
23 Commanders has a -- runs courses or runs qualifications on a national standard basis.  
24 Does that sound right?

25                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I'm not sure if they -- how many they  
26 actually run, but they certainly make it known if there are courses or seminars going on  
27 nationally or internationally that would benefit, and they would fan that out to the  
28 divisional coordinators across the country, and then we'd -- we'd, of course, couldn't just

1 drop and go. It had to be something that we'd make ---

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sure. I understand. But in terms of  
3 qualifications for you, 2010, and for your colleague in 2015, that would have been a  
4 national course that was undertaken with national course standards; correct?

5 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Correct.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Any follow-up in terms of Critical Incident  
7 Commander training on national course standards that you can comment on?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No. In my time in the program, once  
9 you've done the course, you come back to the division, the division manages the  
10 program.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And would that be managed  
12 through what we have identified as the Critical Incident Command Group, or what you  
13 have identified as?

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes, and in answering to the Support  
15 Services Officer, who ultimately has control of that group.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I asked the question of S/Sgt.  
17 West with respect to training, programming post-2014 with the Moncton incident. Are  
18 you able to comment about whether there has been any change or developments in  
19 terms of training, continuing education for initial Critical Incident Commanders?

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think we really pushed -- we -- the  
21 RCMP, we pushed the initial Incident Command course, which was a one-week course  
22 geared towards Detachment Commanders and Detachment Supervisors just to have a  
23 better understanding of what the expectations were from the Critical Incident  
24 Commander coming in. So many of our members have been trained in that regard  
25 since then, and as Critical Incident Commanders, we've often lectured on that course in  
26 one form or another. And that -- a large part of that had to do with -- the biggest  
27 complaint from Moncton, I think, had to do with communication amongst the Command  
28 Group with the frontline members, and that course is geared -- there's other aspects,

1 but a large part of that is geared towards understanding the terminology that we use  
2 and what our expectations are when we arrive, and who is actually in charge at that  
3 point.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So you've actually partaken in this course  
5 training program with respect to Detachment and/or District Commanders for initial  
6 Critical Incident Commanders?

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Okay. Is that the same for you,  
9 S/Sgt. West?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Let's talk about the Critical  
12 Incident Program in H-Division. We've spoke with S/Sgt. West with respect to the fact  
13 that there were 6 qualified Critical Incident Commanders at the time of April of 2020.

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Was that a comfortable number for you,  
16 S/Sgt. Surette?

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes. We had talked numerous times  
18 about what was the right number ---

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- and we felt that we could adequately  
21 manage the call volume and frequency with the six members that we had.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So the on-call status that was defined by  
23 your colleague, the one in three, on one week out of every three ---

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- was that a manageable on-call ---

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- situation for you?

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, it takes a toll, like any on-call

1 system does, but we felt we could manage that, yes.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. How long was that on-call status --  
3 situation in effect before April of 2020?

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I recall not being on call initially when I  
5 was training, 2010, 2011. I would think that the formal on-call system, we would have  
6 got approval for that somewhere around 2012 or '13.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So it was in existence for a  
8 significant time before ---

9 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Absolutely.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. You were well used to that ---

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- schedule?

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Let me just continue on with a few  
15 questions on training like I did with S/Sgt. West with respect to your role as -- and you, I  
16 have a sense, have had a significant supervisory role in your Detachment Commander  
17 role.

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Would you have a familiarity with the  
20 CIIDS system and the CAD logging and the MWS systems?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** There's a familiarity with it, but I -- in  
22 my role as DANCO, in my last seven years, I didn't use it. I didn't have an MWS in my  
23 vehicle. And prior to that, I would have had access to it in my detachment, as  
24 everybody else did. So my familiarity with it on a day-to-day basis is a little limited at  
25 this point.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

27 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But in terms of training, ongoing familiarity

1 for general duty members, what can you say about that in your role as a supervisor?

2 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Just making sure that everybody who  
3 was using the system did have the proper training. We have divisional courses set up  
4 for that, workshops, that type of thing, to make sure that people know how to use the  
5 equipment.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And often as my role both as a  
8 Commander and as a DANCO was to set up training or ensure that the right people who  
9 needed the training were going to the training.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. We're going to move on then  
11 from that sort of general information, training and background information. Yesterday,  
12 when we were in the proceedings, there was a Foundational Document tendered into  
13 the proceedings entitled the RCMP Command Post Operational Communications  
14 Centre and Command Decisions. Now a long title, but we've referred to it as the  
15 Command Decisions Document. Are you gentlemen familiar with that, having had an  
16 opportunity to look at it in previous -- on a previous occasion?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I have.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I intend to use that document then  
19 as a sort of a guidepost for some of our upcoming questions, and it'll hopefully cover  
20 some topics that the Critical Incident Commander can provide some insight to the  
21 Commissioners on.

22 Before I do that, I think it's important for us to determine what is a  
23 critical incident, from your point of view, please, gentlemen? Can you tell us that  
24 relatively quickly?

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think the laymen definition, the best  
26 definition is that it's an incident which is beyond the scope of your typical detachment,  
27 and requires some sort of coordinated effort, and would include calls where the risk is  
28 elevated beyond what we would call a normal call.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And is the definition of a critical  
2 incident something that is familiar to you, S/Sgt. West?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, it is. And ---

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- as it's noted in the Foundational  
6 Documents, so to expand on that, you think of critical incidents, yeah, Kevin said,  
7 beyond the scope or what typically uniform general duty members would take care of.  
8 So you think of armed and barricaded, hostage taking, and even to the -- like, high-risk  
9 warrant service. So you think of along those lines, it's something that just is the  
10 elevated risk to the public, elevated risk to the police as well.

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And are you able to give me some  
12 insight into who is it that decides what is a critical incident?

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, basically, and this goes down to how  
14 the process works in this division, is when our frontline officers, our uniform officers are  
15 dealing with some matter, often they'll realize it's beyond their ability to deal with the  
16 incident with what they have at hand. Then from there, a call will be made to a Critical  
17 Incident Commander, whoever's on call, discussions, so the decision usually rests -- will  
18 rest with the Critical Incident Commander with -- once there's -- information is provided,  
19 if it meets the threshold of a critical incident, which then prompts the process of moving  
20 forward from there.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So that decision rests with the Critical  
22 Incident Commander as to what steps are taken if a threshold is met?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And the decision that's being made by the  
25 Critical Incident Commander is made in response to information that's being provided  
26 from who?

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** From who could be from the Risk Manager,  
28 it could be the on-scene Commander, it could be somebody within that chain, that

1 information chain, so there's -- it's not set in stone as to who actually calls the Critical  
2 Incident Commander, but we're available 24 -- being on-call, we're available 24/7, and  
3 it's -- a lot of times it's who's the person in best position to provide that information to us.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But I'm getting the impression that it's the  
5 Critical Incident Commander that makes the decision if this is a critical incident such  
6 that it triggers something called the Critical Incident Package.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that's done on the basis of  
9 conversations that you may have with a number of people, and it doesn't really matter  
10 who they are, just what their basis of knowledge is?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, really it comes down to who's in the  
12 best position ---

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- that -- to provide that information. And it  
15 may be times where the on-scene person, Commander, is so involved in what is going  
16 on, he has to rely on whether it's the Risk Manager or somebody else to provide, so it's  
17 very dependent -- situationally dependent. And then once we start involving whether it's  
18 high-risk warrants, unplanned events, then it's somebody different again.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So it's -- there's no set that it has to be this  
21 person that calls.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** In an unplanned event, you're making the  
23 decision of what is a critical incident, such that it determines what kind of resources are  
24 deployed, on the basis of telephone calls, is that it?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sound right, S/Sgt. Surette?

27 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah. And I think it's important to note  
28 as well that we often -- if we're not getting all the information we want from that initial



1 caller, whether it be the risk manager or detachment commander somewhere, we may  
2 very well say, "Well, who's your top guy on the scene? Who's running the show on the  
3 ground?" And we may call that person for further clarification. And quite often -- or not  
4 quite often but often we end up providing advice as opposed to activating the Critical  
5 Incident Package; quite often we would flesh out the situation with them, provide some  
6 advice or guidance or suggestions, and have them let us know how that goes before we  
7 make a decision.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So I understand there are different  
9 types of mobilization of the package. Who decides the extent of the Critical Incident  
10 Package being mobilized?

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** The commander, the Incident  
12 Commander.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** The Critical Incident Commander. And  
14 how is that done; on the basis of information in those phone calls that you have as well?

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Does that sound right, S/Sgt. West?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct. So it's based on the  
20 information provided, and lots of time with the follow-up conversation with the ERT  
21 commander as to what -- the appropriate resources for the situation at hand.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Do you gentlemen feel that this is  
23 a productive and/or efficient way of making determinations for the deployment of  
24 services?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I do. The division has moved forward  
26 in processes over the last number of years where we've tried to take out some phone  
27 calls, the in-between phone calls as almost going too far up the command structure to  
28 have information funnelled down.

1                   The best process we've come up with is to kind of have that more  
2 direct line of conversation right to the Critical Incident Commander because there's  
3 where -- the Critical Incident Commanders are the persons that have the knowledge,  
4 have the training to understand what the process is, what the package -- what the  
5 Critical Incident Package can bring to the table.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I would agree. As well as the way it  
8 was before, the calls may go up the line and back down to us, and the questions that we  
9 had weren't being answered by someone who was third-, fourth-, or fifth-party removed.  
10 So we had lobbied for the change to the current standard, which was accepted.

11                   But I think it's worthy to note as well that once we make that  
12 determination, we still do need the authorization from the Support Services Officer to  
13 activate the package, but generally speaking, he may have some questions, clearly,  
14 when we call him for that authorization but, generally speaking, he defers to our opinion  
15 on that.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay, very good.

17                   Then what I would do is ask that we proceed on to talking about the  
18 callout in this case, and the initiation of the Critical Incident Package. And I'm going to  
19 ask Madam Registrar to bring up the Foundational Document, in particular page 40,  
20 paragraph 95. And this is simply an introductory paragraph with respect to timing and  
21 who's doing what at the time.

22                   So it indicates:

23                                    "At 10:42 p.m., S/Sgt. Halliday called S/Sgt. West,  
24                                    who was one of the on-call critical incident  
25                                    commanders....advised...West of the report of multiple  
26                                    people shot and houses on fire in Portapique. S/Sgt.  
27                                    Halliday requested that S/Sgt. West mobilize the  
28                                    RCMP [ERT or the] Emergency Response Team and

1 the CIC package. S/Sgt. West's notes indicate that  
2 detachment members were on scene,...the  
3 perpetrator 'may have been associated to a police  
4 vehicle.' S/Sgt. West agreed...the situation fell within  
5 the criteria of a critical incident."

6 So there are a couple of things of significance in that. First of all,  
7 S/Sgt. Halliday is, it would appear, requesting the CIC package and mobilizing of the  
8 emergency response. Is that S/Sgt. Halliday's role, in terms of what's going on at this  
9 early stage?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He's calling me to provide information on  
11 what he has and requesting that the Critical Incident Package be stood up.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. His -- whether it's his role or  
14 whomever calls us, their role was to provide us with the information. He may be calling  
15 us as a DANCO, he may be calling as the OpsOff. I'm not sure what he's calling -- what  
16 role he's filling.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** But he's -- he's basically calling us to  
19 request the assistance because it's beyond scope of -- scope and ability of the frontline  
20 officers to deal with.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** At this stage, of course, though, S/Sgt.  
22 West, ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- he would have been the Ops Officer  
25 for Northeast Nova, right?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. So he's a person of some rank, ---

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- obviously, and significance.

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Does that have any role, in terms of how  
4 you are engaging in with him, obtaining information, processing information, and then  
5 delivering it later?

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No. Basically when somebody calls us with  
7 information, whether it's the senior NCO in that area or it could be the corporal or risk  
8 manager, they're providing us with information what they have and what they need to  
9 have.

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

11                  Any comment on that, S/Sgt. Surette? I know you didn't receive the  
12 call, but in terms of rank structure, in terms of people making calls and making requests,  
13 how does the CIC react?

14                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't think it makes any difference  
15 who's calling, as far as rank. For us, it's a matter, does it meet the threshold for an ERT  
16 package call. And if it does, it does, and if it doesn't, I don't think either of us would  
17 have any problem telling them that.

18                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Let's just explore that a little bit.  
19                  S/Sgt. West, you had no problem suggesting that this met the  
20 criteria for this meeting the Critical Incident Package.

21                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

22                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Am I right there?

23                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No problem at all.

24                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And that was on the basis of one  
25 call?

26                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

27                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

28                  S/Sgt. Surette, what would you have said under the circumstances?

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Much the same. On -- my initial  
2 thoughts on this was that we didn't know where the suspect was because in a -- in what  
3 we would term a traditional ERT call, we normally have containment of a confined area  
4 or building. It's not always that way, as we all know but that's -- and so quite often in  
5 the field we get calls from detachment members where they are asking if it's an ERT  
6 call, they don't know where the suspect is; you know, there's been a domestic and the  
7 perpetrator has departed the scene, and no-one knows where he is. Well, clearly, that's  
8 something we need to flesh out before we'd authorize. But I think in this case, that's  
9 superseded by the magnitude of what was going on, clearly from the beginning.

10                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. There is a procedure that next  
11 needs to be followed, once a determination is made that the Critical Incident Package to  
12 be engaged, what's that procedure, S/Sgt. West?

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. And this is related to what Kevin  
14 expressed earlier. At the Critical Incident Commander level, we do not have the  
15 authority to call out the package, for lack of a better term. The deployment of our  
16 Emergency Response Team and all the -- parts that come with it rests at the Support  
17 Services Officer level. So once I spoke with S/Sgt. Halliday that evening, my next call  
18 was to Supt. Darren Campbell, briefed him on what Steve had told me, and then  
19 received he approval to call out the Critical Incident Package.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Do you see that as a problem, in  
21 terms of timing, response capability; that is, Halliday to West to Campbell and then to  
22 Mills? We have a number of steps there.

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, it's ---

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Do you see an ability to eliminate any  
25 steps in that regard and from a timing point of view?

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think when we're looking at the timing side  
27 of it, we're talking it happens in a matter of minutes. Like, the way it's set up in this  
28 division, and I believe most divisions are the same, it's the authority to deploy the

1 Emergency Response Team is -- rests at the Support Services Officer.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But as the Critical Incident Commander  
3 with the training, the experience, the exposure to these types of issues, would you like  
4 the ability to make that call yourself.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I think it still had -- there's value within  
6 the process of having the Support Services, they're the divisional resources, they're -- to  
7 have them be the say in the deployment of our Critical Incident Package.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. Surette?

9 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, along with that, I think we would  
10 be notifying the chain of command anyway. So that call really doesn't slow anything  
11 down.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I hope we'll talk about this; the command  
15 issues a little later, but I appreciate your ---

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The one thing I'd like to add to that when  
17 we're talking about -- when we're talking about deployment of the Critical Incident  
18 Package, we're talking about 30-plus specialized resources that are coming from  
19 throughout the division. These are some members that are in fulltime positions, there  
20 are members that are in part-time positions with various responsibilities. So we're  
21 talking about mobilizing 20, 30-plus regular members from this division -- in a division  
22 that's just under 1,000 members, so you're taking 30-plus resources away from their  
23 substantive roles, up to 30 from their substantive roles, so...

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. But in terms of the Critical Incident  
25 Commander having ultimate control over the incident, ---

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- has ultimate control over the incident  
28 except for the ability o call out the package, is that right?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think that's fair statement.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

3                   Sound right, S/Sgt. Surette?

4                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I wanted just to finally speak about  
6 the issue that emerged in that paragraph 95; that is, information from:

7                                   "...West's notes indicate that detachment members  
8                                   were on scene, and...the perpetrator 'may have been  
9                                   associated to a police vehicle.'"

10                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Those are from your notes, ---

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- as itemized in paragraph 95. That is  
14 kind of careful wording, "may have been associated". What information did you have  
15 with respect to a police vehicle at that time?

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe what I -- what Staff Halliday had  
17 told me is that it's -- basically said there may have been a police vehicle involved and he  
18 was -- and he was going to take efforts, make efforts to ascertain if there were any  
19 police vehicles unaccounted for.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Did you make any further inquiries  
21 as to or would you in that position have made inquiries as to, "What do you mean?  
22 What in the world do you mean by a police vehicle being involved?"?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't recall our exact conversation.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And what did you take from that  
25 conversation about the status of the police vehicle? What kind of police vehicle?

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, with what he said, a police vehicle. I --  
27 nothing more.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Very good.

1                   When the call comes, then you as the Critical Incident Commander  
2 have to activate some protocols as well, I presume.

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And those are, briefly, Staff Sergeant  
5 West?

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, from -- once it's my -- have the  
7 authority to mobilize the critical incident package, then my call was to Emergency  
8 Response Team team leader, which was Corporal Tim Mills at the time, gave him a  
9 brief lowdown and then get Tim to start mobilizing his resources.

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Corporal Tim Mills is a person you  
11 knew?

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

13                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You had a working relationship with him?

14                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I've worked with him on a number of  
15 occasions.

16                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. In critical incidents?

17                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

18                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. In terms of your position at that  
19 point, what is it that the -- you do as the responding Critical Incident Commander?

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Once I ensure that the critical incident  
21 package is being stood up, for lack of a better term, then it's my -- my process then is --  
22 I'm getting this call, I'm at home, okay. So then it's I need to get to headquarters, get  
23 geared up and then start heading towards Portapique to take -- take -- get my command  
24 post set up.

25                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And I understand that "gearing up"  
26 means obtaining physical gear, obtaining your police protective materiel ---

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

28                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- things of that nature, but also having to



1 engage a scribe? Is that right?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Now, I need to know a little bit  
4 about that because it seems to me that the Critical Incident Commander is the person  
5 that gets access to a scribe, unlike some other parties in this involvement.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I need to know about the importance and  
8 the use of the scribe, please.

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. Within the Critical Incident  
10 Commander side of the house, we always engage a scribe. A scribe is our notetaker.  
11 It's our notetaker, not the incident notetaker. As -- whether it's an incident like  
12 Portapique or other incidents we have, it's -- it's impossible to make notes and do at the  
13 same time, okay. That's what we found. And it just makes part of our job a little easier.  
14 They're taking -- they're at our shoulder. As we're moving around,  
15 they're beside us, they're making notes pertaining to what we're doing.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is that part of the critical incident  
17 package, then, having a scribe?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. And how is it that you meet  
20 and/or arrange to have this functional relationship with a scribe? How does that work?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I contact the scribe directly.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Is there a role or -- a role of  
23 scribes?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** At that time, there was -- it was not an on-  
25 call -- well, there is a list of scribes, but we -- there was not an on-call scribe.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I utilized a Sergeant from traffic that I know  
28 quite well that I've worked with over the years that is a scribe, so I called him directly to

1 have him come with me.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So we have an on-call Critical Incident  
3 Commander.

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** We have an on-call critical incident  
6 package, but we don't have, on April -- in April of 2020 an on-call scribe.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. I think that's how it worked. I think  
8 things have changed since then, but ---

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- there -- when you say "on call" you're  
11 taking a paid on-call person.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Things have changed since April?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, they -- I believe they've moved forward  
14 with the scribe portion.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Now, you're both retired so I don't  
16 want to put you in a position ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- where you have to speak about  
19 something that you can't ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- speak about.

22 But did you see -- it seems to me that your -- who was your scribe?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Sergeant Rob Lewis.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And you had a working  
25 relationship with him.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Had a very strong working relationship with  
27 him.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. You make the call to Sergeant

1 Lewis and he's there.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** If he's available.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** If he's available. But he was clearly  
4 available.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Very good.

7 Tell me about scribes. Are there -- is there a training regimen for  
8 scribes?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There is a scribe course.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And can you give us some insight  
11 into what -- what that might be and in terms of how it impacts the Critical Incident  
12 Commander's role?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't have an in-depth knowledge of the  
14 scribe course. I know there is a course that is put on that's specific to the critical  
15 incident program.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Staff Sergeant Surette, are you  
17 able to comment on the importance of having a scribe in your position as a Critical  
18 Incident Commander?

19 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** The importance, yes, absolutely.  
20 Without it, there are many things that are going to get missed.

21 I agree with Jeff, you can't do and write at the same time and some  
22 calls are slower and you have an opportunity to do that, but most calls, including  
23 definitely this one, from my observations, were -- the dynamic nature of the information  
24 coming in made it impossible to receive the information, think about it, make a decision,  
25 pass that along and then write it all down.

26 So the importance of the scribe is -- is of paramount.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you.

28 I'm going to move on, then, to talk about the fact that there were

1 two Critical Incident Commanders in this case.

2 I've described the primary as being Staff Sergeant West and the  
3 associate, perhaps, as being Staff Sergeant Surette. That sound fair to you gentlemen?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, okay.

6 Is that a usual thing, to have two Critical Incident Commanders?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** We've talked in this division. We've had  
8 discussions in our training as to there may be situations where there's a benefit to have  
9 a second Critical Incident Commander present.

10 Depending on the situation, the dynamics, there are times when it  
11 could be beneficial. Not all calls.

12 A couple of key things that we've -- with that, regardless of if there's  
13 a second one there, there's truly -- and I don't know if you say primary and associate or  
14 whatever. There's one Critical Incident Commander that's in control. The second  
15 Critical Incident Commander is there in a support role for anything to maybe some  
16 taskings. There may be just bouncing ideas off it. And I've seen this exercised in some  
17 of our larger exercises as well as in some of our more high-risk executions where we've  
18 had more than one Critical Incident Commander present.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Madam Registrar, if you could  
20 bring up Staff Sergeant Surette's interview with the Mass Casualty Commission from  
21 January 28th, in particular, page 14.

22 There we go. Very efficient.

23 In the middle of that paragraph, Staff Sergeant, I'm just going to ask  
24 you to comment on it. "So that weekend" -- yeah.

25 "So that weekend, Jeff and I -- of that week, Jeff and I  
26 were -- were on call together and he called me at  
27 10:59 p.m., basically told me he didn't have a lot of  
28 details, but he said a call in Economy -- near

1 Economy, is what he said at the time, which shows  
2 we still didn't have a lot of information."

3 So it looks like you got the call very quickly, or relatively quickly,  
4 from Staff Sergeant Jeff West.

5 Is that an unusual thing for you to receive a call like that?

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No. As a matter of fact, I mean, we all  
7 work things a little differently, probably, but Jeff and I had been on call together many  
8 times over the years and we would normally -- if one of us was moving or mobilizing, we  
9 would let the other know immediately ---

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- just for awareness because if -- if  
12 the second CIC is not mobilizing right away, there's always a possibility that that will be  
13 the relief CIC eight or 10 hours down the road, depending.

14 So as I did in this case, I didn't mobilize right away because there  
15 was so many unknowns. The scale was -- was obvious, that there was obviously  
16 fatalities and fires, but we agreed on that initial call that I would hang tight, maybe get  
17 some down time and see if he needed me to come in now or come in later as a relief.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And the obvious point, I suppose, under  
19 these circumstances, as indicated in the -- in the document is that you're at your home  
20 in Nova -- in Yarmouth County, so I'm two and a half -- 2:45 from Halifax and then  
21 another hour to Truro. So we have some geographical issues here that are of  
22 significance in terms of engaging the associate Critical Incident Commander.

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is that something that you two thought  
25 about in terms of engaging an associate Critical Incident Commander being in  
26 Yarmouth, Nova Scotia?

27 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think the initial thought is that we both  
28 know that we're -- that we're both on call and we're both available by virtue of being on

1 call so, you know, had this call been in Digby or Shelburne or Yarmouth, it would have  
2 been the other way around. As a matter of fact, the routine from that end of the  
3 province or Cape Breton is that now you have to wait that extra amount of time for the  
4 ERT package to actually make its way down there and as an Incident Commander,  
5 you're left dealing more with the frontline members than you -- than you would be in a  
6 case closer to Halifax.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** So it goes both ways, right.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No, this I understand. But it seems to me  
10 from the layperson's point of view that four hours from the scene, once you mobilize, at  
11 the best, and that's if weather is good. And I understand it wasn't that good.

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** It doesn't seem like a very practical call  
14 out process.

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Understood.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Does that sound right to you?

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's understood. Again, that was a  
18 decision that we made, was for me to travel up eventually at the second call, ---

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- was for me to travel up. And when I  
21 left, I don't think we had, you know, flushed it out as to whether I was going to be the  
22 second, whether I was going to take over, whether I was going to get up there and get  
23 some downtime and then take over if it was a protracted situation. But at the end of the  
24 day, Jeff was there and Jeff was in charge and it was just a matter of me making my  
25 way there to fill whatever role I could.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. S/Sgt West, there are other  
27 Critical Incident Commanders on the call out role, aren't there, that are geographically a  
28 little closer than Yarmouth County to Portapique?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, there are a number. As I casually  
2 stated earlier, there are six.

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The six Incident Commanders at that time  
5 are around the province. We have one in Cape Breton, Kevin in Yarmouth, we've the  
6 Valley, the city. So ---

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Bible Hill.

8                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Bible Hill. We have a number of -- but  
9 knowing the on-call schedule, I know that Kevin is available. I know he's available.  
10 There's no chasing anybody. We know he's available. We know he can start rolling  
11 that way. And yes, it is four or five hours, but I know he's readily available by phone, by  
12 radio, as he's travelling down as well. He's available to me.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And now that you look back on the  
14 decisions made, and I know Monday morning, quarterbacking ---

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- is a very difficult thing. But if you had  
17 the decision to make over again, would you have deployed a second or a different  
18 associate Critical Incident Commander?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Just because -- well for -- knowing he's on  
20 call, knowing he's available, ---

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- it's the idea of having that available  
23 resource right there ready to roll. I'm not chasing, looking for him, or anything like that.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I know four and a half ---

25                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Yeah.

26                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- is a long way away.

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I did misspeak. I mentioned Bible  
2 Hill. We had an Incident Commander in Bible Hill, but he was currently, at this time, he  
3 was off duty sick following some surgery. So I didn't want to give the wrong impression  
4 ---

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

6                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- that we had an Incident Commander  
7 sitting in Bible Hill.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Further on in the -- maybe we  
9 can bring it up again, Madam Registrar, the page 14 of the Mass Casualty Interview  
10 with you, S/Sgt Surette, there is the discussion -- yeah, down at the bottom. Right in the  
11 middle of what we're looking.

12    “So I got another call at 12:27 on the 19<sup>th</sup>. At 12:27 on  
13 the 19<sup>th</sup> from Steve Halliday. So Steve was acting  
14 operations NCO for Northeast Nova and his substantive  
15 role was DANCO. So basically my counterpart in  
16 Northeast. So he called and he looped in Jeff.” (As  
17 read)

18                   Now, I'm wondering about the command structure here again. I  
19 understand the Critical Incident Commander is -- had contact with you to come assist  
20 Associate CIC, but all of a sudden, we now have Steve Halliday involved. Are you able  
21 to say how that fits in in terms of your responsiveness to this occasion?

22                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I honestly don't know why Steve called  
23 me. Steve and I know each other fairly well. We've trained together. We're both  
24 instructors and stuff like that. Why he called me at that time, I don't know, but he did  
25 loop in Jeff. And I just remember him, I have in my notes the details of that call that I  
26 recall as to what the situation was. And I think he was probably trying to impress upon  
27 on the magnitude of the call. And he certainly did suggest that we might want to bring  
28 two CICs in, but at the end of the day, after that call, Jeff and I spoke privately and we



1 made that decision.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Did you see that as any sort of  
3 confusion of command or too many cooks in the kitchen at this point?

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I didn't.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. S/Sgt West, any concern of Acting  
6 Officer Halliday being involved?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No? Is that something that you would  
9 expect to take place, in terms of your initial mobilization as the Critical Incident  
10 Commander? To have that uniform side of the house, so to speak, involved?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I can't recall that type of call before, that  
12 -- from the uniform side.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** My experience may be a little bit  
14 different because I generally have a longer way to drive as an Incident Commander and  
15 I have, many times in the past, had conversations, ongoing conversations as I make my  
16 way to the scene.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** That's true. And I'm wondering is that the  
18 case when you're dealing with uniform in command at the scene? But in this case, you  
19 had a Critical Incident Commander appointed.

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. And you still would be dealing with  
22 a uniformed commander?

23 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Oh, no. I'm sorry. I thought the  
24 question was while we're on route, do we deal with ---

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- with uniform.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** So the answer for that would normally,

1 for me, be yes. In this case here, after that call and Jeff and I spoke, I didn't speak to  
2 anybody other than Jeff on the way up.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. Very good. How easy is  
4 that, S/Sgt Surette, to communicate with the Critical Incident Commander as you're  
5 driving up the South Shore of Nova Scotia?

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I was monitoring the radio. And I  
7 called you, I believe, twice on the way up. And both times I kind of picked my time  
8 when there seemed to be a bit of a lull.

9 Now, a lull in the radio traffic doesn't necessarily mean a lull in the  
10 Command Post either, so I'm very cognizant of that. But I felt the need to have a quick  
11 discussion on the way up, those two times I called was necessary.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I think probably the first thing I  
14 said, "Hey, can you talk for a second?" Like, if he's busy, I'm not going to tie him up.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. All right. Let me ask you, yourself,  
16 S/Sgt Surette, about the role of a second Critical Incident Commander. How useful, in  
17 your view, is that?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I think in this case, it was useful  
19 primarily because of the volume of information that was coming in continually, and I was  
20 able to provide, at least I think, in my mind, I think I was able to provide a little bit of a  
21 filter. There was a lot of information coming at Jeff from a lot of sources. So I was able  
22 to provide a little bit of a filter there, I think.

23 In addition to that, I think Jeff and I had many conversations. When  
24 you have somebody who is likeminded, like-trained, like-experienced, and you're  
25 dealing with this situation which, let's face it, is a situation none of us had dealt with a  
26 situation of this magnitude before, we were able to bounce some ideas back and forth. I  
27 think I tried and I think I was successful in never stepping on Jeff's toes as the  
28 commander, but I also wanted to initiate several conversations with him to make sure

1 that we were on the same page, you know. And I think it was helpful from that  
2 perspective, but I guess I would leave that for Jeff to say.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But from your perspective, how  
4 comfortable were you in the role as the associate or the second Critical Incident  
5 Commander?

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I was comfortable in the fact that  
7 Jeff was doing everything that I would have done. But it is difficult, after years of  
8 training and police work, and Type A personalities, to step back.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

10 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Having said that, I recognized that as  
11 my role that night, ---

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- and I don't believe I overstepped  
14 that.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Anything, S/Sgt West?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, nothing.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Let's move on then to Command  
18 Post designation and selection. This is an area that perhaps, Madam Registrar, if you  
19 could bring up page 89, paragraph 190 for introductory purposes?

20 "At 12:12 a.m., S/Sgt. West spoke with S/Sgt. Carroll,  
21 who confirmed he would contact S/Sgt. Royce MacRae  
22 with the Crisis Negotiation Team. Two minutes later,  
23 ERT team leader [...] Mills spoke with CIC West and  
24 advised [him] that, once ERT arrived, they would stage at  
25 Portapique Beach Road. S/Sgt. West instead requested  
26 [the] ERT attend first at the Bass River fire hall."

27 So once again, there's a couple of things in there. The Bass River  
28 Fire Hall was designated by somebody, somewhere, at sometime, as the Command

1 Post.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Are you able to provide us insight in that  
4 regard?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. Early on, just prior to that, I don't recall  
6 whom my conversation was with from the uniform side, but I requested that they identify  
7 a Command Post for us in the area. I don't know the area. I didn't realize that Bass  
8 River was past -- you'd have to travel through what we'd call the hot zone to get to it.  
9 So initially, they identified Bass River as being the location for the  
10 fire hall.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And just to be clear, "they", are you able  
12 to give us an insight as to who that is?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe I got that from S/Sgt Al Carroll. I  
14 think that's where I ---

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But you're not sure?

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I'm not sure.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No. Okay. Very good. Continue. I didn't  
18 mean to interrupt you.

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, so once my commentary there to Tim  
20 was, I believe they'd be passing the Bass River Fire Hall before they got to Portapique.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I see. Okay. I guess my question would  
22 be to you. Even if the Bass River Fire Hall is the appropriate place, ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and it's clear that it wasn't, ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in hindsight, why would the ERT be  
27 attending at that location, as opposed to the hot zone specifically at that earliest stage?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** A lot of times, sometimes they will stop at a

1 location close by to stage, get prepped, get mission ready from there to move forward.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So that was the thought process from that.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Keeping in mind, of course, that time is  
5 always of the essence ---

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in these types of situations, I would  
8 have thought it would not have been that productive of a move to have him go to the  
9 Command Post as opposed to the scene.

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There would have already been the IA team  
11 that was moving forward prior to Tim.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I see. Okay. So I guess the more  
13 general question I might have is ---

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- this Bass River Fire Hall, you didn't  
16 know where it was?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You had no familiarity with it. Why are we  
19 having a Command Post set up in a fire hall in a rural district anyway?

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. Command Posts we've used various  
21 locations, could be fire halls, could be community halls, could be ---

22 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Legions. Could be legions.

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- could be on the side of the road in a  
24 Suburban.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So we were looking for -- we wanted  
27 something that was in the vicinity of our location, but outside of what we consider the  
28 hot zone, that would allow for a staging area, a large parking lot, a room large enough to

1 comfortably, as comfortably as you could, facilitate a Command Post with -- and the  
2 resources in it. So typically, we found in rural Nova Scotia there's an abundance of fire  
3 halls. There's not too many communities you go by that won't have a fire hall. Most fire  
4 halls will have some sort of meeting room, conference room that we leverage quite  
5 often.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm. So this desire to leverage a  
7 community hall or a fire hall ---

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- this is something that has been  
10 traditionally done by the Critical Incident Command team?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, it is.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Any thought given to abandoning  
13 that approach and setting up a permanent Command Post, either at headquarters or  
14 otherwise, engaging the use of technology, such that you don't have to spend so much  
15 time getting to where you need ---

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- think you need to be?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and there's always conversation as to  
19 moving forward, best practices ---

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think it's very important to make note,  
22 before making those leaps to say, okay, we're going to run it out of a tech place, or  
23 wherever, where we have all the tools, that's something that has to be -- table talk that  
24 has to be exercised, that has to be really run through the process to know that those  
25 types will work, because with rural Nova Scotia, we have -- there's always going to be  
26 communication's issue, okay, whether it's the cell phone, radios, whatever. We want to  
27 make sure -- if we're going to run it out of a centralized hub, for lack of a better term ---

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- we want to be -- we'd like -- we'd probably  
2 want to be very sure that the system has been exercised fully and knows that, you know  
3 what, it will work in Briar Island, it will work if we're called to the Meat Cove, those type  
4 of things.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. So my question to you about  
6 setting up Command Post in a fire hall, now that you've been through a number of years  
7 of ---

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- experience and also went through this  
10 Portapique ---

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- experience, do you have any  
13 comments with respect to the effectiveness of actually setting up a Command Post eight  
14 kilometres away from the hot zone for command decisions?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm. It's -- there are pros and cons to  
16 being in the proximity ---

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

18                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- okay. It allows for face-to-face flow of  
19 information, whether it's coming from the Emergency Response Team team leader, or  
20 from maybe the GIS NCO investigators that are assigned under the investigative side,  
21 so it allows for that flow of information. I'd say the face-to-face, there's always value in  
22 that.

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm. Okay. S/Sgt. Surette, do you have  
24 any comments in terms of -- I know you can't talk about Bass River, you weren't there at  
25 that stage, but my question was a little bit more general in terms of rural Command  
26 Posts ---

27                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- being an effective tool for the CIC.

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think the thought process for years  
2 has been that, you know, the CIC is tightly tied to the ERT team and the negotiators.  
3 And the idea has always been if you bring that whole package to the scene or to a  
4 Command Post nearby, then, yeah, you can have that face-to-face, you can have --  
5 more easily have those conversations with people that have to be -- as the situation  
6 evolves. I understand, like, there are pros and cons, you know, time to get there, but  
7 keep in mind, the ERT team and the EDU and the negotiators, they have to get there as  
8 well; right? So the Incident Commander is just another cog in that wheel. So getting  
9 there, that's going to take time regardless.

10                   Some of the benefits, yeah, I think probably with advances in  
11 technology, running it from a centralized location may work, but I never thought I'd say  
12 this about myself, but maybe I am old school. To me, I want to be closer. I want to be  
13 able to get a feel for what's going on as opposed to being detached, 2 or 300 kilometres  
14 away and looking at a screen.

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I know a little bit about feeling old school  
16 sometimes, but do you think that technological advancements may assuage your  
17 thinking in that regard; that is, you know, maybe it's easier to have a permanent  
18 Command Post somewhere.

19                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah. No, I would agree that  
20 technology has come a long way. Sometimes we're slow to get it, but I think that would  
21 be the primary benefit of having a centralized Command Post.

22                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. In terms of the Command Post  
23 that was structured eventually at the Great Village Fire Hall, not the Bass River ---

24                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's correct.

25                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- Fire Hall, did -- is there technological  
26 engagements and processes that take time to actually get the Command Post up and  
27 running?

28                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess with that, it depends on, like, there



1 are resources that are getting there.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And I think probably what you may be  
4 alluding to is the radio system side of the host. And we -- because that would be one  
5 piece of technology that's brought with the radio tech, also, the Emergency Response  
6 Team brings a tech support guy as well, that he has to come and set up his gear as  
7 well.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And I guess what I'm saying is  
9 you're lugging gear to ---

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- the scene ---

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- for limited purposes, and I'm  
14 wondering whether that's an effective use of law enforcement resources.

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, I think you'd have to do that  
16 anyway. That -- the radio gear itself, quite often they have to set up an XO repeater for  
17 reception, and if they are not there, if they're also in a centralized location in Dartmouth  
18 or Halifax, that's not going to be of any benefit to that end of the operation.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

20 Madam Registrar, can we bring up page 104, paragraph 219,  
21 please?

22 And I'll ask you to comment, S/Sgt. West, on what appears to be  
23 difficulties yourself getting to the Bass River Fire Hall. So paragraph 219 says,

24 "Meanwhile, S/Sgt. West was travelling to the  
25 Command Post. As his vehicle approached [...]  
26 Great Village [...], he sought directions to the "Bass  
27 Fire Hall" and was redirected to Great Village..."

28 So and in that paragraph, there's excerpts from the Colchester

1 radio that indicate between 12:52 and 12:53, you had indicated that you felt you were  
2 lost. And do you recall that?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Are you able to provide us some  
5 context and insight, because I'm lost coming from the Critical Incident Commander ---

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm lost ---

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- raises some concerns.

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I took the exit before I -- one exit early.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Oh.

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So I was on the old highway longer than I  
11 needed to be.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. Okay. And I guess this would take  
13 me back to my earlier question ---

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- given the fact that the Critical Incident  
16 Commander is lost, for whatever period of time ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- do you think this is a useful  
19 expenditure of your resources and time getting to a community hall?

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, at that time, that was our process.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Okay.

22 Were you driving?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I was.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. You have a scribe who was taking  
25 notes.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You're obtaining information.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Why is it you have no driver?

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, with myself and the scribe, it's -- I need  
3 him making notes. I'm driving. That's -- that was what was available to us.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Okay. All right.

5                   Was there GPS available for you to find out where Bass River Fire  
6 Hall was at that point?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm trying -- I can't recall if there was an  
8 MWS in that vehicle I was driving or not.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I know from personal experience  
10 that it -- I've got lost ---

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in rural Nova Scotia before.

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** We wouldn't be the first one, but I'm not --  
15 -

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- a Critical Incident Commander and the  
18 concern would be obviously by Nova Scotians that that's something that shouldn't  
19 happen.

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Any comment in that regard?

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't quite understand. Could you just ---

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

24                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- state that again for me, please?

25                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sure, that the Critical Incident

26 Commander ---

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- attending at a critical incident ---

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- goes over the air ---

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and indicates I think I'm lost.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I -- because I didn't come to the fire  
6 hall as quick as I thought I was. I knew I was on the right road. I just ---

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- needed to go further.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Any remedy for the Critical Incident  
10 getting -- the Critical Incident Commander potentially getting lost that you can think of?

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I guess, GPS.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Okay.

13                   Any comments, S/Sgt. Surette?

14                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No? All right.

16                   Let's move on then to the arrival at the Command Post.

17                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And I think you gentleman can provide a  
19 great deal of insight for us with respect to the structure of the Command Post.

20                   Page 112, paragraph 230, Madam Registrar.

21                   As a jumping point,

22                                    "At approximately 1:02 a.m. on April 19[th], S/Sgt.

23                                   West arrived at the Great Village fire hall Command

24                                   Post. In his interview with the Mass Casualty

25                                   Commission, [he said]:

26                                   So, once I arrive at the command post, I start seeing

27                                   who we have there and kind of get our command post

28                                   set up, start to get that point where I'm comfortable

1 with taking control because I should go back. Like  
2 during this time once they'd called me, I got a critical  
3 incident package rolling. I'd been on the phone with  
4 Steve Halliday, been on the phone with Tim Mills kind  
5 of getting everything going. I'm still not -- I haven't  
6 taken control yet, okay. That is still the uniform side  
7 of the house is still in control."

8 Now, when you arrive at the command post at Great Village after  
9 we get that straightened out, who was there?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There was uniformed resources. I believe  
11 there was an -- EHS was staged there as well.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** When you say "uniformed resources", are  
13 you able to give us more detail of who that might have been?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe it was Dave Lilly was there with the  
15 children in the vehicle.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. That's Sergeant Dave Lilly ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, sorry.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- right?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** He was attending to the children at that  
21 point?

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** He had his hands full.

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Any other uniformed members?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall who else was there.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Very good.

28 EHS was there?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Anyone else there in a position  
3 of command?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Actually, I don't recall who else was there.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. To be entirely accurate, are you  
6 having conversations with Constables Beselt, Patton and Merchant in Portapique  
7 proper?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No? Okay.  
10 You are conversing, however, regularly with Corporal Mills of the  
11 ERT team.

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. And in terms of you determining  
14 what your next steps are, how is that being made as you transport to Great Village?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, initially the idea was we wanted to get  
16 Corporal Mills and his team there, get into the hot zone, establish their position in there  
17 and then move forward with what information we were able to glean as we -- once they  
18 were in there and decide what our taskings were, depending on what was happening at  
19 that point or what information we were receiving.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And did you make any strategic  
21 decisions as the commanding -- as the Critical Incident Commander as you were  
22 arriving at the command post or when you first arrived at the command post?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No? Okay.

25                   And why's that?

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't -- I had not taken command yet.

27                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Very good.

28                   Tell us about that, please. What do you mean by you had not taken

1 command?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, once -- once I arrive, I need to get --  
3 gather what information I can, get in a position where I'm comfortable, I'll be able to go  
4 on the air and announce that I am in control ---

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- okay. I'm the Critical Incident  
7 Commander and I have control of the matter.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So when you say that the uniformed side  
9 of the house is still in control, what exactly do you mean by that?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That would be whether it's risk manager or  
11 whoever the uniform ---

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- commander is at that time.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. And that clarity's important to  
15 me. It doesn't mean that there was uniforms at the command post in control.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** There were uniformed officers at the  
18 command -- at the command post, but they were not the command team. All right.

19 Okay. So did you have any engagement, then, with the uniformed  
20 side of the house as you were setting up the command post?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Just -- I believe just a quick conversation  
22 with Staff Sergeant Lilly that he -- that had the kids, and they were going to be  
23 transported to the hospital.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So how do you engage with the  
25 uniformed side of the house and their command, the command structure they're in at  
26 that point when you arrive? What takes place with ---

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** With that?

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, once I get there and get set up, I had a  
2 conversation with Steve Halliday and I told -- ask -- told him that I'd be taking over  
3 command and that I'd go on the air and announce that I'm at the command post, I have  
4 command.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right.  
6                   So when you get to the command post, what is the state of its  
7 setup?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There is no setup yet.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** None yet?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

11                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** None at all?

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

13                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So is it your role as the Critical Incident  
14 Commander to engage in the time-consuming process of setting up the -- the  
15 machinations of the command post?

16                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, the command post is the room.

17                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

18                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** What I would set up when I have an  
19 opportunity would be basically our boards on the wall. I'd have our scribe set up.

20                         The radio tech sets up the radio. The crisis negotiation team  
21 members, they'd set up whatever they needed. The -- and then once the general duty  
22 commander got there, he'd set up what he needed.

23                         So the physical hands-on of doing stuff in the command post, that  
24 would not fall to the Critical Incident Commander.

25                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So when the Critical Incident Commander  
26 arrives at the Great Village fire hall, it's pretty bare bones at that point, eh?

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

28                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And your role, then, is to liaise with



1 other members of the command triangle ---

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and set that command post up.

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. So they've already been mobilized.

5 They're already en route, so once -- they bring the tools they need for whatever for their  
6 tasking.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Gotcha.

8 So Staff Sergeant Surette, when you arrived at 5:48 a.m. things  
9 were different, weren't they?

10 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Completely.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** It was a fully-functional command --  
12 command post?

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I would say, yes.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Just Staff Sergeant West's  
15 experience of arriving at a command post in its early stages, is that consistent with your  
16 experience?

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Having to set everything up from  
19 scratch?

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Pretty much.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. That might take me back to the  
22 question I had before.

23 Wouldn't it be useful to have a command post set up and running at  
24 the moment you get in there as a Critical Incident Commander?

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I don't think we're going to argue  
26 with you on that point, but there's value in both.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you.

28 All right. Tell me about public communications at this time, Staff

1 Sergeant West. Do you have any engagement with informing the public about the  
2 situation?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I had no involvement in that.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Would you have thought about the  
5 necessity or the importance of public communications from this early stage as you set  
6 up the command post?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There's always -- yeah. There's always  
8 consideration, thought towards that, the public.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So do you recall thinking and/or  
10 considering a plan with respect to public communications at these early stages of the  
11 command post?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't recall when conversations or thoughts  
13 would be.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Am I correct to say at these  
15 early stages of the process it's an information-gathering task from the Critical Incident  
16 Commander's point of view?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Early on because of information  
18 gathering and then what our taskings are, what's important now, what do we need to  
19 address.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. Are you -- you're getting a lot of  
21 information coming in relatively quickly at this early stage.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** There's a lot of information that was coming  
23 in throughout the entire process.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And that information is coming  
25 from ERT and from general duty and other sources.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Is there any way the Critical  
28 Incident Commander has, at those early stages, of filtering the information for purposes

1 of making it prioritized so that you can gauge your decision-making process?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Is there any process? No, there's not. Is  
3 there value in some sort of filtering process? Definitely, whether it's -- there are various  
4 things that could be, but is there value in a filtering process? Yes, there would be.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** How would you be able to do that, Staff  
6 Sergeant West? How would you be able to filter information such that you're only  
7 getting the important stuff at this point?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it could be -- and now, this is more  
9 hypothetically speaking.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Of course.

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Whether it would be dedicated real-time  
12 crime analysts in our comm centre or stuff like -- someone that is able to filter  
13 information, but that's -- that's a position -- that type of thing wouldn't be off the side of  
14 anybody's desk.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand.

16 Did you experience -- I'm going to put this in quotation marks  
17 because it's something I've used periodically -- information overload at that point?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't know if I'd say overload. There's an  
19 abundance and constant inflow of information ---

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- that was coming in throughout that has to  
22 be processed, prioritized, actioned, relevant, so overload. Some people may say  
23 overload, abundance. It's just a constant inflow of information from various sources.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But you're trained to deal with that as a  
25 Critical Incident Commander.

26 Did you have any difficulties yourself, Staff Sergeant Surette,  
27 processing and dealing with the amount of information you were getting that stage at  
28 the command post?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Are you talking to me? Because you said  
2 “Staff Sergeant Surette”?

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I meant -- I’m looking at West and saying  
4 Surette.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sorry. Staff Sergeant Surette -- West, did  
7 you have any problem with that?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** You know, like I say, there’s constant, and  
9 that’s one of the benefits of the scribe, it’s a second set of ears for you. But you -- it’s  
10 impossible to listen to radio traffic, being on the phone and in-person conversation all at  
11 the time. It’s impossible to listen to everything that’s going on.

12                   So there is the opportunity to miss something.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. What do you say about that, Staff  
14 Sergeant Surette?

15                   Got the right guy this time.

16                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I agree.

17                   And certainly on the front end, the first hour or two of setting up  
18 your command post and getting a handle on everything is probably the most busy.

19                   As people settle in -- I think it’s important to know, too, that as  
20 Incident Commanders, we delegate a lot and we have to trust our people.

21                   So in the case of like information flow, there may be some things  
22 that come to the patrol side that the commander of the patrol side in this case, whether  
23 it would have been Halliday or Carroll or MacCallum, they may just deal with that if --  
24 they’ll bring it up to the Incident Commander if they feel that they should.

25                   You have to trust your people to some degree. And as time goes  
26 on, I think we -- we tend to get better, more comfortable in our roles. I mean, time in  
27 any critical incident.

28                   So that initial two hours or so is really busy. And I don’t see a way

1 around that because as an Incident Commander, I don't want anyone filtering my  
2 information too much because I might not get the proper information or the right  
3 information to make -- make that decision, so I don't really see a big way around that.  
4 You're stuck.

5 What helps, though, as Jeff said, is having that scribe or having  
6 people around you that you trust and you know are competent to make sure you're  
7 getting that information.

8 You may not get it on the first -- on the first flow, right. You might  
9 have to ask, "What was that?", right.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So that's kind of what the boards are for,  
11 or what I've learned about the boards. Can you, Staff Sergeant West, tell me about the  
12 boards, and what role they have in terms of information, distribution, and Common  
13 Operating Picture?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The boards, for lack of a better term, are  
15 usually paper sheets put up on the wall, but they are almost like our tracking -- we keep  
16 track of relevant stuff. It's kind of like we have key things or whether from a situation,  
17 our mission, execution, and then command and control, we all these boards we put up,  
18 and it all -- it acts as a way we keep track of certain things that are going on, what our  
19 mission is. It also helps -- it serves as a briefing point for when Kevin came in, for when  
20 Staff Sergeant MacGillivray came in or when Staff Sergeant Morin came in. So it acts  
21 as a brief -- one aspect of a briefing for them.

22 So when we put the boards up, they are -- they're there for the  
23 Critical Incident Commander.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So what goes on them is controlled by  
26 myself, and it's either going on by me or somebody that I direct to in this time. Most of  
27 the stuff went on, Rob Lewis, Sergeant Lewis put most of the stuff on the boards for me.  
28 But they're a tool we use within our SMEAC process of planning our -- working through

1 our mission and our taskings.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So the boards are a priority at the  
3 Command Post, are they?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** They -- like I say, they are a planning tool.  
5 We get to them, we get stuff sometimes, we'll have a wall and we'll get some stuff to put  
6 on them, and it's back and forth, but we don't allow it to take away from what the  
7 priorities are. It's like anything else, what's important now, what do we have time to do.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. But in terms of information  
9 distribution ---

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and Common Operating Picture for  
12 people at the Command Post, the boards is the methodology that's used for that; is it?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The boards are geared towards the Critical  
14 Incident Commanders.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And that is -- that information is up  
16 for you to process ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and engage in because it's there?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sound right, Staff Sergeant Surette?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Okay. So are the boards set up  
23 immediately upon arrival?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe shortly after we got there we had  
25 them out.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So I just want to get a sense of  
27 what the boards are ---

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- from an informational point of view.

2                   And Madam Registrar, the Emergency Response Team  
3 Foundational Document at paragraph 134, and forgive me, I don't know the page.

4                   At page -- paragraph 134—if you scroll down—will give us a sense  
5 of what I believe you're talking about are the boards.

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So I'm looking here at three  
8 photographs from -- I believe that were isolated from the Command Post later on in the  
9 morning. But is this the description, what looks like sheets of white paper with tape on  
10 them ---

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in terms of that? Okay.

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that's what you've used for years?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And you're comfortable with this  
17 methodology?

18                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, in the sense that, you know what, it's  
19 paper and markers.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** You know it's going to work.

22                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And it's easy to add on to. And as I  
24 mentioned, like, our boards are usually based on the SMEAC, and then the --  
25 eventually, if an operation runs long enough, you may see them all around on all the  
26 walls. But we start off with our SMEAC ones, and then you might see some other plans  
27 on there. Or with these, these were boards that were put together from information that  
28 Staff Sergeant MacCallum had put together for me when we were tracking ---

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- residences in that ---

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So -- and the content is less  
4 important to me at this stage as opposed to ---

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Fair.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- methodology ---

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and information distribution.

9                   Does that sound right to you? Is this a familiar process to you, Staff  
10 Sergeant Surette?

11                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes, it is.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Do you have any suggestions from  
13 your role and your experience about whether this is an effective way of communicating  
14 information, or maybe there's a better way of doing it?

15                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** You know, I know it's look rudimentary,  
16 and I look at that, that was a preparation for evacuation. There are boards which are  
17 much more populated than that.

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

19                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** However, I don't really see an  
20 alternative. That -- you could -- you could type it up on a nice little document and put it  
21 up on a -- on the -- with a projector on the wall, but it would serve exactly the same  
22 person. I -- and like as Jeff said, this -- you know you've got paper, you know you've got  
23 markers, and you know it's going to work. You don't have to set up any additional  
24 equipment, and and it served its purpose.

25                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Who's responsible for the boards? Did  
26 you answer that already?

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The responsibility -- the information that  
28 goes on the board is the Critical Incident Commander.



1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Okay. Are you physically the one  
2 doing that or is that scribe?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It could be the scribe, it could be the Critical  
4 Incident Commander. But I -- the key point there is the information that's going on there  
5 is what the Critical Incident Commander has asked to go on there.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. And I think that's important.  
7 If a -- if a general division commander decided they wanted some information known in  
8 the Command Post, would they touch those boards?

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No. Any information that's going on there is  
10 going on either by myself or directed by me.

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay, thank you. All right. In terms of the  
12 physical setup, and the boards are useful to me ---

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in getting a sense of a physical setup,  
15 you also described that the critical -- the Crisis Negotiating Team had a place.

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** This is actually on the second floor of the  
18 Great Village Firehall?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. So the second floor, basically, so a big,  
20 open space on -- at the Great Village Firehall. And so in that space, like our -- we would  
21 have had set up for where the Critical Incident Commanders were working. The Crisis  
22 Negotiating Team, they have a space, and they also require a separate room. I think  
23 they were in the kitchen area. The tech support for ERT were -- was in that room as  
24 well, and along with the radio operator for ERT as well.

25                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right.

26                                   Madam Registrar, page 113, paragraph 231. I just want to ask for  
27 a comment. This is from the Command Decisions document.

28                                   And this is a drawing, paragraph 231, drawing from Staff

1 Sergeant West's timeline notes. You've indicated the Command Post is there. You  
2 then talk about the next paragraph, CIC at CP, Command Post, and at the bottom it  
3 says:

4 "The Uniform Command Team tradition..." (As read)

5 Sorry:

6 "...transitioned to the CP [Command Post] at Great  
7 Village at my request." (As read)

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Now, I'm interested in why you  
10 would have requested to have at that time have the Uniform Command, and who did  
11 you mean by the Uniform Command?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That was Steve -- Staff Sergeant Halliday  
13 and ---

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- whomever he had with him.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The rationale is we -- I wanted to have the  
18 Uniform Command. Typically, we'll have -- when we're set up, we have the Uniform  
19 Command with us in the Command Post.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And in terms of the Critical  
21 Incident, what role is the Uniform Command playing, and why do they need to be at that  
22 Command Post?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** They play a very significant role in the sense  
24 that if you think of a critical incident, the Emergency Response Team, they are in, truly  
25 in the centre, the hot zone, whatever you want to call it, but that's it. The uniform side of  
26 the house, and when I say "uniform", general duty officers, patrol, whatever you want,  
27 they play a significant role as to controlling outer points. So we need to have the  
28 Uniform Commander there, because he's the one that will make stuff happen for us with

1 the uniform side of the house. So we -- it's very beneficial for us to have whoever the  
2 Uniform Commander is in the Command Post with it to direct, to facilitate what we're  
3 requesting from the uniform side of the house in -- in relation to the response to a critical  
4 incident.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And you say it's very important,  
6 and I'm going to say again, what about having them technologically connected at the  
7 Bible Hill detachment or at Headquarters. Why do you need to have them physically  
8 there?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, once again, I guess it goes back to  
10 traditionally that's how we've done it, the benefit of the face-to-face and the interaction  
11 at the Command Post. Because as Kevin had mentioned earlier, and you had  
12 mentioned as well, the inflow of information, okay, making sure we catch everything. So  
13 they're in the Command Post with us. Some -- they're going in information that we may  
14 not be hearing or feeling in a call that we're not hearing, that they can bring to us  
15 directly.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Are you able to estimate or give us  
17 a sense of how long it took to set up the Command Post, Staff Sergeant West? Any  
18 idea?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, when we talk about the set up of it ---

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- okay, the set up for just the Critical  
22 Incident Commander with the stuff on the wall ---

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- but as the radio tech shows up he sets up  
25 his stuff, as the tech guy, support guy for ERT, he sets up. So when it was actually, we  
26 had all the resources in place and they had everything plugged and fired up, I cannot  
27 say.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. Let me ask you, then,

1 about your actual taking of command ---

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and the announcement thereof ---

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in terms of what took place at the  
6 Great Village Firehall.

7 On page 118, Madam Registrar, paragraph 243:

8 "In his interview with the Mass Casualty Commission,  
9 Staff Sergeant West described his radio challenges  
10 and how they were subsequently resolved."

11 And I'll read this quite quickly ---

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- so that we are all on the same page:

14 "I go over the air...one of the struggles initially was  
15 radio coverage. We're in a rural province, our radios,  
16 they're...it's like cell phones; there's areas...because  
17 our radios, I think as they described it, they basically  
18 work off the same cell towers...So, I was having  
19 trouble getting out on the radio, on my portable to say  
20 I was on the scene, I was in control and...stuff. So, it  
21 took me a couple of seconds...a couple of minutes to  
22 [go] through, find a spot where I could stand with my  
23 radio to get on the air."

24 And then the quote goes on to say at some point you even had to  
25 physically move the location next to a window in order to get cell phone coverage in  
26 order to announce your command.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Now, from, once again, S/Sgt West, from

1 a lay person's point of view, that appears to be sort of problematic. That is, the  
2 fundamental pinnacle guy at the top of the triangle ---

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- is trying to announce he's in command  
5 and he can't do that because he's in a rural setting in a Command Post where he has to  
6 stand by a window to do so.

7 Can you comment, please, on that, from your experience?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and like I said, I was having problems,  
9 whether the radio was bonging out or bonking out, I'm not sure the correct terminology,  
10 ---

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- and for what the rational, whether it's too  
13 much traffic or whatever, but it is problematic that we see being able to get radio -- to  
14 get air time to make these announcements.

15 And where I was only operating off a portable radio at that time, it  
16 makes it more difficult, it doesn't have the -- I guess the power, the strength, of a mobile  
17 based station or whatever.

18 The resolution to that was once our radio tech, that's why we -- a lot  
19 of times we have a radio tech come, he brings a mobile base station. Basically a radio  
20 system that would be in a police vehicle is brought in, is plugged in, and an external  
21 antennae set outside. That will alleviate it.

22 But I agree, yes it does impact -- it's an issue when you can't get ---

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And in this case, it may not have  
24 been significant, but certainly there was a degree of delay ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- for the Critical Incident Commander ---

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- to announce to all on scene that he

1 was in command.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You agree with that?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. S/Sgt Surette, you experienced  
6 similar difficulties with radio comms in rural Nova Scotia when responding as a Critical  
7 Incident Commander?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Any suggestions for the  
10 Commissioners with respect to how that might be tackled?

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, you know, I've been involved in  
12 the tactical world since the early 90s and it's been a problem at almost every operation  
13 I've ever been involved in.

14 So what the solution is, I really don't know. We've come a long  
15 way. Our -- the TMR system in this province is generally pretty good. It's when it gets  
16 overloaded.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I don't know what the solution is.  
19 I'm definitely not a techie and I don't know what the solution would be there, but it  
20 certainly would bear some sort of investigation.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Commissioners, I'm going to move on to  
22 mapping next. Is this a good time to break at this point?

23 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Yes, it is, Mr. Burrill. Thank you.  
24 We'll break for 15 minutes.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you.

26 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. The  
27 proceedings are now on break and will resume in 15 minutes.

28 --- Upon breaking at 11:06 a.m.

1 --- Upon resuming at 11:24 a.m.

2 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Welcome back, the  
3 proceedings are again in session.

4 **--- S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE, Resumed:**

5 **--- S/SGT. JEFF WEST, Resumed:**

6 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Burrill. I have a  
7 reminder for you and the two witnesses about the translation services, so we'll wait for  
8 the witnesses to come in.

9 Thank you again, Mr. Burrill.

10 And thank you, officers.

11 We understand that it's a real challenge for the translation services  
12 to keep up, so we would just ask that you speak as slowly as you can and that would be  
13 greatly appreciated. So thank you.

14 **--- EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR. ROGER BURRILL, Continued:**

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** The translation services requested me to  
16 do that as well, so I suspect it's my pace that's speeding you up. But we'll try to  
17 moderate that a little bit.

18 I wanted to make sure, before I moved on to mapping, that I was  
19 fairly providing information to the Commissioners with respect to your roles attending at  
20 the Command Post, because I do want to leave the impression it was just a physical  
21 setting up of material.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I know there are checklists and there are  
24 engagements that are undertaken by the Critical Incident Commander. In particular, I  
25 think you referenced one, the SMEAC checklist.

26 Perhaps it's best if that's explained by you, S/Sgts, in terms of what  
27 that is and what implications it has for your work when you arrive at a Command Post?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** All right. So SMEAC is -- it's a planning tool

1 we use within the Critical Incident -- SMEAC stands for Situation, Mission, Execution,  
2 Admin, and Command and Control, Communications.

3 So basically when we talk about our boards, that's how we set our  
4 boards up, under some of those initial categories. We use -- when we're talking about --  
5 it's a planning tool. It's used widely within the policing environment with the Critical  
6 Incident Program. It's also widely used within the military environment as well.

7 So when we're talking about Situation, basically what do we have?  
8 Okay. Under that, within the Situation, it's location, suspect information, along that.

9 Mission, very simple. What are we here to do? And that includes  
10 what our authorities are to act.

11 Execution. Under the Execution side of the house, that's  
12 everything from our immediate action plans to deliberate action plans, break out plans,  
13 and stuff like that that are on the tactical side.

14 I don't develop those plans. The Emergency Response Team  
15 Team Leader will develop those plans.

16 Then we move on to the Admin side. That's where we will often  
17 categorize what resources we have available to us, what we're requesting when we  
18 have them on site and that.

19 And finally with the Command, the C is Command, Communication  
20 -- Command, Control, and Communication. Basically who we have. Who is in our  
21 command triangle? What are our contact persons? What are the radio channels we're  
22 working on? Information when we're starting to look at turnover plans, sustainability  
23 and all that.

24 That's really what our SMEAC is. It's truly a planning tool. It's one  
25 of the key points within the Critical Incident Commander Training Program, everything is  
26 based on SMEAC when we're developing our response to a critical incident, even in the  
27 training environment or in the real-world environment.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Does that sound right to you, S/Sgt



1 Surette?

2 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Couldn't have explained it better.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So that tool that you're using, ---

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- that planning tool, is that being used  
6 throughout your engagement as a Critical Incident Commander to this incident?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, our SMEAC is basically, it's ongoing.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. Any other tools that you're  
9 using when you're attending at the Command Post for purposes of responding to the  
10 incident?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think that's our big one. That's kind of like  
12 our launching off and then situation-dependent is what's next? We may have -- develop  
13 different plans as it moves on, dependent on what the task at hand is.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you.

15 So let's move on then, Madam Registrar, to the mapping issue.  
16 And in particular, I'd like you to raise S/Sgt West's Mass Casualty Commission  
17 interview, and particularly page 24/25.

18 And this is an interview where Wayne Fowler is making --  
19 interviewing -- asking some questions about mapping at 3059.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I'm just going to read a portion of this  
22 and ask for your response:

23 "Wayne FOWLER: Okay. And so you're in the  
24 Command Post and you're set up before you announce  
25 command in control. Are you able to tell us what you had  
26 accessible to you in regards to mapping, resource  
27 placement, resources available to you as they were  
28 coming on board, or?"

1 Jeff WEST: Early on, mapping, short of maybe  
2 somebody had some Google Maps up, maybe a hand-  
3 drawn of the area. Okay. It's -- Portapique is a fairly  
4 small area, and with the streets and some of the hand-  
5 drawn is kind of, 'Okay. Here's where this -- this is with  
6 the Bay and all of that.' So early on, it was just like I say,  
7 somebody could bring up Google Maps, a hand drawn  
8 map on a piece of flip chart. That was early on kind of  
9 where we're at, where things are happening.  
10 And then as we kept going on, trying to work on, okay,  
11 where are our uniformed resources and what -- and  
12 where are our emergency response resources, where are  
13 they staged, where are they deploying from? But early  
14 on, that would be it." (As read)

15 So are you able to comment in terms of the information early on ---

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- with respect to mapping as it's  
18 described there.

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, as it was kind of laid out there, when I  
20 first got there, I can't remember when it was, but I was presented with a hand-drawn  
21 map. A hand-drawn map was included in my boards ---

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- material. I do not recall who provided that  
24 with me. But at the onset, that was the best that we had and description of the area.

25 As we move forward as resources were arriving at the Command  
26 Post, and I say the main resource would have been the tech support for Emergency  
27 Response Team, Cpl Kevin MacDougall, he comes with laptops and some projection  
28 screen. He's able to bring up some Google Maps or Google Map type material for us to

1 view.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Are you familiar with Pictometry?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I am.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You're familiar that it's a platform that's  
5 useable, accessible, by RCMP?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Was that accessible to you at the  
8 Command Post?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Directly to me, I did not have a laptop with  
10 me.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe Cpl MacDougall would have had  
13 access to that.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Would you, in your position as the  
15 Critical Incident Commander, have mandated him to access that for purposes of making  
16 situational awareness clarified for you?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recall if I asked Cpl MacDougall to  
18 do that, but he would have had that available to him.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Once again, we talked a little  
20 earlier about ---

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- CIIDS ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and the computer ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Integrated ---

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- information ---

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- dispatch system and so on, ---

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- where you can actually have access to  
3 where resources are deployed.

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is that your understanding of how that  
6 works?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. And I know you have some risk  
9 manager experience ---

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

11                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in that regard.

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's correct.

13                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Would you have had access to that  
14 platform for purposes of determining where resources were moving and located?

15                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe, at some point through the night,  
16 somebody did have access to a CIIDS term, whether it's -- a CIIDS mapping. One thing  
17 -- key thing to remember with CIIDS, and we're talking mapping of police resources ---

18                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

19                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- you're mapping police vehicles that are  
20 GPS enabled. So you're mapping where police vehicles that have a mobile work station  
21 in a -- that has been turned in -- turned on and logged into. That will tell you where the  
22 vehicles are. That doesn't necessarily mean our police officers are in that same  
23 location. So when we're talking about mapping through the CIIDS portion of it ---

24                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

25                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- we have to be cognizant of the fact that  
26 that shows where police vehicles with MWR -- MWSs are stationed.

27                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. You now know, of course, in  
28 hindsight, about the importance of the blueberry road in terms of egress from that

1 community. What can you tell me in your role as the Critical Incident Commander you  
2 knew about blueberry road?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** We had no knowledge of that.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And you, of course, didn't arrive  
5 and set up until well after one a.m. in any event.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I was -- by the time I showed up in  
7 Great Village ---

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- we're talking three plus hours post initial  
10 call.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, okay. Thank you.

12 I'm just going to tie this up by making sure that we've got the maps  
13 clarified.

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Madam Registrar, yesterday we had  
16 some maps that were exhibited in these proceedings with S/Sgt. Halliday, in particular,  
17 Exhibit 1462 and Exhibit 1463, if I'm not mistaken.

18 And I'm just going to ask either of you, given your exposure and  
19 your location at the critical -- sorry, the Command Post, whether these are familiar to  
20 you. Have you seen that map before that's displayed?

21 Is this 1462, Madam Registrar? Thank you.

22 This is identified as 1462. Either of you gentlemen recognize that?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recognize that map.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. If we could put up 1463, please,  
25 Madam Registrar?

26 1463 is now before you. Looks like a map of some nature on a  
27 piece of paper. Any comment, gentlemen, about whether you recognize that, either of  
28 you?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recognize that map.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

3                   S/Sgt. Surette?

4                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No? So from your discussion earlier  
6 about hand-drawn maps, are you suggesting that it was a different map that you were  
7 looking at, at that stage?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And are you able to describe  
10 whether the amount of detail on the map that you were looking at was the same quality,  
11 more rudimentary or more sophisticated?

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The map that I was shown, or was looking  
13 at, was more Portapique-side centric.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I see, as opposed to what we'll see in  
15 1463 is both Portapique and Bay Shore side.

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And you're comfortable that it was  
18 a hand-drawn map?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. And forgive me, I think you  
21 answered this, did you -- do you know who drew that or drew that up?

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I do not.

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Very good.

24                   Any further comment you have to say with respect to mapping?

25 Are you concerned now that we look back that the quality of mapping may have been  
26 substandard for a Critical Incident Commander to actually do his job?

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe -- I mean, we're looking at what we  
28 had available to us at the time.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. We work with what we have  
3 available.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Of course.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Is there possibilities of better mapping?  
6 Definitely.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Okay. Let's move on to the issue  
8 of credible leads and movement ---

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- of the ERT team, because I think that  
11 you would have had some role in that, Staff Sergeant.

12                  Page 119, Madam Registrar, paragraph 244. We're moving on to  
13 now what the Command Post has established. 244,

14                                   "Once CIC West had established his command, Cpl.  
15 Mills advised him [...] there[d] been reports of lights  
16 flashing in [...] Five Houses area to the west [...], and  
17 that RM Rehill had directed ERT to head to the Five  
18 Houses area..."

19                  And then there is a brief transcript of radio transmissions from 1:27  
20 to 1:43 -- sorry, 1:27 to 1:28. It looks to me, from looking at that, is that decisions have  
21 been made with respect to locations and response to credible leads in advance of you  
22 taking command. Is that possible?

23                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I believe, because prior to me being on  
24 the air taking command, I believe there could have been conversation between the Risk  
25 Manager and the Emergency Response Team team leader as to what was informations  
26 coming in, was there actual information that ERT needed to move on.

27                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And so at 1:27:56, Sgt. West  
28 indicates,

1 "Copy that. You're going to Bay Shore road."

2 Was that at that point, given your state of information, an  
3 acknowledge of what the ERT were doing, or was that a direction to the ERT?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It was an acknowledgment of it.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And I understand that you rely on  
6 the ERT team from an operational point of view ---

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- to provide you information and to  
9 provide you advice on what their next steps are; is that right?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And is that something that happens  
12 regularly in an incident like this?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Well, with this, and for this set of  
14 circumstances specific ---

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- yeah, it was basically the ERT tasking  
17 was initiated by the Risk Manager with information that was coming in to the Operation  
18 Communication Centre.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Once I had taken over control, then it is still -  
21 - it becomes on me, okay, is this a tasking that we're going to continue on. And with the  
22 information that was coming in three plus hours from the initial, we've got a possible  
23 sighting in the area. It's probably one of the first possible sightings, somebody's in the  
24 backyard with a flashlight, we have a responsibility to investigate that. And given the  
25 circumstances of what was going on, the appropriate response to that would be the  
26 Emergency Response Team to address that information.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So on Monday when the ERT team  
28 members were here, I asked them the question about credible leads ---



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- that is -- this is on the western side ---

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- of the Portapique River.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And we know that there are fires,  
7 structure fires, and there are casualties and deceased in the Portapique community.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What type of analysis was undertaken by  
10 the Critical Incident Commander to authorize and/or permit the ERT team to go over to  
11 the west side in ---

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- response to that lead?

14                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. And as I said just previously ---

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- this is probably the first -- some of the first  
17 information we've had come in, in a number of hours, in relation to possible sightings.  
18 Now we've got somebody in their residence, in the close proximity -- I know we're  
19 saying it's across the bay, across the river, it's not that far away that a person could not  
20 -- it seemed conceivable that a person could travel that -- over that period. So we have  
21 a person saying there's somebody in the backyard with a flashlight. Given what had  
22 transpired, we have an obligation and responsibility to determine whether there's a  
23 threat in that area to that person.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. West, in terms of responding to  
25 credible leads, is that usually initiated by the ERT team leader, or the ERT team, or is  
26 that initiated by the Critical Incident Commander directing the ERT to it?

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It's -- you know, nothing's set in stone ---

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- okay? It's depend who's got -- where that  
2 information is coming and who is funneling it in. It could be some information that ERT  
3 is gathering on the ground. It could be information that's coming in through the  
4 Operation Communications Centre, could be coming in from obviously somebody else,  
5 but when this information comes forward, there is always going to be some sort of  
6 discussion. Is this a credible threat -- we're using a number of different words, but  
7 credible seems to be ---

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- the one of choice. Is this something that  
10 is -- needs to be actioned? And when we put that through our decision-making process,  
11 we think of things why here, why now, what has changed. We also think of is it  
12 necessary, risk effective, and acceptable.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What can you tell us then about your  
14 thinking as the Critical Incident Commander about the credible possibility that the  
15 perpetrator had actually left the community of Portapique, Bay Shore, Five Islands, and  
16 was elsewhere in the province at that time?

17                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, at that point, we had not received any  
18 information to suggest. We were based on -- our decision-making process throughout  
19 those number of hours was based on what we knew at the time, and what we -- and the  
20 majority of our information, we -- would have come in, in those early hours of the  
21 incident, and then as that information's coming in through the night. And one of those  
22 examples would be this report of somebody in the backyard with a flashlight.

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Any comments, S/Sgt. Surette? I  
24 know that you weren't there at this time, but do you have any comment with respect to  
25 the issue of credible leads?

26                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No. I mean, I agree wholeheartedly  
27 with what Jeff's saying. One of the -- he mentioned NRA and everything, another one is  
28 the priorities of life, and at the top of the list is, you know, innocents, public and

1 hostages, with the police second, with the suspect or whoever third, and preservation of  
2 evidence fourth. Well, if you don't go check out that lead, you're not doing a very good  
3 job with that overlay in that decision-making process.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** As you're attending or driving towards  
5 Portapique and consulting with your colleague, are you discussing, thinking, reviewing  
6 the possibility that the perpetrator has actually left Portapique and may be in some other  
7 location in the province?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't recall that we discussed that  
9 specifically. I think, at that point, there was still so many unknowns. I remember, even  
10 though in hindsight now, knowing what I know now, that at one point I remember saying,  
11 that first phone call to Jeff at 2:26, I believe I said, you know, have you considered -- I  
12 was just throwing ideas out. I said, have you considered a containment call out with the  
13 TAV at his residence? Right? I had no idea that his residence was one of the ones that  
14 was burnt at the time. Right?

15 But these were the things that, again, we were still trying to narrow  
16 that circle ---

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- and try to determine where he was.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. All right. I'll move on to the  
20 next topic, perhaps, of significance. And this emerged from ERT discussion on Monday  
21 as well. And that is having the ATAK Ops officer or member embedded at the  
22 Command Post for purposes of facilitating operations.

23 Page 145, Madam Registrar, paragraph 300, I think, speaks to this.

24 So at paragraph 300, it indicates that around 3:15 a.m.,

25 "...West tasked [...] ERT with checking the residence of  
26 the perpetrator at 200 Portapique Beach Road. Cpl. Mills  
27 was then directed to head to the Command Post to  
28 discuss timelines and the upcoming CIC shift change.



1 come up a couple times, that our members were reporting flashing lights. Okay. The  
2 Emergency Response Team were heavily engaged, tasking, from the moment they  
3 arrived right through the night. So we had to look at when can we get to these tasks?  
4 Okay. So now it was a point, Cpl Mills recognized they wanted to -- they need to check  
5 that out. Could our meeting be pushed back?

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. It -- would there have been any  
9 advantage to having a tactical ops officer with ERT actually embedded at the Command  
10 Post at that point?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. And ---

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And I only say that because Cpl Mills and  
13 Cpl Milton seemed to have some commentary on that.

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Let's put it that way.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, there's no disagreement there at all with  
17 the value of having ATAK Ops or some ERT component assigned to the Command  
18 Post.

19 However, on the night of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> -- that period, our Emergency  
20 Response Team was not fully staffed. Okay? Their -- weighed -- these would have  
21 been discussions we had, we weighed taking a trained ERT operator out of the hot  
22 zone, so then you're going initially they respond with 12 and they're up to 13. So you're  
23 taking a trained ERT operator out of the hot zone, out of the response zone, to be ATAK  
24 Ops.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So there's pros and cons, but you looked at  
27 trying to look at the big picture. So Cpl Mills is readily available to me by phone, by  
28 radio, but you've seen radio, you can't rely on two-way conversation for an extended

1 period of time on the radio. So that's why we're looking at that mid -- those early  
2 morning hours where I needed to have my command team back together, ---

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- to have that discussion as to where are  
5 we now? What's next?

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. So you talked to us about SMEAC,

7 ---

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and we've heard referenced to  
10 ICLEAR, ---

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- these terminologies. But there is  
13 something called the command triangle; isn't there?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Could you explain that for us, please?  
16 What the command triangle is?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. So the command triangle, and that's -  
18 - it's -- you'll see a picture of it in our boards.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. The command triangle basically is  
21 made up of the Critical Incident Commander, top of the triangle, okay, there's where the  
22 decision point is. Okay. Within that triangle, so you have -- on one side, you'll have the  
23 Emergency Response Team Team Leader.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** On the other side, you'll have the Crisis  
26 Negotiation Team Team Leader.

27 Those are the three key points of the command triangle.

28 And then under that triangle, you'll see branches for -- one branch

1 will be for the uniform command, the general duty side of the house. So when need  
2 stuff done by the uniform side of the house.

3 On the other side, you'll usually see GIS or MCU written in there.  
4 So we need the investigative side as well for -- all right, it could be who's drafting the  
5 judicial authorization? Who is doing these investigative steps away from that incident  
6 scene?

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But in terms of the command triangle, am  
8 I correct to say that it's meant to be a structure for purposes of being very responsive to  
9 an incident as it emerges?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and basically, it's kind of like --  
11 typically when we're talking about critical incident and we talk about the Command  
12 Triangle, those are the three key people. It's the tactical response and the crisis  
13 negotiation side of the house, as we talked about earlier, traditional critical incidents,  
14 they're armed and barricaded, hostage situations, some sort of communication is going  
15 to be established. So that's why the key point of having the Crisis Negotiation Team in  
16 there, it's kind of like when we're weighing our options, what will this do? What will that  
17 do?

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And I guess my follow up on that is  
19 if you've got the Critical Incident Commander at the pinnacle of the triangle, ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- the Crisis Negotiator Commander at  
22 one of the points ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- of the triangle, and also at the  
25 Command Post, ---

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in this instance, the connecting point  
28 on the triangle, the ERT team leader, ---

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- or ATAK Ops officer, was not within  
3 your grasp at the Command Post. Was that a problem for you in terms of operations?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think given what we had that night, ---

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- when we're looking at resources and ---

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- we all fall back on what we knew at the  
9 time, what resources we had available to us. Okay. Typically if you're looking at a fully  
10 staffed Emergency Response Team, that's 18 members. Okay. Then you have -- once  
11 you're getting close to those numbers, you have the luxury of having that resource with  
12 you. Once you're getting down to 10, 11, 12, 13, you don't -- you've got to weigh the  
13 fact that you're having that person out of the ERT operation. And it makes it very  
14 difficult for Cpl Mills to wear both those hats. And I recognize that. So that's why -- you  
15 recognize what you have and the impact it does have on your command triangle.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. And we'll go to page 158,  
17 paragraph 333, just moving along here.

18                   And between 4:15 a.m. and 4:55 a.m., Cpl Mills actually met with  
19 the CIC West, Royce MacRae, and Stephen Power.

20                   So am I to understand from this paragraph, reviewing the materials,  
21 that this would have been the first time that the third member of the command triangle  
22 actually physically met with you for purposes of planning?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Does that concern you at all,  
25 Critical -- as a Critical Incident Commander? Or are we just back to where we were ---

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think we're just back where -- you know,  
27 ideally, there's no question that it would be ---

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- benefit -- when you have that luxury, to  
2 have ATAK Ops there, or the Team Leader, or whatever you want to refer to him as.

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Okay. Very good.

4                   Any comment, S/Sgt Surette, with respect to that third member of  
5 the triangle being present at the Command Post or otherwise?

6                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, what I can say, I think what we  
7 have to realize is that that command triangle, the ultimate decision rests with the CIC.  
8 That's true. However, it is very collaborative effort and, you know, the value of having  
9 everybody there, including in this case, the uniform and then GIS eventually, present, is  
10 that everybody hears all the ideas.

11                   But the idea that Tim being -- or Cpl Mills being with the team, it  
12 didn't stop Jeff from having those conversations with him. What it inhibited was having  
13 all the conversation together.

14                   So at the end of the day, all that information still funnels up. It's still  
15 going to be Jeff's decision. But again, when you weigh the value of removing one of the  
16 ERT members or being able to consult as an as-needed basis, I think that's the  
17 justification for that decision; right?

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. Okay. Let's move on then to  
19 evacuation plans, because I understand the Critical Incident Commander had quite a  
20 role with respect ---

21                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

22                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- to evacuation plans? Am I right there?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. At page 140, Madam Registrar, at  
25 paragraphs 290 and 291, these paragraphs speak generally to the evacuation planning.  
26 In particular, at 290, under the title "Decision Point", the suspect -- and these are from  
27 your notes, ---

28                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- S/Sgt West:

2                                 “The suspect was still believed to be in the area,  
3                                 Priorities of Life: as this matter was becoming more  
4                                 protracted it was anticipated that an evacuation / shelter  
5                                 in place plan would be required and [that] this information  
6                                 would assist with [the] plan.”

7                                 So at this stage is when you made the evacuation determination.  
8                                 And how is it that evacuation determination came about, as opposed to shelter in place?

9                                 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, discussions were ongoing throughout,  
10                                 and these are discussions I had with Kevin, as well as S/Sgt Halliday, is as it became  
11                                 more protracted, we had to start -- we were starting to, “Okay, how are we going to deal  
12                                 with the residents that are still there?” One of the -- and to develop a plan, a plan that is  
13                                 achievable, or executable by our resources and how can we do that as safely as  
14                                 possible. So part of the initial start planning was determining the knowns, and that's  
15                                 where I went to S/Sgt. MacCallum to say can you put together a list of the knowns as to  
16                                 do we know what people have been spoken to, what residents are believed to be  
17                                 evacuated, and then start building from there, and then get to the point where we have  
18                                 a feasible evacuation plan that we can launch with the assistance of the Emergency  
19                                 Response Team. And it goes back to -- we talked about this, at this time, we were still  
20                                 functioning on the information that we had received early on that there was -- we had --  
21                                 that we had nothing to indicate that our suspect was outside of the area.

22                                 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. So am I correct to suggest that  
23                                 your focus changed to evacuation or shelter in place issues on the basis that things  
24                                 calmed down with respect to the ability to contain the perpetrator?

25                                 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, yes, because we've gotten to the point  
26                                 where, like I said, our Emergency Response Team was very task heavy early on ---

27                                 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

28                                 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- you know, so dealing with what's

1 important now, so now we're thinking, okay, this is becoming more and more protracted.  
2 We've got to start planning it to -- if we move forward.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And can you comment then, please, on  
4 how you felt about the quality of information that you were receiving with respect to  
5 residents still in the community, residents not in the community, residents who may be  
6 in the community?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I guess we'll go back to having -- and  
8 Kevin alluded to this earlier, we have a number of our people in our Command Post with  
9 us and we're tasking people. We have to have some trust in what we're tasking people  
10 to do, that when I'm putting a request forward to S/Sgt. MacCallum, that he's bringing  
11 me information that is sound.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So I showed you earlier those boards ---

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- from the ERT document.

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** That's a manifestation of the information  
17 that you had received from the people you had tasked?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. Any further comment  
20 with respect to early evacuation efforts made at this point? No?

21 Kevin? No? No? All right.

22 Let me ask you then about updating command ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- because at page 147, paragraph 303,  
25 there is reference made to,

26 "According to the timeline of CIC West, at [...] 3:25  
27 [...], he updated Support Services Officer[s]..."

28 And I know from reviewing the materials and the documents that

1 this is not a one-off. This is something that occurs relatively regularly with respect ---

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- to the Critical Incident Commander,  
4 that is, updating the Support Service Officer.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Can you tell me the rationale for that and  
7 whether that's a good investment of time for a Critical Incident Commander?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. I guess the rationale behind it is we  
9 have a large-scale event occurring in this province that will -- the resources that we're  
10 having there impacts our resources across the province. So the value and the theory  
11 behind keeping the Support Services Officer updated on what we have that's ongoing,  
12 this is where we're at, just a brief thing, the rationale behind it, it makes sense to me. It  
13 also allows us where -- to the point where, as I had mentioned, we're well into this  
14 event, that first started, that following -- the previous evening, so we're now we're  
15 getting to the point is we're looking at sustainability, turnover, okay, if this runs beyond  
16 one operational period, we -- we'll require additional resources, not just general duty  
17 resources, but specialized resources, i.e., an Emergency Response Team from J-  
18 Division. So we need to start getting that information out to the Support Services  
19 Officer, because some of those processes will have to be initiated by him.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So the timing on it, we have no -- in this  
22 whole process, there's no set timing that every two hours I have to provide an update to  
23 the Support Services Officer, or anything like that. It looks at when I have an  
24 opportunity to, it's a phone call. It's not a briefing note, it's not anything like that. It's not  
25 labour intensive. It's a phone call to the Support Services Officer to give him a brief  
26 update on, and what, if anything, I'm looking for from him.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** You're going up the chain.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** My question to you is, is that a useful  
2 expenditure of your time, given the critical incident that you're engaged in?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe it is, just because you have the  
4 liberty of when you do it, okay, and you also look at if I'm looking to leverage resources  
5 from another division, okay, that's something that needs to be initiated from the Support  
6 Services side, CrOps side of the host.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. Surette, do you have any comment  
8 on this issue of the regular updating of command?

9                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I agree with everything Jeff said,  
10 with the added -- what he mentioned about having the liberty to be able to do it, it's  
11 better for us to call than to be interrupted at a really bad time to -- by someone who  
12 wants to know what's going on. And don't forget, we are a paramilitary organization, so  
13 there is a chain of command. No matter what you're involved in, there's a chain of  
14 command to follow.

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What about having or arranging in the  
16 critical incident response structure for having that chain of command actually physically  
17 present for purposes of communication?

18                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, I think, you know, just as we as  
19 Incident Commanders, we task our ERT leader and our negotiator and our patrol to do  
20 something, we have been tasked to perform this duty, this function by the chain of  
21 command.

22                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So would it be of advantage or  
23 disadvantage to have your SSO, or your ASSO, or your CrOps officer, or anyone like  
24 that, in the Command Post?

25                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** To me, I do not see it as an advantage. I  
26 think -- and this kind of goes back to one thing Kevin said, we are an organization of  
27 structure and of rank. And by nature, you may -- people may default to somebody  
28 who's of higher rank that's not in the decision-making ---

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I see ---

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- spot.

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I see. Okay. I think that answers the  
4 question.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Great. Let's move on then to another  
7 area of interest for many people, the air support situation.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So at page 148, paragraph 305, Madam  
10 Registrar, your notes indicate that at 3:38, you were updated by S/Sgt. Halliday about  
11 DNR helicopter.

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So you would have known relatively early  
14 in your role as the Critical Incident Commander that there was no access to the RCMP  
15 J-Division helicopter?

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, that's correct, early on Staff Halliday  
17 had advised me that the Air Services out of Moncton was not available.

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Now is this a common experience, an  
19 uncommon experience? Can you make any comment with respect to your experience  
20 as a Critical Incident Commander about that?

21                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. And this is speaking from my  
22 experience, not ---

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes, please.

24                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- anecdotal from what other persons have  
25 said.

26                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Of course.

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I've, throughout my career experience as a  
28 Critical Incident Commander, I think I've been involved, other than the Portapique's call,

1 one other incident where I requested Air Services, and at that -- on that occasion, Air  
2 Services was available to me.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. All right. How important  
4 is the air support piece to your role as a Critical Incident Commander?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think given situational factors, an air  
6 support, air asset can provide a situational aware, lots of information, and it -- and  
7 situational aware, and tools in which we can maybe -- can achieve our tasking, our  
8 mission.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Would it have made any difference to  
10 your decision-making role if you had that there?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** In relation to the entire ---

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, in relation to situational ---

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well ---

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- awareness in terms of what decisions  
15 are made with respect to resource deployment.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it's hard to play the what if.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Sure.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Because you still -- you have to base it on  
19 what you knew at the time.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** If Air Services would have been available to  
22 us, it would have been another avenue to funnel information into the decision-making  
23 process.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, I understand that. That's a fair  
25 answer.

26 With respect to unavailability of Air Services, what's the Critical  
27 Incident Commander know about contingency planning?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** My knowledge, there's no contingency plan

1 for when our air asset is not available.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Any name or a person to contact  
3 in terms of who's the air support guy or air support person?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not have that, no.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. S/Sgt. Surette, I'd asked questions  
6 of S/Sgt. West with respect to the importance of air support. You have any comment on  
7 that in terms of your role as a Critical Incident Commander?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, I don't want to speak in  
9 generalities, but overall, the more equipment you have, the more capabilities you have,  
10 the better off you're going to be. There's no question about that. In relation to this call,  
11 knowing what we know now, it likely wouldn't have made a big difference, but at the  
12 time, it would have been nice to have that FLIR in the air, yes.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Did you know there was no air support or  
14 there were lack of air support as you were travelling to the Command Post?

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

16 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And did you -- were you in a position to  
17 advise your colleague at all with respect to next steps?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I think when we did have that  
19 conversation, I think Steve was -- S/Sgt. Halliday was already looking at an alternate --  
20 alternative.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, and that's the DNR helicopter.

22 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Right.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What do you know about and have you  
24 had any experience with the use of a DNR helicopter in critical incidents before?

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, I'll go back first as far as  
26 contingency planning goes, you asked that question?

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** There is an area of thought where we



1 should turn that back to Air Services. So in other words, if I call Air Services and I say,  
2 "I need the helicopter," and they say, "It's not available." And I say, "Okay. Well, it's  
3 incumbent upon you to find me an aircraft." The problem with that -- and I agree that  
4 that is an alternative, but I've never seen that come to fruition. I've never seen us make  
5 that request and any other aircraft became available.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** There was some discussion on a  
8 previous call a long time ago about a fixed wing coming out of London, Ontario, but that  
9 never materialized either.

10 So I think by experience, if it's not available we -- the most prudent  
11 thing to do is start looking at alternatives.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And that alternative in this case  
13 was the deployment of the DNR helicopter.

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Right.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And just both of you, from an experiential  
16 point of view, are there limitations associated with the DNR helicopter, as opposed to  
17 the J-Div helicopter?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What are those, please?

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I didn't know this at the time, but they  
21 won't fly until daylight which -- understandable. And they do not have FLIR capability as  
22 well.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And I think some communications ---

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Oh yeah. Yeah.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- issues as well. So it doesn't bring the  
27 same tools that the RCMP air asset brings.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And I understand that there were

1 actual communication difficulties in this.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that you were involved in that, S/Sgt.  
4 Surette, am I right?

5 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Can you tell us about that, please?

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Sure. At one point when the DNR --  
8 well, fast forward, when the DNR helicopter did get airborne for us, with a member from  
9 ERT as a spotter, it was discovered that he didn't have access to one of the law  
10 enforcement channels.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Would that be an encryption, ---

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- or an encryption type of channel?

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** My understanding he didn't have that  
17 encryption. The radio was capable of doing that, but he didn't have the proper  
18 encryption tool.

19 So Glen Byrne in the command post at one point turned and  
20 handed me a radio and said, "Here, this is..."

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** How do you mean handed you a radio?

22 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** He literally handed me a radio and  
23 said, "You can talk to the pilot on this." So I took that on. You know, I can relay that  
24 information to Jeff.

25 So I think you'll see in some of the transcripts there's several times  
26 that we tried to communicate but we weren't able to; vice versa as well, so that there  
27 was some issues with that mutual aid channel that we were using.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** It wasn't encrypted either.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And that created some difficulties,  
3 in terms of providing instructions to air support?

4                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Any suggestion on how that  
7 might be improved in the future?

8                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, considering that you're talking  
9 about another agency, it's not like we can force them to keep their encryption data with  
10 the RCMP channels up to date, right?

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. I understand there were also  
12 communication difficulties with respect to the delivery of substantive information to the  
13 pilot as to where he should go and under what circumstances, and that involved you,  
14 S/Sgt. Surette, is that right?

15                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Can you tell us about that, please,  
17 as well?

18                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Would you just ask the question again,  
19 please?

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. I understand there were  
21 communication difficulties with respect to substantive instructions to the pilot about  
22 where to go and how to go and what was going on, and that came from you?

23                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

25                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** So I did try to direct him to the  
26 Glenholme address at one point.

27                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

28                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That went -- actually, that one worked

1 half-decently well. He did get to that area but not before the perpetrator had left. So it  
2 turned out to be of no real value there because at that point he's gone, he's gone. You  
3 don't know which car is his.

4 Another time I know that he stopped -- I believe he stopped for fuel  
5 and weren't aware that he wasn't in the air anymore. I tried to direct him to -- I believe it  
6 was Plains Road where he was unable to go. I may be wrong on that, but it was at one  
7 point. And then at the conclusion of this entire event at 11:25 or :30, I was directing him  
8 to Enfield, and he was already on the ground at that point, in that area.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Had you yourself or you, S/Sgt.  
10 West, had any experience, in terms of communications with DNR pilots of this nature?

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Not really. A long time ago I did -- I  
12 was qualified to operate a police vehicle airside at an airport. There's a certain licensing  
13 procedure, but that was years ago and it's not really congruent.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand. How would you rate the  
15 efficiency of communications with the DNR pilot under these circumstances?

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Poor.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. West?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Nothing to add to that.

19 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Anything that you might be able to  
20 envision that would be able to improve the poor communications with the DNR pilot?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess really, it's the radio systems that are  
22 available to them ---

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- that work within the encrypted  
25 environment within the policing, law enforcement.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Were you gentlemen familiar with any  
27 protocols or prior arrangements with DNR with respect to contingency of the helicopter  
28 or air support for purposes of something like this?

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, we have used them before. I was  
2 peripherally involved with their use in the search for a sunken fishing vessel the year  
3 before in the Annapolis -- or, sorry, the Bay of Fundy.

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

5                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I know we had used them, and  
6 they had been very good.

7                   And I just want to point out, too, that these issues that we're  
8 pointing out, ---

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

10                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- the pilot was fabulous. And, I mean,  
11 they came out to help us at a moment's notice, ---

12                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

13                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- and I don't want to take away from  
14 that at all. But the setup clearly is not ideal.

15                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay, all right.

16                  Let's move on, then, to further discussion about communications  
17 and use of the radio.

18                  We've heard from prior witnesses that in a critical incident,  
19 communications are often the first to go, in terms of difficulties to communicate with  
20 your fellow members and provide instructions. Do you have any comments, either  
21 experientially or in this incident, as to how the comms worked?

22                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, for me I'd say it's -- goes along with  
23 what Kevin said earlier. You know, communications are always going to be an issue  
24 because it goes down to what you're saying, what's being received, overtalk, short and  
25 to-the-point conversations on the radio.

26                  I found that regardless of where I've worked, whether it's been on  
27 this coast, on the West Coast, in the big city, Surrey, or on Salt Spring Island, there's  
28 always -- you're always going to have radio issues. And I feel it's improved here in the

1 province, but it's a rural province with lots of hills, that they're always -- there's going to  
2 be some -- I'm not a tech guy so I don't know what the solution is.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. Surette?

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Much the same. It's -- that adage is  
5 true, it's always -- comms is always the first to fail. Not that it fails all the time, but  
6 there's always -- it seems every operation, post-operation we identify comms issues of  
7 some sort, which I think is why we have access to a number of different channels, to try  
8 to mitigate that to some extent. But, you know, comms are -- and you can have great  
9 comm reception and someone walks into a house and all of a sudden you don't have it  
10 anymore. Stuff like that, right?

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right.

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Can't, you know, predict it.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I want to direct your attention, then, S/Sgt.  
14 West, to page 155, paragraph 322. And this is a broadcast at 4:05 by S/Sgt. West.  
15 Three twenty-two (322) says:

16 "Two minutes later, CIC West reiterated the current  
17 objective of the critical incident response:  
18 '4:05:52...Sgt. WEST...Yeah, Timmy, I just want  
19 to...go over our missing [sic] and all that  
20 stuff...everybody. Just ah -- just a reminder, mission  
21 here is to contain the area and locate and arrest...our  
22 suspect in this. Our suspect is...,authorities were  
23 working under his ah, they...criminal code there,...of  
24 murder, arson..."

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I'm getting the sense that what is being  
27 stated there, 4:05 is patently quite obvious.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that given the fact that comms are so  
2 important, in terms to minimize that, how is it that this information was necessary to be  
3 transmitted?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it's -- this incident's been ongoing,  
5 okay? And it's one of those things, everybody, you say, "It seems obvious" but we want  
6 to make sure our mission statement is pushed out there and it's pushed out there to --  
7 we've had a lot of different -- when I say our ERT resources, we understand who they  
8 are. We've got other resources coming in as well, so we wanted to make sure  
9 everybody understands what our mission is.

10                   Our mission is very simple, and that's what's on our SMEAC  
11 boards. So it's another opportunity to push that mission statement out to make sure  
12 everybody is aware of what it is.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is that something that would be routinely  
14 done by the Critical Incident Commander, the pronouncement of the mission?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

17                   Does that sound right to you, S/Sgt. Surette?

18                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

19                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is that something that would be done  
20 regularly? And I'm only suggesting it because it sounds obvious.

21                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah. Again, keeping -- and yes; the  
22 answer to your question is yes. Keeping in mind that you do have a lot of people  
23 coming and going in these things. You have people coming from other districts; many  
24 have arrived late to help out, and you want to make sure you push that out.

25                   And I believe that was borne out of the inquiry after the Moncton  
26 shootings where these little things like this to keep everybody informed weren't being  
27 done or weren't done effectively. So it is part of our training to ensure that people know,  
28 (a) who's in charge, (b) what the mission is, and then pertinent information as you go

1 forward.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay, thank you.

3 Let's move on, then, topically again, to issues around command  
4 structure and communications as the incident unfolds.

5 Did you experience, S/Sgt. West, any difficulties with, how shall I  
6 say, people or persons stepping on your toes as the Critical Incident Commander?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Overall, no.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I assume I know what you're referencing to.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. Let's bring up page 168 so that  
11 we're all clear on it. Paragraph 347 is an incident that I would like you to comment on  
12 for purposes of clarification. Paragraph 347:

13 "As ERT discussed a plan to head back to Orchard  
14 Beach Drive, Sgt. Andy O'Brien began to scale back  
15 at the checkpoint at the head of Portapique Beach  
16 Road. However, CIC West rescinded the directive:"

17 And then there's a transcript there, and the final line in the excerpt  
18 of the transcript is:

19 "[Sgt. West]: 'Everybody stay in their positions ah, for  
20 now please.'"

21 Now, I'm getting the sense that there was some conflict of  
22 command there from that transcript ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and that excerpt. Does that sound, or  
25 does that accord with your understanding of what was going on at 5:11?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Please provide us some context  
28 with respect to that, Staff Sergeant.



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And I think if you -- like from what the radio  
2 transmission -- I believe that's where I heard it, over the radio transmission. And it goes  
3 back to, we talked about a command triangle and who's the decision-maker, where the  
4 decision-making point is, and where the general duty, the uniform side of the house is  
5 part of that. However, what was this? Somebody was standing down in resources at  
6 one of our locations, and that had not gone through my side of the house yet. So ---

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** How can that possibly occur?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It shouldn't happen. I don't know how it  
9 occurred. It shouldn't happen.

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

11                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Somebody took something on -- upon  
12 themselves for whatever reason. But I heard it and addressed it and made sure we  
13 were all on the same page moving forward.

14                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Is this a common problem for Critical  
15 Incident Commanders having people in a position to perhaps countermand and/or  
16 contradict their directions otherwise?

17                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** During my time as a Critical Incident  
18 Commander?

19                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** This is the only incident I experienced that.

21                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Staff Sergeant Surette, any comment with  
22 respect to concerns over directions being countermanded or contradicted?

23                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, same experience as Jeff. I can't  
24 think of a time that it's -- that it's happened to me.

25                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right, let's move on, then,  
26 again, to the tail end of the evacuation planning process, page 176, paragraph 363:

27   "Sometime between 5:25 and 5:35...West  
28   and...Halliday discussed evacuation plans. The team

1 considered the risk of ambush while evacuating the  
2 residence balanced against the risk of victimization if  
3 the residents were left to shelter in place. The  
4 decision was made to evacuate. CIC West told  
5 S/Sgt. Halliday that once the perpetrator's warehouse  
6 had been checked, work would begin on the  
7 evacuation plan."

8 Now, when I read that excerpt, I'm under the impression that  
9 S/Sgt. Halliday is having a direct role in terms of consultation and/or information  
10 provision to the Critical Incident Commander about the evacuation planning. Does that  
11 sound -- have I characterised that properly?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Staff Halliday was feeding in to the --  
13 to the conversation and to what our plan was going to be, and understanding that there  
14 were several roles and responsibilities that he was going to have take on. And one of  
15 his roles was going to be to work on a comfort centre. Where -- if we're going to  
16 evacuate these people, where are we sending them to? You've got to remember, the  
17 time, what's going on, we need to send -- provide them a place to go.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right, I understand that, but getting back  
19 to the command triangle ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- with the Critical Incident Commander,  
22 the CNT, and the ERT ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- where is it that Halliday, Staff Sergeant  
25 Halliday as a consultative role in that triangle? Or am I misunderstanding the role of ---

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well ---

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- of the -- of the OPS Officer in that  
28 regard?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** When we look at this, he's there, whether  
2 you say the OPS Officer, he is there as the Uniform Commander.

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay? And there are certain tasks and  
5 responsibilities that within the critical incident response there is a role for the uniform  
6 side of the house to take on. Okay? And it -- and it -- so a lot of it's in relation to, like,  
7 for this, where are we going to send this -- these individuals?

8                   And recognising that, yeah, we say it's a command -- everything is  
9 a -- there's an approach that everybody has value, and to bringing information to the  
10 table to help with an informed decision and a process forward. So with Staff Halliday  
11 there, yeah, he was also able to provide information, consultation, and all that, but it still,  
12 if we go back to the triangle, we talked about that, but it also where it's our command  
13 triangle, but we do have the offshoots for the Uniform Command side of the house, the  
14 GIS/NCO side of the house as well.

15                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I'll ask you directly ---

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- did S/Sgt. Halliday overstep his  
18 bounds with respect to the manner in which he interacted with you?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, he did not.

20                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you. Moving on, then, to  
21 drone issues.

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** The Foundational Document at page 184,  
24 paragraph 377, indicates that the drone would have been deployed:

25   "By 6:13 a.m. on April 19th...the ERT drone...RPAS  
26   was airborne. Cst. Milton broadcast this information."

27                   Now, you're familiar, of course, with the fact that resources  
28 available include a drone.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And you're also familiar with the fact that  
3 drones can carry certain payloads, including FLIR.

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm. That's correct.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And I'm going to ask you directly as well --

6 -

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- 6:13 seems a little late for the drone to  
9 be ---

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

11                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- deployed under these circumstances,  
12 given what was going on in Portapique. Have you any comment in that regard?

13                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** My comments that relate to that is that's a  
14 tool that ERT has available to them.

15                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

16                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** They have to make a determination through  
17 tactics—and I'm not a tactics person, I don't dictate their tactics—what's available to  
18 them, when they can safely deploy a tactic, and what the -- what the -- what their goal,  
19 what their mission is or task at that time.

20                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. But as the Critical Incident  
21 Commander, you would have availability or know of the availability of resources to be  
22 used, and could suggest it to the ERT team leader ---

23                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- "Put a drone up there"; right?

25                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's correct.

26                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** But that wasn't done in this case?

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

28                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that wasn't done because why, Staff

1 Sergeant? Are you in a position to say?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speak to why that discussion wasn't  
3 had.

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Very good.

5 Any comment that you would have, Staff Sergeant Surette, with  
6 respect to the deployment of the drone at 6:13?

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Okay. We'll move on, then, to  
9 public communications, which is obviously a significant area of concern for Nova  
10 Scotians and others.

11 With respect to public communications, I want to direct you, Staff  
12 Sergeant West, to the transcript of your Mass Casualty Commission interview, in  
13 particular, page 36 and page 48, and I'll ask for your comment on those.

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So at page 36, when you were being  
16 interviewed by Wayne Fowler, at the top, the following is as described:

17 "I'm just going to stop you, yeah, right there, just  
18 before we move into this. Between the information  
19 times, you're starting to get the information from Lisa  
20 Banfield and her family out of Halifax and now  
21 becoming aware of this fully replica police car, and  
22 Glenn Byrne is pushing out, I'm going to...the  
23 BOLO's..."

24 "Yeah."

25 "Wayne Fowler: '...to all the police services, both  
26 internal and external. What communication or what  
27 information is being passed on or who's making any  
28 decisions in regards to media personnel?'"

1 "Jeff West: 'That's with Steve Halliday.'"

2 "Wayne Fowler: 'That rests with Steve?'"

3 ""Yeah.""

4 So I just want to move on to page 48 on the statement for purposes  
5 of completeness. Page 48, at the top:

6 "Jeff West [at 5:59]: 'Okay. No, I wasn't involved in  
7 any of the...media stuff that came out after that part, I  
8 don't think so. Trying to think if I ever maybe got ...  
9 might have gotten an email from anybody in there.  
10 But I don't recall playing ... being involved in or  
11 approving or anything like that. There may have been  
12 a question to me or something like that, but I was not  
13 play ... I was not in ... in any sort of active role in any  
14 of the media stuff that would have come out through  
15 Strats Comms after the fact.'"

16 "Wayne Fowler: 'Right, okay. And I think we clarified  
17 it beforehand when you were in the command post,  
18 the media releases went through...'"

19 ""Steve Halliday.'"

20 ""...Steve Halliday?'"

21 ""Yes.'"

22 Let me ask you about -- both gentlemen, about the role of the  
23 Critical Incident Commander with respect to the dissemination of information to the  
24 public from a public protection point of view. Is that a role that a Critical Incident  
25 Commander may take upon themselves?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The way -- and we were just talking about  
27 this incident?

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yes.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Really, I believe early on,  
2 Staff Halliday had been engaged with Strat Comms to a certain degree. So it was -- he  
3 -- it was -- really, it was delegated task to him to carry on with that. And typically, in a  
4 critical incident you won't see the Critical Incident Commander be heavily involved in the  
5 crafting of media releases or anything because we're -- as we've said before, we're  
6 heavily involved with the critical incident response.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So in this case, it was Steve Halliday,  
9 Staff Halliday was the contact point, the point to deal with the strategic comm side of the  
10 house.

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

12                   Does that accord with your understanding, S/Sgt Surette?

13                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes. And we would -- our involvement  
14 at CIC often would be if we're stressing that a certain piece of information shouldn't go  
15 out or a certain piece shouldn't go out, we may make that known to the person we  
16 delegated that to. I shouldn't say may. We would make that known to the person we  
17 delegated to. But at the end of the day, it comes back to what I said earlier about  
18 trusting the people that you're delegating things to.

19                   The role of CIC is very dynamic and sometimes you've got to  
20 delegate some stuff, and this is an example of that.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** In the circumstances that you  
22 experienced that night on April 19<sup>th</sup>, particularly in the morning, given the protection of  
23 the public potentially in Portapique about an active shooter, were thoughts put to your  
24 mind to direct S/Sgt Halliday to actually make sure that a public communication got out  
25 for residents to know and be aware that the risk was there?

26                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I think if I recall properly, around  
27 8:00 o'clock, around the time that Glen Byrne was sending out the BOLO -- I mean,  
28 don't forget, we're all in the same room and we're all talking. And I seem to recall some

1 suggestion at that point that that should go out. And I'd be awful surprised if Steve  
2 Halliday didn't speak to that yesterday.

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And indeed he did. I guess what  
4 I'm trying to determine is, from the Critical Incident Commander point of view, what role  
5 do you have if you feel that there may be a deficiency with respect to public protection  
6 from an information provision point of view?

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I would think that if we knew there was  
8 a deficiency, we would address it, or if we wanted to make sure something was pushed  
9 out. But bear in mind, when this is going on, we're not checking emails and we're not  
10 checking Twitter.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. Right. Okay. At page 216,  
12 paragraph 453, there is reference to the fact that there was actually a contact between  
13 StratComms and S/Sgt West. Looking at paragraph 543:

14 "As detailed in the RCMP Public Communications, April  
15 18–19 [...] Foundational Document, media messaging  
16 was discussed at the Command Post at various points of  
17 Hour Ten. CIC West's notes indicate he received a call  
18 from the director of the Strategic Communications Unit,  
19 Lia Scanlan, at 7:00 a.m. 'to discuss media messaging.'  
20 CIC West's notes say he advised her 'that I would have  
21 Steve Halliday contact her to discuss messaging...'"

22 This is consistent with what your prior information is with respect to  
23 delegation?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

25 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Did you at all engage in any form  
26 of discussion with StratComms and Lia Scanlan in terms of what you felt was important  
27 and/or necessary from a Critical Incident response?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.



1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Tell me about BOLOs then, in  
2 terms of information being provided to policing agencies? Would you have directed or  
3 engaged anyone to provide information in that fashion?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** From my perspective, for me, I know Glen  
5 Byrne, Glen Byrne was in the Command Post with us. Glen acts as a radio loggist for  
6 ERT. Glen Byrne is also, at that time, was the manager of the Operations  
7 Communication Centre. And I'd also worked with Glen during my time at the OCC.

8                   There was times when information was coming in and I'd ask Glen  
9 to make sure that got pushed out through the OCC. The OCC is where our BOLOs go  
10 through. So.

11                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm. So once again, this would be a  
12 delegation to Mr. Bryn, ---

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

14                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- Commander Byrne under those  
15 circumstances?

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. The circumstances, gentlemen,  
18 changed after the information was received from Lisa Banfield and from the Banfield  
19 family ---

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- in the mid-morning of April 19<sup>th</sup>? You'd  
22 agree with me in that regard?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

24                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I guess what I'm concerned about is this  
25 information and your understanding as Critical Incident Commanders about the replica  
26 police vehicle.

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

28                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** What was your understanding about the

1 substance of that replica police vehicle before the information came from Lisa Banfield  
2 and Lisa Banfield's family?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. So prior to that, our understanding  
4 that it was likely one of the decommissioned, for lack of a better term, former police  
5 vehicle. The individual had three/four Taurus' registered to him.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So the understanding that it was likely -- the  
8 police vehicle was likely one of the decommissioned that may still have had some  
9 reflective decal on it.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And now I'm going to ask you a  
11 further question.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

13 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Why that decommissioned adjective?  
14 Why did that come to mind for you, S/Sgt West?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe that was -- early on, that was --  
16 decommissioned, or former police car, or whatever, because of the -- somebody  
17 mentioned previously he had been seen or stopped with a vehicle that had decals on it.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. So you were aware, of course, that  
19 Andrew MacDonald had been involved and provided important information ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- with respect to the nature of that  
22 replica ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

24 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- RCMP vehicle. You were aware, of  
25 course, that the children had made 9-1-1 calls ---

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and had provided very important  
28 information as to the nature of that replica ---

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- vehicle. Did you have access to that  
3 information for purposes of formulating your thoughts about the replica RCMP vehicle?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Did you know that Andrew  
6 MacDonald was available to be interviewed and/or interviewed and information had  
7 been obtained from him earlier in the morning?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe it was in the early morning, I don't  
9 know the exact time, when S/Sgt. Halliday made me aware that Mr. MacDonald had  
10 been interviewed and provided additional information about -- but at the onset, I wasn't  
11 aware of Mr. MacDonald.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. And can you explain or provide  
13 any insight into why that fundamental witness who had fundamental information, the  
14 Critical Incident Commander wouldn't have been made aware of?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speculate on why that ---

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

17                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- wasn't brought forward to me.

18                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No, that's fair enough.

19                   Any comments, S/Sgt Surette?

20                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No. Just to reiterate, I know we -- I  
21 talked about this before as well, in relation to Mr. MacDonald, and in reviewing my notes  
22 in preparation for today, I did note the same thing, that Steve Halliday provided us with  
23 information at approximately 6:20 or 6:25 that Mr. MacDonald had been interviewed by  
24 and MCU member, Cpl Berthiaume, and that he was -- I -- my notes do say, if I recall,  
25 that he was driving a Taurus, but he drove into the Portapique area and Mr. MacDonald  
26 felt that he had no -- or as it was relayed to us, Mr. MacDonald solidified our belief that  
27 there was no other way out.

28                   So I do have that in my notes at 6:25 or so.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

2                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And just to be -- to state the obvious,  
3 when we talk about a dynamic Command Post, that was immediately followed by the  
4 call that Lisa Banfield had come out of Leon Joudrey's house. And so there's -- that's  
5 just one example of how quickly some of this pertinent information was coming out.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, I understand. And I suspect there  
7 might be some concern amongst people with respect to the fact that the Andrew  
8 MacDonald information was well available long before Lisa Banfield and Lisa Banfield's  
9 information became available to you, and the children's 9-1-1 calls certainly would have  
10 been well available to, you know, critical decision ---

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

12                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- makers, like you.

13                   My concern is, what do you say in terms of that information being  
14 available, but the Critical Incident Commanders not actually having access to it? How  
15 could that be?

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it's one of the -- I can't -- how do you  
17 speculate why that wasn't available to you? Like, -- and to theorize why it wasn't, I can't  
18 say.

19                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. No answer further than that?

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

21                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you. I'm led to believe that  
22 prior to Ms. Banfield emerging from the Portapique area, that there was a bit of a  
23 dormant period in terms of the investigation. Would that be a correct assessment of  
24 what was going on or am I incorrect in that regard?

25                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't know if dormant ---

26                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Help me out on that.

27                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And when I think of throughout the evening  
28 and early morning hours, everybody was heavily tasked, whether it was ERT or our

1 investigators. So there was lots going on. So I don't know what you mean by  
2 "dormant"?

3 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah, what I mean is no new information  
4 coming in, ---

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Oh.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- no actual decisions being made as a  
7 result of new information. Is that inaccurate on my part?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think we're saying there's -- the initial  
9 information that was out -- the initial inflow of information going on, then when we got to  
10 the Command Post. However, throughout the early morning hours, there was not -- and  
11 I don't know -- I don't think dormant is the right word.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And that's fair.

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** But there was no -- there wasn't a significant  
14 amount of additional information or intelligence coming in. There was a lot of  
15 background work going on with inquiries with the suspect's parents and stuff like that,  
16 but we weren't getting a lot of additional information to impact the move forward.

17 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. I -- and the reason I used that  
18 word dormant that you have corrected me on is because after Ms. Banfield emerged,  
19 the family information became aware, things were moving hot and heavy very, very  
20 quickly, ---

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- compared to the hour before, things  
23 were not quite as busy. Would that be a better and more accurate assessment?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, because if you -- I think that's much  
25 more accurate because in those hour plus earlier, that was what allowed us to start,  
26 okay, now we can start working on an evacuation plan.

27 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So it allows us to -- so I won't say dormant,

1 but the what's important now, why here, why now, what has changed.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Thank you. And I think we're both getting  
3 together in terms of ---

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- our terminology. I guess my question  
6 for you then is, once you're thinking of the evacuation plan, do you, at that point, put  
7 your mind potentially to public coms, or is that still entirely with S/Sgt. Halliday?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** We weren't with -- I don't think we discussed  
9 public comms at that moment.

10 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I'm moving along here, gentlemen.  
13 I should be ---

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

15 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- done here very soon. I wanted to  
16 discuss the credible lead with respect to Wentworth. At that time, S/Sgt. West, and I'm  
17 going to refer to page 254, paragraph 543 as a sort of jumping point, so we can  
18 contextualize it. But at that time, Sgt. West,

19 "Approximately two minutes later, [...] broadcast[...]

20 "H - ERT Base," confirmed that EMRT should respond  
21 to the Wentworth scene. CIC West then attempted to  
22 contact [...] Tim Mills, but appeared to [be]

23 experiencing poor audio quality..."

24 So this takes us back to ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- a fundamental concern that we had  
27 been discussing ---

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- earlier. Did you experience poor audio  
2 quality in terms of your ability to speak to ERT team leader?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and I think that's evident throughout  
4 the radio transcript. And as things changed, things start to happen, there's more people  
5 on the radio, so there's more reason why you can't get through. So, once again, it goes  
6 back to we've acknowledged that radio comms is an issue.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah. All right. Once the mission shifts --

8 -

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- so to speak, to Glenholme ---

11                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

12                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- how does the Critical Incident  
13 Commander's role impact or change? Are you able to discuss your role at that stage,  
14 given the fact that we have a mobile active shooter, and any comments you have on  
15 that would be I think appreciated ---

16                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

17                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- by the ---

18                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And I think that's a fair point, and I believe  
19 Kevin and I will both have some comments on that.

20                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

21                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Is because we've always talked early on  
22 what a traditional critical incident armed barricade. Now we've gone from not a  
23 contained scene, not a contained location to a mobile. And so it's really -- we get to the  
24 point, and it's almost our response within getting to the -- it really comes a truly a  
25 collaborative response, effort with our uniform commander, how do we get our  
26 resources where we need to get them, maintain -- recognizing that we still have crime  
27 scenes in Portapique that we have to maintain and protect. So I guess really, and Kevin  
28 will probably be able to add to this, it's kind of -- it really changes kind of some

1 traditional thinking of dealing with it. Now we have a mobile threat, and a lot of times,  
2 we'll almost equate it to it's almost like an IARD type situation that's physical, vehicle  
3 borne in the sense that we're trying to get to the ---

4 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** S/Sgt. Surette, I know you want to speak  
5 to this.

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah. No, exactly as Jeff said, and just  
7 to add to that, it becomes a -- it's no longer a traditional ERT call for a number of  
8 reasons, so it becomes much more of a collaboration between general duty and our  
9 ERT responders. We have to rely -- as an Incident Commander, we are primarily in  
10 control of the ERT and CNT, as we've talked about, in that command triangle. We have  
11 -- in a traditional response, the uniform, or GD leader, or commander, would -- we may  
12 say we want this road, that road and that road blocked off. It's up to him who he sends  
13 to each of those roads; right? So in a case like this, we, as Incident Commanders, and  
14 we, as commanding the Emergency Response Team, have to rely on the GD  
15 resources. There's a lot more of them out there, a lot more cars, more mobile, to help  
16 us try and track this guy down and try to hem him in. And that led to a number of  
17 decisions later on that we -- you know, we can talk about as far as, you know, blocking  
18 the roads or not, and that type of thing. But in reality, it becomes kind of a collaboration  
19 of everybody who's involved. And at that point, I don't say that any one person can  
20 really have control of everything that's going on. It becomes much more of a  
21 collaboration.

22 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** How effective is the Critical Incident  
23 Command model operating from Great Village Fire Hall to deal with the manhunt of an  
24 active shooter from northern Nova Scotia down to southern Nova Scotia?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It's a very difficult role and responsibility.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Seems difficult.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

28 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** My question is ---



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

2                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- how effective ---

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well ---

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- is your Critical Incident Command  
5 model under these circumstances?

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess, like, when you're looking at it and  
7 think -- you're saying how effective is the model, well, is there somebody in charge?  
8 And it goes back to Kevin said, somebody's in charge, okay, we have to rely on, we --  
9 who can get our general duty resources? Who can get our ERT resources, who -- so  
10 this incident is truly a one-off that nobody has been involved in. So to think of, okay,  
11 how would you do it differently from a Command Post, whether a Command Post in  
12 Great Village or wherever your Command Post is, it's very difficult to say.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. All right. I think I'll come back to it  
14 in a moment, but I want to ask you about decisions made about roadblocks, choke  
15 points and checkpoints.

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

17                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Did you gentleman have a role in that in  
18 terms of decisions being made in that regard?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. And with that, there is all kinds of  
20 discussions going on. And with that, I guess, we had to look at timeline we were at and  
21 what we were dealing with then. And discussions were, there were -- lots were based  
22 on -- around roadblocks versus visibility; okay? And Kevin has mentioned this before in  
23 our discussions, and there's one thing to take into account, if we're talking roadblocks,  
24 roadblocks are member heavy in the sense that we have to have a lot of resources.  
25 Given this dynamic, roadblocks may create a target-rich environment, for lack of a  
26 better terminology. When we're -- we've got a number of roads all through that area,  
27 and it's kind of, like, almost, do we -- does -- do you value that, or do we need eyes on  
28 the road there, where we can see if we can see the suspect vehicle and then build from

1 there. So I think there's where a lot of discussions centred around.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And there was discussions with  
3 respect to roadblocks and checkpoints and so on.

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

5 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And the decision rested with the Critical  
6 Incident Commander at this point?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** So we'll look at paragraph 603 at page  
9 274. 603 and 604 speak about that decision-making process. But, essentially, at 603,  
10 there's the discussion of the target-rich environment ---

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

12 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- that you mentioned, S/Sgt. West. At  
13 604,

14 "According to S/Sgt. Surette's notes, a discussion  
15 occurred between himself, CIC MacGillivray, and  
16 S/Sgt. West about closing [...] highways down versus  
17 setting up members at stationary points for them to  
18 observe traffic, with "ERT staged at strategic points  
19 for response." It was agreed that ERT members  
20 would be strategically positioned to observe traffic.  
21 S/Sgt. Surette explained to the Commission that the  
22 aforementioned concerns informed his decision to  
23 direct the monitoring of major roads instead of  
24 blocking them."

25 That must have been a very difficult decision, and I suspect that  
26 you weren't very experienced in making this type of decision. Is that a fair assessment  
27 on my part?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** When you -- experienced ---

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Experienced in the manhunt part --  
2 portion of this type of response?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, and I think it goes back when you say  
4 manhunt.

5                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Is there a specific course offered by the  
9 RCMP, Canadian Police College titled manhunt?

10                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

11                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, you're relying on your policing  
12 experiences that you've developed over 30 plus years of policing ---

13                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

14                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- as well as the people that you have in the  
15 room with you to make decisions.

16                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

17                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I think the process remains the  
18 same, your critical thinking and critical decision-making process. So if I can use that as  
19 an example.

20                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Please.

21                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** If you block the road, you've got -- in  
22 practical terms, you've got members out of their cars with hard body armour and  
23 carbines probably, but they're vulnerable. They're stopping traffic. Then you've got a  
24 line-up of cars perhaps 2 kilometres long on the 102, and then you've got a person who  
25 at this point, when this discussion happened, Glenholme had happened, Hunters Road  
26 had happened, Plains Road had happened. You've got a person who is clearly killing at  
27 random. And are you going to expose two kilometres, or a kilometer, or even two cars  
28 to someone approaching them in a marked -- what looks like a marked police car and

1 just opening fire? And I -- I'll be honest, I really advocated to not block the roads for that  
2 reason. If we could keep eyes on the intersections, we knew that there was likely going  
3 to be a shootout at some point, but we didn't want a shootout to happen in front of a  
4 line-up of civilians parked on the 102, probably getting out of their cars and looking  
5 around to see what's going on, because you know that's going to happen. So, to me,  
6 that was the lesser of two evils there.

7 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** No, I understand the decision-making  
8 process, and I think it's indicated, and you've given it context. I guess my question to  
9 you was earlier about experience and courses, and S/Sgt. West ---

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

11 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- said there's no courses. You can't  
12 table talk this; can you?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** And that's in some of our discussions post-  
16 event. This isn't something that you table -- it's not similar to anything in the exercise at  
17 Canadian Police College. It's not a table -- it ---

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** It's not something that's ---

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Been table talked.

20 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. I promised you 10 minutes ago I  
21 was almost at the end. I really am almost at the end.

22 Page 279, Madam Registrar, at paragraph 613, I want to direct your  
23 attention to the transcript excerpt at 10:23:13. This is S/Sgt. West communicating with  
24 Cpl. Mills.

25 "Yeah, Tim, I've got -- ah, the Risk Manager's gonna  
26 be coordinating where [...] uniform cars are going.

27 Um, I'm gonna leave it with you [or] get our um, ERT  
28 resources staged in some strategic locations..."

1                   It appears to me, from that, that a decision was made to hand over  
2 decision making to the frontline ERT personnel at that point. Is that a correct  
3 assessment of that commentary?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. And this was -- 10:23, this was after  
5 S/Sgt. MacGillvray had taken over command.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. So, at that point, it was relying on  
8 Staff -- Cpl. Mills to strategically position his members.

9                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right.

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So that's given him -- delegating it down to  
11 him to where he wants to place his resources.

12                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. And the next natural question  
13 would be, it seems to me, and please comment on this ---

14                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

15                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- that the CIC or the Critical Incident  
16 Commander model has become redundant at that point because the ERT is taking over  
17 control of placement of his people; isn't that a fair assessment?

18                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't see it as being redundant. There's  
19 still other aspects to the Critical Incident Package that are involved. So we're allowing  
20 him, we're giving him the -- it's one of those things, we're not dictating tactics to him.  
21 We're allowing him the ability to place his resources as he feels is appropriate, knowing  
22 what he had, who's in what vehicle, where the dog is ---

23                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Right. Because ---

24                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- where the TAV is, his ---

25                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- he's on the road, on the scene ---

26                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

27                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- and you're at the Great Village ---

28                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, because ---

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** --- Fire Hall during ---

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- if -- and we'll probably typically, if it would  
3 have been -- if there would have been a Tact Ops in the Command Post ---

4                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- those conversation would have been with  
6 Tact Ops.

7                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay.

8                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I think really, that's a -- that there,  
9 to me, is a sign of strong leadership in letting -- knowing when to relinquish control and  
10 knowing when to take it back. And in this case, I think, they're on the ground. They're  
11 in a better position to determine where they should be going, based on everything that's  
12 going on around them, while we are, again, in Great Village in a fire hall.

13                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

14                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** So I think that was a necessary  
15 component of that collaborative effort that I spoke of earlier.

16                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. In terms of what's going on at that  
17 stage, given the fact you're in the Great Village Fire Hall, and the responsibility for  
18 placement is given to the ERT team leader, what responsibilities are you having  
19 specifically? Is it crime scene containment and follow-up at that point?

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, at that point, as I mentioned, Staff  
21 MacGillvary had already taken over, so Kevin and I are there supporting. Our intention  
22 initially was to stand down, get rest for the next operational period.

23                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

24                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So the Critical Incident Commander at that  
25 time is still maintaining the overall, getting the picture of what's going on, what's next. Is  
26 it going to turn into an armed standoff in a vehicle? Is it going to turn into armed and  
27 barricade or whatever, so there's still that component that being engaged in there to be  
28 able to do, okay, what's the point now, what's next, why here, why now, what has

1 changed.

2 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Because that could easily have  
3 transitioned to a hostage situation in a vehicle, for example, at which point, our GD guys  
4 would have likely been tasked to contain the area and wait for ERT to pull in, like, as an  
5 example. So if your CIC is become disengaged from what's going on, those decisions  
6 aren't going to be made in a timely manner. So you're still on -- trying to be on top of  
7 everything that's going on around you.

8 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Thank you. I think we've covered  
9 that area and I appreciate your candidness in response. I want to ask you a few more  
10 questions about the topic Alert Ready.

11 Can you tell me, S/Sgt. West, whether you had any familiarity with  
12 the public Alert Ready system?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I had no familiarity with it.

14 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Did you have any idea it was an  
15 accessible tool?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, it was not a tool in our toolbox at that  
17 time.

18 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. S/Sgt. Surette, can you provide  
19 any insight as to whether you knew about the availability or operability of the Alert  
20 Ready system?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I knew -- I had gotten an alert because  
22 of COVID, so a couple of weeks before that.

23 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** M'hm.

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** It had never reached our level as far as  
25 accessibility at all.

26 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Any training at all with respect to access  
27 to Alert Ready as a command -- Critical Incident Commander?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not at that time, no.

1                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Okay.

2                   I understand that 10:30 in the morning you gentlemen directed  
3 Insp. Bell and S/Sgt. Halliday to secure and manage the various crime scenes. Does  
4 that sound about right? I can point it out ---

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe so, yes.

6                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Yeah.

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

8                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** And did you have anything more to do  
9 with the securing and management of the crime scenes after delegating that to other  
10 parties?

11                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

12                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Would you or did you consider a  
13 direction to those whom you delegated a specific and clear effort to check all houses in  
14 Portapique for purposes of determining whether there were more victims or not? Is that  
15 part of your mandate or your role?

16                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Not at that point. I don't recall any --  
17 giving any of that direction. I think our focus was operationally based in stopping the  
18 threat.

19                  **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Was there a -- yeah, okay. I think you've  
20 answered that.

21                  Okay. The Command Post was shut down at when, please?  
22 Gentlemen, any idea?

23                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** After -- I guess after the Big -- the incident at  
24 the Big Stop, so ---

25                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** After the perpetrator was ---

26                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, because and then once that matter's  
27 done, then you're moving from it's no longer critical incident. Now it's a Major Crime  
28 investigation. So we shut down our Command Post, and then this whole matter



1 transitions from a Critical Incident to a Major Crime investigation.

2 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** I understand. Okay. And then you  
3 relocated for a debriefing to the Bible Hill Detachment and concluded your involvement  
4 in this matter for that particular stage; is that right?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

6 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** Okay. Does that sound right, S/Sgt.  
7 Surette?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

9 **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** All right. Commissioners, those are my  
10 questions with the witnesses today.

11 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you very much, Mr.  
12 Burrill.

13 Officers, the process we have developed is that once you've  
14 completed your evidence, your main evidence with Mr. Burrill, that we will break, and  
15 Mr. Burrill and other Commission Counsel will meet with Counsel for the Participants  
16 and discuss whether or not there are further questions for you, and if so, who will be  
17 asking them. So that's the stage we're at now.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

19 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** So thank you so much for your  
20 testimony so far, and we will break now until 2:10, and ask you to come back at that  
21 time.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Thank you.

23 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you.

24 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. The  
25 proceedings are now on break and will resume at 2:10 p.m.

26 --- Upon breaking at 12:49 p.m.

27 --- Upon resuming at 2:13 p.m.

28 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Welcome back. The

1 proceedings are again in session.

2 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you. Good afternoon,  
3 everyone, and thank you, Counsel, all Counsel for meeting and agreeing on a formula  
4 for follow-up questions which will have four Participant Counsel, I have a list here, to  
5 ask some questions and potential some questions from Department of Justice Canada.

6 So we can call the witnesses in, please, and I'll explain that to  
7 them.

8 Counsel, if you don't mind, just briefly explain your retainer to each  
9 -- to the witnesses when you come up in order.

10 **--- S/SGT. JEFF WEST, Resumed:**

11 **--- S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE, Resumed:**

12 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you again, Officers. The  
13 Counsel have met, our Counsel met with Counsel for the Participants, and they've  
14 agreed that four Counsel will ask you questions. Obviously, we may need a break  
15 between that, and if any time you feel you need a break, just let us know, and we'd be  
16 happy to deal with that. They will, as each one approaches the podium, they will  
17 introduce themselves to you and give you information about who they represent. And  
18 after that, Counsel for the Department of Justice may have questions for you as well.  
19 So thank you again so far.

20 And I understand, Mr. McLellan, you are first to go.

21 **--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:**

22 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Good afternoon, Staff Sergeants.  
23 Staff Sergeant West, I'm going to take you back to about ---

24 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Sorry, Mr. MacLellan, can you  
25 just ---

26 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Oh, of course, I just launched right  
27 into it. I apologise.

28 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** All right.

1                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** My name is Matt MacLellan. I, with  
2 my colleagues at Patterson Law, we represent the majority of the victims' families, as  
3 well as those individuals most affected. Apologies.

4                   Staff Sergeant West, I'm going to take you to about 1:00 a.m. on  
5 the evening, we'll say early morning, April 19th, 2020. This would have been about the  
6 time you arrived at the Command Post; correct?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

8                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And I think, and you'll have to  
9 correct me if I'm paraphrasing this incorrectly, you had made some comment earlier that  
10 between that time and announcing you were taking command, you were information-  
11 gathering. Is that fair to say?

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Information-gathering and prepping for the  
13 takeover.

14                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Could you maybe elaborate  
15 on what prepping for the takeover means in terms of getting the lay of the land and...?

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, even just to the fact of getting there,  
17 establishing what -- where the firehall -- what part of the firehall we were using; getting -  
18 - just transition up there, seeing who was available, what was at the firehall at that time.

19                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And this is part of the, I believe,  
20 and correct me if this acronym is wrong, the SMEAC process; correct?

21                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, the SMEAC is more the planning tool;  
22 okay? This is just getting there and getting in a position where you're ready and able to  
23 take over command.

24                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay.

25                   Madam Registrar, could we please pull up, it would be COMM  
26 Number 50895? This is the Containment Foundational Document. We'll go to page 13  
27 and the associated figure, please.

28                   So I don't know if you've seen this figure before. This depicts a

1 containment point on Highway 2 to the east of Portapique. Are you familiar? When you  
2 came on, I guess I should ask before that, were you familiar with what containment  
3 points were in place when you took command?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I was not.

5 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** You were not. Were you aware  
6 that this containment point, this is the containment point set up at approximately  
7 12:01 a.m., stationed at that point where Constables Nicholas Dorrington, and shortly  
8 thereafter, Trent Lafferty, were you -- were you -- you were not aware that this  
9 containment point was there?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** You are correct, I was not aware of that.

11 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And so I guess one question I have  
12 for you is, are you aware of when the last sighting of the perpetrator was in Portapique  
13 before you took command?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The last sighting? No, I'm not aware of that.

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So you wouldn't have been aware  
16 of the amount of time between the last sighting and when containment points were set  
17 up?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I was not.

19 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So you wouldn't have been aware  
20 that Andrew MacDonald had seen the perpetrator in Portapique ---

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

22 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** --- around, we'll say, 10:28 --  
23 10:25, 10:28?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I was not aware.

25 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So you would not have been  
26 aware, and I'm sorry if I'm just repeating myself, but you wouldn't been aware that that --  
27 the points east of Portapique were uncontained for approximately an hour-and-a-half.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No. Like I say, I was not aware. I was --

1 they were three hours into the event by the time I'm in the area.

2 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And so I'll go back then. Is  
3 part of the CIC role, then, to get a sense of what containment points are already set up,  
4 or is this... I know you had mentioned this was a bit of a one-off, so if you could maybe  
5 just discuss how getting an understanding of those containment points fit within what  
6 you understand to be the CIC role?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it's all part of getting the big picture,  
8 and the idea is being able to get in place and obtain that information through the  
9 resource you have at hand, which is usually through the Uniform Commander.

10 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And so you -- would you ask them  
11 what containment points are already set up, or is that something you would expect they  
12 would come to you with?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, that's situation dependent. There may  
14 be times when you ask or they may come to you with it.

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** But you knew the containment was  
16 a major part of the overall effort then?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, containment is always part of our  
18 critical incident process.

19 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Right. I think, and this was cited  
20 before, at least 4:05, the mission objective was to contain the area and locate the ---

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That was always ---

22 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** --- the suspect?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, that was always ---

24 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- the mission.

26 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Thank you. And so I'm also going  
27 to expect that when you came on you weren't aware that Constable Colford had radioed  
28 earlier in the evening, stating that she was told by Kate MacDonald that there was

1 another road somebody could take out?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I was not aware.

3 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Staff Sergeant West, I understand  
4 you were using Google Maps during the critical incident?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Me, personally? No. I -- when I referenced  
6 it, it was somebody who had aerial photography. It could have been Google Maps. It  
7 was something that overlaid. Whether it was Google or one of the other mapping thing -  
8 - tools, I'm not sure, can't say exactly which one it was.

9 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And Staff Sergeant Surette, maybe  
10 you can answer that as well, what mapping technology you were using once you arrived  
11 on scene in -- or sorry, in Great Village?

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** My understanding when I arrived was  
13 that the map that was up on the screen was a Google Maps or something very similar to  
14 Google Maps. It had that look to it.

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And what kind of screens  
16 were you -- were you viewing this on? Are we talking big projector screens or,  
17 essentially, a small laptop?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** They were being projected on a -- on a  
19 big screen at the front of the Command Post.

20 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And you had testified earlier you  
21 were not aware of the blueberry field road at the time.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

23 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And there was nothing on these  
24 maps that you've seen that would have made you think, "Well, there's a road there"?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not that I recall, no.

26 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Are either of you familiar  
27 with the geography in Portapique?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I am not.

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

2                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** You wouldn't have travelled on the  
3 roads there, I suppose. What is the process for interviewing a child witness that you  
4 would be aware of?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it's dependent on the situation,  
6 whether it's a -- something that... Something that I know in the past, it could involve  
7 Children and Family Services, but to the actual process steps, it's, I guess, situation  
8 dependent.

9                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** We do have a course, a training course  
10 for some investigators in relation to child interviews, and they're normally conducted --  
11 my understanding of that is that they're normally conducted in conjunction with a  
12 member of Community Services or Children and Family Services.

13                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So nobody that was present at the  
14 Command Post was prepared or trained to interview the children that were there?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't know if we can speak to that way. I  
16 don't know of the training of the people and the members that were involved.

17                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Was there any thought given to  
18 asking locals about the geography or possible ingress and egresses from -- into and out  
19 of Portapique?

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall having that conversation.

21                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And I'll ask you, by the time  
22 you got there was there any thought given to asking locals about the geography and  
23 roads?

24                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I do recall there was a comment I  
25 believe made by -- I can't speak for Staff Halliday, but if I recall, when he updated us at  
26 6:20 or 6:25 about the interview of Mr. MacDonald, his understanding of that update,  
27 and as it was relayed to us, was that there was no other way out.

28                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Right. But you -- other than that,

1 you're not aware of any conversations with locals or attempts to speak to locals about  
2 roads?

3 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I'm not aware of any, no.

4 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So there was...

5 And Madam Registrar, I'll ask that you bring up COMM  
6 Number 50895. This is Exhibit 6. Actually, it's the same one we just had up, page 15,  
7 Figure 9.

8 Okay. So this depicts a containment point at the eastern prong of  
9 Brown Loop. Staff Sergeant West, you're familiar with Brown Loop now, I suppose?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

11 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And you were aware that there was  
12 a containment point set up there at approximately 5:00 a.m.?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'd have to refer to my notes as to what time  
14 -- when I was aware of it, but I know there was containment and there was  
15 conversations about Brown Loop throughout the night.

16 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Madam Registrar, if you could go  
17 to COMM Number 003901. This is at about page 6. This is the typed member notes of  
18 Staff Sergeant West.

19 And I see at 4:57, "MacCALLUM to I/C..." And sorry, who is I/C?

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is myself.

21 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Yeah:

22 "MacCALLUM to I/C has put a...car on #2 Hwy and  
23 Brown Loop after reviewing with I/C and noting that  
24 there was not a resource blocking that intersection."

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's a fair reflection of my notes.

26 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So it's fair to say, then, that as of  
27 eight -- or 4:58 a.m. on the 19th, you were aware that a resource was being placed at  
28 the ---



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

2                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** --- intersection of Brown Loop?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's -- yes.

4                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Thank you.

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

6                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So this is kind of a general  
7 question, and I guess I'll put it to both of you.

8                   Had you known that the eastern -- the road or Highway 2 east of  
9 Portapique was not contained for, say, an hour and a half after the last sighting of the  
10 perpetrator, and had you known that there was an alternative route out of Portapique,  
11 i.e., the blueberry road, would that have changed your containment efforts overnight?

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Knowing -- like I say, our decisions were  
13 made at the time with what we knew, okay, and the idea with the point of containment  
14 being established, and with what was presented to us.

15                   If there would have been additional information brought to us earlier  
16 on, we would have actioned that as we decided would be appropriate at the time.

17                   But it's hard to say when you're -- with your -- with what you know  
18 now, as opposed to what you knew then, trying to factor in, well, if you knew that, would  
19 you have done that? Well, if some -- we process that information, make a determination  
20 on it, what our impact, what our police actions were at the time.

21                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. S/Sgt Surette, I'll actually  
22 put the same question to you, if that would have changed how you viewed the  
23 containment efforts over night during the time that you were there?

24                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I think -- I mean, just by  
25 definition, containment means to contain. So your efforts on the front end would be to  
26 cover off any points of entry or egress. And I think it's worthy to note that quite often on  
27 the front end of these things, the local members are normally relied upon to set up  
28 containment, the local members, the local supervisors, the local detachment

1 commanders are relied upon with knowledge of the area to guide that containment.

2 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. So on that, are you aware if  
3 any of the local members had knowledge of that area?

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't know. Typically that's what  
5 would happen.

6 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Did anybody ask if any of the local  
7 members had knowledge of the geography and roads in Portapique?

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I didn't when I arrived, no.

9 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** S/Sgt West?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't recall what conversations I may or  
11 may not have had. I know through -- there was some indication that some of the  
12 officers were quite familiar with the area, and that's where some of the maps were  
13 created from. The hand-drawn maps were created from the officers familiar with the  
14 area.

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And that's the extent of your  
16 knowledge on that point then?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

18 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So I have a few questions, not too  
19 many, about the -- what we're referring to as the replica cruiser or the mock cruiser.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So I think, S/Sgt West, you had  
22 stated that what was relayed to you by S/Sgt Halliday was that there, quote -- I don't  
23 know if this is a direct quote, but "may have been associated -- the perpetrator may  
24 have been associated with a police vehicle"?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** What did you understand  
27 "associated" meant?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well I believed the information passed on

1 said there may have been a police vehicle, an indication in the initial call and said police  
2 vehicle was seen at the scene.

3 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Did you understand that he was  
4 driving the vehicle or just that it was there?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It was -- I took that as a vehicle there. I don't  
6 know whether -- the exact words Steve would have relayed to me at that time.

7 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And safe to say, prior to Ms.  
8 Banfield coming out of the woods, you didn't understand you were looking for a fully  
9 marked RCMP cruiser?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, we were -- well, that was the first  
11 information that kind of found to me that -- yeah, around that time, was about the fully  
12 marked police vehicle. We were -- there was, I believe, three vehicles that were  
13 associated to him, and we had accounted for three vehicles.

14 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And you wouldn't have reviewed  
15 the 9-1-1 tapes?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

17 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** S/Sgt Surette, same question. You  
18 wouldn't have had opportunity ---

19 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

20 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** --- to listen to those tapes?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

22 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So, S/Sgt Surette, you had  
23 mentioned that -- and gain, forgive me if I'm paraphrasing this incorrectly, the role of the  
24 associate CIC in this particular incident was to "filter" information going to CIC west?  
25 And I believe you used that term "filter"?

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I did use that term earlier today. Yeah.

27 And bearing in mind, this is -- as we've established, this is kind of -- I shouldn't say --  
28 this is not -- this is -- not only because of the scope of the incident itself, but we often

1 would have an overlap of CICs, but to bring someone in over this length of time was not  
2 something that we do frequently. So we're kind of learning as we go.

3 So I did use that term, but when I -- if I could explain that, I think in  
4 hindsight what I should have probably said is that also as a CIC, in recognizing that we  
5 have similar training, and backgrounds, and experience in the CIC world, there's some  
6 things that I know that the CIC needs to know right now, and other things, not so much.  
7 So it's not that I was keeping anything from him, but perhaps triaging that information  
8 might have been a better term.

9 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And thank you for that. I  
10 appreciate that. So while you were -- you had a fairly lengthy drive, I understand, from  
11 Yarmouth to Great Village; correct?

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes. Yes.

13 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** You arrived ---

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Five forty (5:40).

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Five forty (5:40). Thank you. So I  
16 understood from your earlier testimony, your information during that drive came from  
17 radio chatter?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** True, except for two brief conversations  
19 with Jeff.

20 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So you had radio chatter and two  
21 brief conversations with S/Sgt West?

22 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

23 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Did you feel then, based on that  
24 information, you were adequately prepared to step into that associate CIC role on the  
25 ground?

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

27 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** You felt fully apprised of the  
28 situation, or at least as much as you needed to be?

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well as much I needed to be. It was --  
2 I mean, that's constant, keep appraised of the situation. So I walked in, had a brief  
3 meeting with S/Sgt. West, looked at the boards, prepared myself, spoke to some of the  
4 people, I don't know in what order, but I knew most people in the room, just to get a feel  
5 for what was going on and where we were. And yeah, from that point on, I felt  
6 comfortable in my role.

7                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** How long would you say those two  
8 calls were?

9                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't know how long they were. They  
10 weren't very long. One was at 2:26, I believe. That would have been a three- or four-  
11 minute call, I think, just brief. And the second was just to let him know that I was getting  
12 close. I asked him to text me the address of the fire hall and that I'd be there  
13 momentarily.

14                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Thank you.

15                   Madam Registrar, can we please bring up -- this is COMM number  
16 0010715. It's the timeline of events of S/Sgt Jeff West. We'll start at page 3,  
17 approximately.

18                   So S/Sgt West, first, can you define the term, what does decision  
19 point mean as it's used in this document? It repeats.

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, it's a decision point. There was some  
21 decision made at that point.

22                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So is it safe to say that that's a  
23 conclusion that is reached at this point? This is the conclusion we're drawing at this  
24 point with the information we have?

25                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It's -- it can be that. It's there's information  
26 that's come in and we've made a decision, whether it's tasking or move forward. It's a  
27 decision point.

28                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Is it safe to say it's the

1 information we are acting upon at this point?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well it's a lot of the -- it's kind of. Yes, we're  
3 acting on whatever is presented and making a decision for an action at that time.

4 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So when you see at, actually, the  
5 second, we'll call it, row from the top:

6 "Decision Point: The suspect was still believed to be in  
7 the area..."

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

9 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:**

10 "...Priorities of Life..."

11 Can you explain what those two points mean?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, and this is from the information I would  
13 have -- there was -- we had received no information to indicate that he was outside of  
14 the area.

15 I think S/Sgt. Surette explained Priorities of Life earlier this morning,  
16 in the sense that they were talking about witnesses, victims, civilians, then the police,  
17 then the suspect, then evidence preservation. I think Kevin described that quite well  
18 this morning.

19 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Now Madam Registrar, can  
20 we go to roughly the bottom of page 6? Same document. Thank you.

21 All right. So this is taking us to approximately 6:33 a.m. on the  
22 morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>.

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

24 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** At this point, it's safe to say Ms.  
25 Banfield has been located and you're getting a fair bit of new information? Is that fair to  
26 say?

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

28 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. So at this time, you are

1 learning that the perpetrator had loaded guns in his vehicle?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

3 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And if we scroll down just a little  
4 bit:

5 "Suspect had indicated..."

6 I understand this to be suspect had indicated to Ms. Banfield that  
7 he was going after her sister, that lives in, this is redacted, but outside of Portapique;  
8 correct? Is that your understanding?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

10 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And then again:

11 "Decision Point:...suspect was still believed to be in  
12 the area;..."

13 If we could scroll down to, say, where -- yeah, we're getting -- we're  
14 almost there. Oh, yeah -- sorry, a little bit -- the top. Looking for ERT -- yes, thank you.

15 At about the second row from the bottom:

16 "ERT to attend suspect property at 136 Orchard  
17 Beach Drive to check if there was any evidence to  
18 indicate the suspect was in the burnt out structure or  
19 vehicle."

20 This was a directive given by you, I take it, Staff Sergeant?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

22 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Based on information Ms. Banfield  
23 had provided?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Based on, yes, that information.

25 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And the ERT members did not find  
26 a body or rifles in that -- in any of the burnt-out vehicles?

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

28 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** At either 136 Orchard Beach Drive

1 or 200 Portapique Beach Road.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct, yeah.

3 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** If we could scroll down a little bit  
4 further? Again:

5 "ERT attended both the 136 Orchard Beach Drive &  
6 200 Portapique Beach Road locations to determine if  
7 either Taurus appear[ed] to be...'fully marked' police  
8 vehicle. ERT TL (T Mills)..."

9 I understand that to be S/Sgt. Mills:

10 "...confirmed that neither burnt out Taurus appeared  
11 to be 'fully marked' police vehicle with a patrol  
12 screen..."

13 Again, this was a directive you had given to go search those  
14 vehicles; correct?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

16 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And there was no divider or silent  
17 patrolman at that time?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

19 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And then, again, we see at  
20 8:09:

21 "Decision Point:...suspect was still believed to be in  
22 the area."

23 If we could scroll down to page 9, please? Yeah, actually that's  
24 great.

25 So the bottom row that's visible there on the screen, if you can see  
26 that. You receive information from the OCC of a shooting in Wentworth with a suspect  
27 heading towards Truro on Highway Number 4. That's an accurate depiction of the  
28 information that was available to you at approximately 9:43 a.m.?



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

2                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And at that time, ERT was diverted  
3 away from Portapique.

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

5                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** On that information.

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

7                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So S/Sgt. West, I have a quote  
8 from one of your -- from your -- do you remember you had provided -- or done an  
9 interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, I believe it was in November of 2021?

10                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

11                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So if we could actually pull up  
12 COMM number 35916; this is the transcript of that interview. And we'll go to, I believe  
13 it's page 42 of the PDF. And largely we're looking at about the final five lines, into the  
14 next page. Sorry; it's the page before. Yes, that's perfect. Thank you.

15                   So S/Sgt. West, you respond:

16                                   "Okay, at 6:30'ish between 6:30 and 7:30, from the  
17 time we know about Lisa Banfield to we're getting  
18 some good information from GIS and [...] Halifax  
19 Regional Police, okay, we know there's a vehicle, an  
20 additional marked police vehicle. However, there's  
21 still no information that's come forward to say that  
22 vehicle is outside of the Portapique area. So, what  
23 has changed? Yes, we've ... what's changed is we  
24 know [there's] an ... there's an additional vehicle  
25 we've ruled out as being ... ruled out that it's one of  
26 the two burnt out Ford Tauruses that we've located,  
27 okay. Could it be burnt out at another location in  
28 Portapique? Could it be behind a house, waiting on

1 an ambush or anything like that? So, yes, at 6:30, [I  
2 take it that's a.m. on the 19<sup>th</sup>] we have additional  
3 information about a vehicle. We don't have any  
4 additional information about him not being in the area,  
5 okay. And so, yeah, so we're still kind of... a lot of  
6 our... our add-on information is now this additional  
7 vehicle, okay. So, what are we doing now? We're  
8 making sure that information is being pushed out to  
9 everywhere else. But it's still ... we still haven't got  
10 that... anything to say he's outside the area.”

11 And then just a little bit below that, you'll see about the middle of  
12 the page there, there's a comment where you say:

13 “...then it's 9:30 before that next big piece of  
14 information comes out, okay, information, that report  
15 of the homicide [...] in Wentworth. So, then, okay,  
16 why here? What's changed? Okay, now, we have  
17 information to show that, yes, he has left the area,  
18 okay. So, then we ... our... that's the key piece that  
19 takes us outside of that area, and our policing  
20 response has to start looking at that outside area  
21 while also maintaining our crime scene.”

22 So, again, it seems clear that that report was the critical piece of  
23 information that moved ERT out of Portapique.

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The Wentworth incident? Yes.

25 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** That's -- yes, thank you, that's the  
26 incident I was referring to.

27 So prior to becoming aware of the shooting in Wentworth, when  
28 was the last sighting of the perpetrator you were aware of?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It would be shortly after the incident had  
2 been reported.

3                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So can you maybe -- can you  
4 provide a time? I'm guessing you mean the evening, night of the 18<sup>th</sup>?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, when the initial officers were --  
6 responded, and then throughout the night there were reports of shots going off, which  
7 could have been gunshots, could have been fire related. But the initial would have been  
8 from those initial calls to police.

9                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Sometime between 10:00 p.m. and  
10 10:30 on the 19<sup>th</sup> -- or, sorry the -- April 18<sup>th</sup>?

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct.

12                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And you're aware that Cst. Milton,  
13 you had stated earlier, had searched part of the Portapique area with a drone with  
14 thermal imaging?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct.

16                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And I think he found some animals.

17                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct.

18                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So I guess my question is a broad  
19 one, and I'll put it to both of you. What -- how can I put this? Did you require evidence  
20 that he was somewhere else to act on the understanding that he was no longer in  
21 Portapique?

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, we were dealing with what we knew at  
23 the time, and where do you go next? You have no information to direct you to a  
24 different area, so where's your point to start?

25                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** S/Sgt. Surette?

26                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** We were -- obviously we were trying to  
27 cover off both eventualities. We did have nothing to say that he had left the area and  
28 that's why we wanted to ascertain, for example, if those two Tauruses that were burnt

1 out could have been the vehicles that were -- the vehicle that was referred to, bearing in  
2 mind they were completely burnt out, there was no decaling left. And the first time the  
3 ERT team had been by there, they were still on fire, so they hadn't been able to get  
4 close, hence the request to go back and check for guns or a body or a silent patrolman.

5 But, having said that, on the possibility that he might have escaped  
6 containment, that's why we did push out the BOLO and all that sort of thing once we  
7 found out about this information. You're trying to deal with both eventualities.

8 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. So I guess my question is,  
9 then, did you require a sighting or evidence that he was somewhere to believe that he  
10 was not in Portapique?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it goes back to what I said; where do  
12 you start? You need something to give you a direction.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Right. Like, had we pulled our ERT  
14 resources out of Portapique when we found out about that car at around 7:30, or  
15 confirmed around 8:00, where would we have sent them?

16 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So Madam Registrar, could we  
17 please pull up COMM number 49654, and we'll go to page 25?

18 This is the Mass Casualty Commission's interview with S/Sgt.  
19 Surette.

20 **(SHORT PAUSE)**

21 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So I won't read the entirety of this.  
22 Suffice to say, if we could scroll up to -- I believe we're at page -- oh, sorry, it's one --  
23 yeah, it's at the top of the next -- the previous page.

24 All right. So you say:

25 "So now we've come to around 8 o'clock there." (As  
26 read)

27 And I know I'm jumping into this. It's my understanding you mean  
28 this is 8:00 a.m. the morning of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

1           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think so, yeah.

2           **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Yeah. And in the previous page

3 you state:

4                               “7:57 Glen Byrne confirms that a BOLO regarding the  
5                               car including a suspect, had been issued.” (As read)

6           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

7           **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So if we’re picking up on ---

8           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

9           **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** I recognize there was a break  
10 before this, and we’re picking up on that.

11           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Okay.

12           **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Eight (8:00) a.m. on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

13           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Sure thing, yeah.

14           So “once we knew for sure about that car, of course we wanted to  
15                               fan that out. We engaged the risk manager and wanted to  
16                               make sure that the neighbouring police forces were aware.  
17                               We wanted to make sure that all the RCMP, of course, were  
18                               aware throughout the province.” (As read)

19           I think they said the province-wide BOLO. You continue:

20                               ““We wanted to make sure Amherst and Truro PD were  
21                               aware and I distinctly remember saying COVID had just  
22                               started at this point, right, like we were two or three  
23                               weeks into COVID and there’s a bunch of DNR guys at  
24                               the border and Nova Scotia/New Brunswick border, so I  
25                               distinctly remember saying to Jeff that we had to make  
26                               sure those guys were advised.” (As read)

27           And by this, you meant Truro and Amherst PD?

28           **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

1                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And so we are aware that S/Sgt  
2 Briers provided an update to Truro Police at 8:43 a.m.

3                   To the best of your knowledge, prior to this, and I'll direct this to  
4 both of you, because I know that you arrived at 5:40 a.m., S/Sgt West, you were there  
5 for a bit of time earlier and you were command since a little after 1:15, between 1:15  
6 and 1:30. To the best of your knowledge, and prior to this 8:00 a.m., did you issue any  
7 commands to notify or contact the Truro Police Services?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall making a direction in  
9 relationship to BOLOs and contact with Truro Police Service.

10                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. Was there ever any  
11 discussion of notifying the Cape Breton Regional Police Service?

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recall any discussion on that. I do  
13 recall with, when we're talking about BOLOs, and ensuring that they go out to all RCMP  
14 and municipal police forces within the province.

15                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So in your -- the evidence you  
16 gave earlier this morning, you had mentioned, and I'd understood it to be regional non-  
17 RCMP CICs, that there are regional police services, non-RCMP services, that also have  
18 members who did the CIC training? Is that correct?

19                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, the Canadian Police College is the  
20 holder of the Critical Incident Commander's Course. On that course, you could have  
21 anybody from RCMP officers to municipal police forces from various municipal city  
22 police forces across the country.

23                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Are you aware if any of the  
24 regional police services, non-RCMP police services, have CIC trained members in Nova  
25 Scotia?

26                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Halifax Regional Police, I believe have  
27 Critical Incident Commanders that are trained.

28                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And at what point did you reach out

1 to -- or did you reach out to the individual you'd known to be critical -- trained as a  
2 Critical Incident Commander in Halifax?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I did not.

4 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** All right. I'm going to pivot for a  
5 moment. S/Sgt Surette -- and I understand that neither of you were responsible for  
6 setting up -- directly responsible for setting up the comfort station in Onslow; correct?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct.

8 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** But you were present while those  
9 discussions were happening?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The discussions between whom?

11 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Sorry, the meetings during which  
12 the members were discussing setting up the comfort centre?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, it was tasked to S/Sgt Halliday for the  
14 comfort centre, to find a location and get that established.

15 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So S/Sgt Surette, I'm going to --  
16 and I promise this is the last time I'm just going to read a block quote, and this one is  
17 not as long.

18 So you were -- we're actually going to go to COMM number  
19 0049654. This is the transcript of the interview with S/Sgt Surette. I think it's page 45,  
20 but it may be 44, because I've been wrong. Yeah, so we'll start at the bottom of that  
21 page.

22 So, S/Sgt Surette, you were asked a question by Willy Crews. Mr.  
23 Crews states:

24 "And I'm just flipping completely again. So Brown and  
25 Melanson are later involved in Onslow. Was it  
26 broadcast? Would they have known about the comfort  
27 centre then? Because you made a point that they made  
28 a broadcast where the comfort centre was being set."

1 (As read)

2 And if we could scroll down, there's some confusion in the next  
3 couple lines as to who was being discussed. Willy Crews clarifies the officers that were  
4 involved in the shooting in Onslow.

5 So, S/Stg Surette, you state:

6 "Yeah, well that's a good question. I think so, because it  
7 was -- they were in and out of the Command Post both  
8 before and during that interview." (As read)

9 Could you elaborate or explain what you mean by "that interview"?

10 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Melanson and Brown were tasked by --  
11 directly by Jeff, I believe, to interview Lisa Banfield.

12 So when she came out at Leon Joudrey's residence, we sent ERT  
13 to pick her up. She was assessed medically quickly there, transported out of there to  
14 the, I believe at Highway 2, the intersection of Portapique Beach Road and Highway 2,  
15 assessed again by our EMRT personnel, and my understanding was at that point, they  
16 went to the hospital, if I'm not mistaken.

17 Anyway, all that to say it was quite some time before they actually  
18 were able to sit down and interview her. So this stuff takes time. And I know they were  
19 proceeding or trying to proceed in a trauma informed manner, given what was going on.

20 So they had been tasked to interview her, and as they were getting  
21 some of the information, they had been back to the Command Post. I can't say if they  
22 came back together. I can't say if they came back from the number 2 highway and then  
23 while they were on their way to the hospital or something like that. Either way, I know  
24 they had been in and out of the Command Post to update the Command Structure  
25 quickly on what was being said. So that's what I'm referring to there, because my  
26 understanding is after that, they also responded to the calls from Wentworth Road and  
27 Glenholme and were heavily involved in that entire sequence of events.

28 So that's where I'm -- clearly I haven't read it all, but what I see



1 there, that's what I'm talking about there, I believe.

2 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. So I'll get to that. So you  
3 continue.

4 "And we were very -- we were talking about the comfort  
5 station quite frequently at that point and Steve was  
6 setting it up. So I would think that they would have  
7 known about that. And I think that there were some -- I  
8 say I think because -- let me think about this, I think --  
9 yeah, I'm pretty sure when the member was dispatched  
10 to the Onslow Fire Hall, he was dispatched over the air.  
11 So people would have heard that there was a comfort  
12 centre, and that's where he was going, to be there for the  
13 comfort centre. Did we specifically get on the air and tell  
14 everybody that there was a com -- probably not, no. I  
15 don't recall that. But it was kind of one of those things  
16 that was happening and I -- anyone paying attention  
17 would have known that was going on." (As read)

18 And so this is just another question of clarification. When you say  
19 "that was going on", you mean that there was a comfort station set up at the Onslow  
20 Belmont Fire Brigade Hall?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** That's what I'm talking about there,  
22 yes.

23 But when I said that, if I can clarify, ---

24 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** M'hm.

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- in preparing for today, at that point I  
26 wasn't aware of their, -- their meaning Melanson's and Brown's -- involvement in that  
27 entire sequence of events with the shootings in Glenholme -- or Wentworth then the  
28 events at Glenholme and then Plains Road. I wasn't aware they had gone through all

1 that. So I would just, not revise that, but I would say that I don't know if they heard that  
2 or not, because there was a lot of things going on at the time and I think my point at that  
3 time was not knowing that they had been involved in that entire sequence of events and  
4 had been in and out of the Command Post, that they likely would have known of the  
5 comfort centre, but I can't say that for sure either way.

6 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** No, no, that's fine. I think your  
7 following comments actually say something to that effect.

8 "I can't see that they wouldn't know, although they could  
9 have been so focused on their interview that they missed  
10 it. It was quite -- I mean, there was a lot going on." (As  
11 read)

12 So the point is, to some extent, made. You couldn't have known  
13 exactly what they knew, just that it was known? That's a fair statement?

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** It is. And our other concern there was  
15 we didn't want to broadcast on the media because we didn't want the gunman to know  
16 that that was being set up as well.

17 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. I appreciate that. Thank  
18 you.

19 So this is really to either of you. But I'll start with S/Sgt West  
20 because at the end of your interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, you were  
21 asked what recommendations you could think of.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

23 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** You -- one of the comments you  
24 had made was:

25 "How can we better leverage technology?" (As read)

26 And I'm wondering if you could better elaborate on what technology  
27 you felt could have assisted that evening that was lacking?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think a lot of that ties back to my testimony

1 from this morning with Mr. Burrill when we were talking about whether it's the ability to  
2 know not just where our members' vehicles are, but where our officers are, whether  
3 they're ERT officers, general duty officers, GIS officers, or whatever. There's  
4 technology there and things, mapping, stuff that's more readily available to us in a very  
5 technology enabled world that we're in right now. So along those lines is, okay, what's  
6 available to use? What can we leverage to help us better -- another tool in our toolbox  
7 to help us do our job?

8 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And so I'm not sure if you're  
9 familiar, there was an app that we had learned about through Staff Sergeant Mills and  
10 now Corporal Milton had provided evidence earlier in the week, and had referenced this  
11 ATAK app.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

13 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** My understanding is that's an app  
14 to locate members who also have that app on their person. Is that a fair...?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and stuff along that lines. And without  
16 giving, like, brand names, but that type of -- I think it's referred to as ATAK, blue force  
17 tracking or whatever. It's technology that -- that's -- would enhance situational  
18 awareness in the sense of where our members are and how to move our members  
19 around, knowing real time information as opposed to just pointing points on a map.

20 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** And I guess this ties into you  
21 made a comment that GPS enabled devices would have been beneficial?

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

23 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Can you comment on whether or  
24 not having better access to thermal imaging for the members would have been helpful  
25 that evening?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess I'd go back to thermal -- it would just  
27 be another tool that's in your toolbox that if the situation allows you to deploy it what it  
28 brings to you. But it's -- it's a tool in the toolbox that could be utilised.

1                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And I'm glad you mentioned  
2 the tool in the toolbox because that's my next question, is that you had mentioned to  
3 your understanding, and I won't go into the quote, it was already covered this morning,  
4 you were not aware that Alert Ready was one of the tools in your toolbox that evening;  
5 correct?

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It was not a tool in our toolbox at that  
7 evening.

8                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. So I did just want you to  
9 clarify one point on that. Is it that you didn't know it existed or that you didn't know you  
10 could use it?

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It was not a tool, and I'll go back to like Kevin  
12 said. Yeah, we heard Alert the previous week about COVID, but it was not a tool in our  
13 toolbox that we were -- we knew of to use in a critical incident setting.

14                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So Glenn Byrne, and that's the  
15 OCC, Operations Commander, who was ---

16                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

17                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** --- present at the Great Hall -- the  
18 Great Village Firehall?

19                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

20                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And he didn't mention  
21 anything to you about using Alert Ready?

22                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recall him mentioning anything to  
23 me.

24                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Same question, Staff  
25 Sergeant Surette, did you have any questions with Mr. Byrne about Alert Ready?

26                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

27                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And you were aware that in  
28 2006 the DMO had offered the RCMP direct access to this system?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I would not have been aware of that.

2                   **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Mr. MacLellan, they didn't know  
3 about it.

4                   **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay.

5                   So my final questions are somewhat related to that. You may have  
6 been aware that at about 8:44 a.m. on April 19th, Constable Stevenson had broadcast  
7 an inquiry to OCC dispatch as to whether there had been a discussion about issuing a  
8 media release to the public regarding the replica cruiser. Are you aware that that was --  
9 that was something that was put out over the radio?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I did not hear that. I was not aware of that at  
11 that time.

12                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Okay. And so that -- Staff  
13 Sergeant Surette, same question.

14                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I read it after in the transcripts, but I  
15 wasn't aware at the time, no.

16                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** So Staff Sergeant Halliday had  
17 stated that there was no point in which he had a conversation with anyone who denied  
18 the release of any of this information. I don't know if you're aware that that statement  
19 was made by Staff Sergeant Halliday.

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

21                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** No. So I guess this is really my  
22 final question then: Do you recall if either of you were approached, say between 8:45  
23 and 9:10 a.m. that morning, whether you had been consulted about whether there  
24 should be a media release regarding the perpetrator's mock cruiser. Did anybody  
25 mention that to you at that time or ask for your input?

26                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I was not spoken to about the release of  
27 information.

28                  **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Staff Sergeant Surette, same

1 question.

2 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I read that in the -- in preparation, I  
3 read that in some of the transcripts that it had been denied, and I -- I was confused by  
4 that. I don't remember any discussion at all about that.

5 **MR. MATTHEW MacLELLAN:** Those are all my questions. I --  
6 Staff Sergeants, I thank you for your time.

7 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. MacLellan.  
8 Mr. Bryson?

9 **--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:**

10 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Good afternoon, Staff Sergeants. My  
11 name is Josh Bryson. I represent the family of Peter and Joy Bond. They resided in  
12 Cobequid Court in Portapique. So thank you for being here today to answer questions.

13 Have you followed the proceeding? Like, have you watched  
14 yesterday's testimony of Staff Sergeant Halliday and...?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I've had limited following of the  
16 proceedings.

17 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And you weren't briefed on what  
18 Staff Sergeant Halliday had testified to? Anything?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

20 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay.

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I did watch some of Staff Halliday's.  
22 But that was actually two questions you asked. I have not been following the  
23 proceedings, but I did watch Staff Halliday's partially yesterday, not all of it.

24 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** All right, thank you. So my first series of  
25 questions is in regards to essentially the Critical Incident Package, and what it takes to  
26 activate the Critical Incident Package. I'd like to get a better understanding of that.

27 So Madam Registrar, if we can pull up Exhibit 1466.

28 So just while the Madam Registrar is pulling that up, so in this case

1 would you consider the Critical Incident Package activated upon the phone call to you at  
2 10:42, Staff Sergeant West? Is that technically when the package is activated?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, and I can -- the Critical Incident Package  
4 cannot be deployed without the authority of the Support Services Officer.

5 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. So what time would you say that  
6 the CIC [sic] is activated?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I'd have to go back to my notes as to  
8 whatever time I received a call from Staff Sergeant Halliday. And then, I think I  
9 mentioned this morning, after I spoke with Staff Halliday, I spoke with  
10 Superintendent Darren Campbell, who received the authority to deploy the Critical  
11 Incident Package. From there, I spoke with Corporal Tim Mills.

12 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And so once that's deployed, I'd  
13 like to now get a better sense of the tangible benefit, the first tangible benefit that we  
14 see as a result of that deployment. So would that be the ERT response to Portapique at  
15 roughly 12 o'clock?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm not sure I understand what you're  
17 question is.

18 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Sure. So when we -- when we talk about  
19 the Critical Incident Package ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

21 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** --- for me as a layperson, is just -- it's  
22 words.

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

24 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** But in terms of actual resources on the  
25 ground, what's the first tangible resource that Portapique sees as a result of this  
26 deployment of the Critical Incident Package?

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it would be the initial IA team that  
28 arrived from ERT, understanding that from the time I received the call to the standing up

1 of the team. They have to get to Headquarters to get kitted up, just time to get to  
2 everything, and then the travel time to Portapique. So I believe, yeah, 12 o'clock, if  
3 you're saying that's when they showed up, that would be the first resources that I'm  
4 aware of from the Critical Incident Package that would be arriving there.

5 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And that was ERT?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe they were the first. I can't say  
7 100-percent. I don't know if any of the BCONS (ph) arrived before ERT, but ERT would  
8 be the -- their IA team would be the first resources from the -- of substance.

9 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And that was, I believe, at roughly  
10 12:03, I think for Staff Sergeant Mills.

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I could be. I'm not sure of the time.

12 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And that would be in the record, so we  
13 can certainly clarify later on.

14 But just to get a better understanding, too, of how it's activated, and  
15 we can look at what, if any, delays exist and how, perhaps, to make them better.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

17 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So the first thing we have here is the  
18 9-1-1 call from Ms. Blair that activated the response of IARD to attend the scene. I'm  
19 assuming that wouldn't -- that wouldn't activate a critical incident response based on  
20 that phone call alone?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not alone, no.

22 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. So the next event we have is we  
23 have the event of the children calling, indicating that their parents have -- are now  
24 deceased, and that there is a house burning, and a male has left in a police car. So  
25 that, in combination with the 10:01 call, would that typically activate the...?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, it's when the information's -- well, we  
27 can't control when they contact us, so ---

28 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Right.



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- when I say "they" whether it's the risk  
2 manager or somebody who's boots on the ground. So we get calls early on, depend --  
3 it's very dependent. So I -- we don't control when they call the Critical Incident  
4 Commander. A lot of times, we need to have some sort of members on scene to add  
5 some validity to what's getting called into the police.

6                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Right. Okay, so let's look at that. So we  
7 know that IARD arrives on scene. They start arriving at roughly 10:22, I may be off on a  
8 minute or two, and ---

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I assume by IARD you mean the initial three  
10 officers or four officers that showed up there ---

11                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

12                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- who did an IARD form approach to the  
13 situation?

14                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes, that's correct.

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

16                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

17                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

18                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So when they arrive on scene, and they  
19 interact with Andrew MacDonald at roughly 10:28, after he has been shot by the  
20 perpetrator, is that the incident that would activate the critical incident response? So  
21 just to refresh. So up to -- at that point in time, we have the original 9-1-1 call at 10:01,  
22 we have the call from the children. So there are reports of multiple people being  
23 deceased. We have the -- Mr. MacDonald, who was shot by the perpetrator, and we  
24 have the perpetrator in a -- that's in a vehicle mobile seen departing that specific area.

25                   So is that the event that would activate the calls to you and so on?

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It could be.

27                   Kevin.

28                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** You know, I -- it's kind of speculation at

1 this point because at the end of the day, when Jeff got the first call, the first call to him,  
2 all those were factors which he would have considered and been advised of. To break  
3 it down and say, "At what point did it become an ERT call?" is very difficult because  
4 that's not how the information came to us, or to Jeff in this case.

5 So when Jeff gets the call, there is all that and then there's more,  
6 right. So at what point does it transition? For us, it transitions when we get the call, we  
7 get the fatality of the situation that's going on and we make that decision as to whether  
8 or not.

9 So to break it down beyond that, it becomes a little problematic, if  
10 you understand what I'm saying.

11 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. Here's what I'm getting at,  
12 essentially.

13 So based on my understanding, all the facts that supported the call  
14 to you for the Critical Incident response were known by roughly 10:28. That's after the  
15 interaction with Andrew MacDonald and the observations of the perpetrator fleeing in a  
16 police car, so at 10:28.

17 What I'm trying to address is the delay it takes to then reach you,  
18 so from 10:28 to 10:42, we have 14 minutes in this serious incident that's unfolding.

19 Do you have any comment on the time it takes to activate this  
20 Critical Incident response in an unfolding mass casualty?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, I think with this -- neither Kevin and I  
22 are in a position to speculate what took place between 10:28 or when I received the call.  
23 We don't know like what the officers on scene were doing, what -- what's going on, so I  
24 don't think it's fair for myself or Kevin to speculate why there was the period between,  
25 what was it, 10:28 and 10:42?

26 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Yes.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** So I don't think it's fair or appropriate for me  
28 to speculate, well, what was the delay, was it an appropriate delay, what were they

1 tasked with, what were they engaged with, so that's my thoughts.

2 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Do you know of anything else -- like when  
3 you were briefed in the call at 10:42, was anything else -- were you advised of anything  
4 else other than the -- up to the shooting of when Andrew MacDonald reported being  
5 shot?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe just -- it was basically what I said I  
7 had received from Staff Halliday when he called me.

8 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** And was there any other information  
9 besides the shooting and the original 9-1-1 calls that you can recall?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not that I recall.

11 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** So just in turn -- because one of the  
12 concerns that I'm trying to express and ask questions about is the -- is the delay. And  
13 do you have any suggestions on how time can be minimized in terms of when we have  
14 an unfolding mass casualty to being able to deploy assets in a matter that's unfolding at  
15 a very rapid pace?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it goes back to we have to -- we  
17 have to have officers on the ground to provide some validity to that. As to what's  
18 causing the delay of X number of minutes, like I say, we can't speculate.

19 But we have -- as we mentioned this morning, that there has been  
20 steps moved forward to streamline the process to cut out the calls between the boots on  
21 the ground, for lack of a better term, or -- and to get to the Critical Incident Commander  
22 to make that and -- that judgment call that it meets a Critical Incident and begin the  
23 process.

24 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. All right.

25 So I'm going to move to public communication.

26 Now, is public communication part of the Critical Incident  
27 response?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It's -- it's part -- we know it's part of it. It's --

1 is public communication in the Critical Incident response? No, we do not -- it's not part  
2 of the Critical Incident Package. We do not have a media component that we call out.

3 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Yeah. No, I didn't ask if it was part of the  
4 package. I asked if it was part of the Critical Incident response to a mass casualty, to  
5 an incident.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, strategic comms, I think is a better  
7 terminology to use as opposed to -- strategic comms plays a role in all our police  
8 operations. I believe early on Staff Sergeant Halliday was engaged with strategic  
9 comms, and that was delegated to him to deal with that.

10 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So just looking at this event, in  
11 hindsight, were you satisfied with the -- with the public messaging, the public  
12 communications that had unfolded as this was developing?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** When you talk about looking at things in  
14 hindsight, it's very -- you have to be very cautious as to judging what happened knowing  
15 what you know now as judging what -- and looking at what was going on at the time.

16 Steve was engaged with strategic comms early on and decisions  
17 were made about messaging going out.

18 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So let's look at that, then. And we  
19 can actually see what we knew at the time and we can look at the messaging that was  
20 out and perhaps we can come to some agreements.

21 Madam Registrar, if we can pull 13633.

22 Or perhaps we can just -- take a look at the first Tweet there.

23 That's -- this is a report of the Tweets that were sent out by the RCMP.

24 So the first here is a Tweet at 11:32, "RCMP NS is responding to a  
25 firearms complaint in the Portapique area". It has some addresses.

26 "The public is asked to avoid the area and stay in their homes with  
27 doors locked at this time".

28 So this is a Tweet that was -- and that's fine there. Thank you,

1 Madam Registrar.

2 And that was a Tweet that was sent out -- sorry. If you could just  
3 keep it up on the screen. Sorry.

4 I'm just going to go to some others.

5 So that was a Tweet that was sent out at that time, is my  
6 understanding. Did you see that Tweet?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

8 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So this was done by someone you  
9 had delegated to -- to --

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, that's incorrect.

11 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So tell me how that Tweet came to  
12 be.

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I have no idea. I was not part -- within the  
14 command post. I was not in command at that time. That was before my arrival at the  
15 Great Village fire hall.

16 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So I understood from Staff Sergeant  
17 Halliday, so you had as -- so you had your command triangle. You're at the very top of  
18 this Critical Incident; correct?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

20 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. And on one side, one branch, you  
21 have Staff Sergeant Halliday that was working with you, under you.

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He wasn't part -- the command triangle, as I  
23 explained earlier, was myself, Corporal Tim Mills and Staff Sergeant Royce MacRae.  
24 Under that, Steve Halliday -- Staff Sergeant Steve Halliday, was uniform command, so  
25 he's providing support to the command triangle.

26 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So Staff Sergeant Halliday testified  
27 that he had delegated that task of social media to Sergeant or Staff Sergeant  
28 MacCallum. Is that your understanding?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** From reading the -- the documents, yes.

2                   **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Okay. So I get the sense you're trying to  
3 separate your chain of command, your triangle, from the social media side of this  
4 response?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, what it is, we've -- I've asked Steve  
6 Halliday in his role to address that side of the house ---

7                   **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Yes.

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- to delegate it to him.

9                   **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** He's under your control; correct?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

11                  **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Yeah. Okay.

12                         So I'm just -- in terms of this particular Tweet, "responding to a  
13 firearms complaint", this is at 11:30. Do you think that's a fair depiction of what's  
14 occurring in Portapique at that time based on what you know?

15                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, like I say, I wasn't aware. I had no part  
16 in that.

17                         I'm not part of the -- our strategic comms, so I don't know what the  
18 discussions were between the persons involved in that, so.

19                  **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Staff Sergeant, I wish I could do that with  
20 my associates and shield myself by saying it was their work product, but I'm just trying  
21 to understand from your side that this is a person under you administering this Tweet  
22 and -- and you're claiming you just have no involvement or you can't really speak to it.  
23 Is that ---

24                  **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Ms. MacPhee has a question --  
25 or something to say.

26                  **MS. PATRICIA MacPHEE:** Thank you. I was just going to object  
27 to that question.

28                         Staff Sergeant West has already stated that he wasn't in command

1 at the time. He's also stated he has no specific knowledge of the type of  
2 communications that went forward in order for that Tweet to be released, and he also  
3 has no specific training in public communications in order to give opinion evidence on  
4 this, which doesn't advance our work here to hear, you know, his opinion on this  
5 particular Tweet.

6 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Mr. Bryson?

7 **MR. JOSH BRYSON:** Yes, thank you.

8 This Tweet was -- was sent out as a response to this mass  
9 casualty. It was part of the Critical Incident response. He's at the top of the pyramid,  
10 Mr. Commissioner. I suggest it's relevant.

11 He can -- he can look at it. It's a person under his direct  
12 supervision and control, and he can certainly make comments on the success of that  
13 social media policy that was unfolding from 11:30 to the next day and he should be able  
14 to look at the -- look at the word of his subordinates and be able to say that yes, this  
15 was -- this was an accurate depiction of what was occurring, or it was not an accurate,  
16 or there's things we can do better. So they're my comments with respect to that.

17 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Well, I understand the question  
18 was this an accurate depiction of what was occurring?

19 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

20 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Sure.

21 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah.

22 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** I think you can ask that.

23 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah.

24 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** But I agree with Ms. McPhee,  
25 you're going to have to lay the groundwork through his experience or otherwise in  
26 communications.

27 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Thank you.

28 So, Staff Sergeant, based on what you know and what you learned

1 upon arriving at the Command Centre, so you became aware of the Andrew MacDonald  
2 incident at Orchard Beach Drive where he was shot?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** When I became aware of that ---

4 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- that was in the early morning hours.

6 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah, and that's fine, because this Tweet  
7 stood from 11:30 to 8 the next morning.

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

9 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Right. So there was no amendments to  
10 this, and this is what this document is suggesting, that the only Tweet that was out there  
11 was the 11:32 and that that remained on the site until 8 in the morning. So that's why  
12 I'm also asking you these questions.

13 So you were aware when you took command, you were aware of  
14 Andrew MacDonald, the shooting that occurred?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I was not aware of the Andrew MacDonald  
16 shooting until ---

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** 6:25.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- six o'clock in the morning, 6:25.

19 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Oh, six in the morning.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

21 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** You ---

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

23 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So you weren't apprised of this  
24 information until six in the morning?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

26 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So you knew about -- so you did know  
27 about the -- you knew about the 9-1-1 calls?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I -- there was -- I knew there had been a



1 number of calls. I wasn't privy to what the content of all the calls were.

2 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah.

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I wasn't aware of the Andrew MacDonald  
4 shooting until it was brought to our attention by Staff Halliday in the morning.

5 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. So I'm having trouble then in  
6 figuring out why you activated the Critical Incident Package then. So this was just  
7 based on the calls?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Based on the information that Staff Halliday  
9 had provided to me.

10 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And that information did not  
11 include anything about actually meeting a victim, a shooting victim?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He did not mention that in initial call to me,  
13 he didn't mention names who people were. I was advised that people had been shot  
14 and houses had been lit on fire ---

15 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- and there were explosions.

17 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So let me ask it this way, so up until 8 in  
18 the morning, so think back to everything you knew as of 8 in the morning, that 11:32  
19 Tweet, was that an accurate depiction to what was occurring in Portapique, to the best  
20 of your information and belief?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, at 11:30, I was advised, when I was  
22 called -- I go back to what I was advised -- the Tweet mentioned there's a firearms  
23 complaint in Portapique area, the public is asked to stay. So the police are responding  
24 to a firearms complaint. What additional information could be in there, I'm not sure.

25 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Do you think that reasonably informed  
26 Nova Scotians of the severity of the situation that was unfolding, is essentially my  
27 question.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It advises them of a firearms complaint.

1 Could it have had more detail? I don't know what more detail you fit in, how much room  
2 there's -- I'm not a social media person. Could it have been crafted -- could there have  
3 been more -- other information? Hindsight is 20/20.

4 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And what's your answer to that?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That there's probably various Tweets that  
6 could go out ---

7 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah.

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- with the content whatever the discussions  
9 are between the people who are requesting it and the person who's crafting it.

10 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. I'm just trying to address the  
11 substantive content. I mean, this is a situation where you have five -- based on your  
12 own understanding, five or six people are deceased ---

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

14 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** --- within Portapique. You have a  
15 perpetrator that's mobile. But you can't say whether that Tweet is satisfactory or not?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

17 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** I see.

18 **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** I'm going to renew the same objection.  
19 We're going over the same grounds here. I think we have to lay a foundation at least for  
20 what kind of expertise he might have in order to provide his opinion on the Tweeting that  
21 did or did not go out, and again, the reasons for perhaps what the Tweets were saying  
22 at various points in the evening. We just don't have a foundation for this.

23 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you.

24 Mr. Bryson?

25 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes, Mr. Commissioner, I didn't think I'd  
26 run into this opposition. I thought the point was fairly obvious and then I can move on,  
27 that a firearms complaint Tweet is simply not informing of the severity of the situation.  
28 And I was asking for -- I suppose I was asking for his views on that. I guess he's given

1 his evidence that he's content with it and I'll move on.

2 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** No, I didn't take his evidence to  
3 be that he's content with it. I -- your last question was, was this satisfactory, and  
4 already back to the first objection. Whether or not it's satisfactory in a social media  
5 world and the number of -- you know, what the strategy is, I think you've made the point,  
6 at least as far as I'm concerned, that we know what was happening at the time, and we  
7 know what was in that Tweet. And the challenge, I guess, is, is there anything  
8 inaccurate in that Tweet? I don't think your question is, is the Tweet misleading by what  
9 it contains, is the Tweet misleading by what it doesn't contain.

10 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

11 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Yeah. And I think you've made  
12 that point.

13 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Thank you.

14 I want to take a moment to look at the -- so perhaps we can take  
15 the Tweets down. And if we can pull 1653? These are BOLOs that were produced.

16 Can we scroll to the very first one? Oh, okay. That was the first  
17 one. 12:07. Okay. Have you seen this BOLO before in regards to this incident?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I have not.

19 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. So you had no involvement in  
20 crafting the content?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

22 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Do you know who did?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I do not.

24 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And in terms of the subject matter, just  
25 take a moment to read it.

26 Okay. Are you finished?

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

28 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah, so same question in regards to

1 this BOLO, so you think the content in this BOLO reasonably informed other policing  
2 agencies of the severity of the situation that you were dealing with through the night?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe, yes, a BOLO was sent out,  
4 provided some initial information to other policing agencies and RCMP as well across  
5 the province.

6 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And do you think this reasonably  
7 represents the severity of the situation that was unfolding in Portapique at that time?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, I believe it did.

9 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay.

10 So I want to move to Cobequid Court. Do you recall any  
11 discussions on the night of April 18<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> about Cobequid Court?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I do not.

13 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. Why is that?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Why is that Cobequid Court?

15 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yes.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't understand what you're getting at.

17 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. I'm just wondering, so we know  
18 that 41 and 46 Cobequid Court contained a total of 5 victims of this mass casualty, and  
19 I'm just wondering, based on your recollection, if anyone turned their mind to Cobequid  
20 Court specifically through the night.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Cobequid Court? No.

22 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. Did you look at a map and see  
23 that Cobequid Court was contained within Portapique?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, and we knew where the roads were  
25 there.

26 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So you knew Cobequid Court was within  
27 Portapique?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, with --along with the other road.

1                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. So when I look at the Colchester  
2 comms, and that's your main form of communications with members; correct?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

4                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** The radio traffic?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So when I look at the comms from 10  
7 o'clock that night to 11 o'clock the next morning, there's roughly 6,000 lines of text and  
8 there's not 1 reference to Cobequid Court. And so my question is, besides looking at  
9 that radio traffic, but you're telling us you had no recollection of Cobequid Court?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No conversations specific to that roadway,  
11 no.

12                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And in terms of Cobequid Court,  
13 we know that it appears that the first member on scene in Cobequid Court was 4:46  
14 p.m. on April 19<sup>th</sup>, and that was 46 Cobequid Court. Do you know that or ---

15                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speak to that.

16                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Were you aware of that fact?

17                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

18                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So that's 19 hours after this mass  
19 casualty began and it's my understanding that that's when the Bonds at 4:46 and the  
20 Oliver Tucks at roughly 4:50 were discovered. Can either of you speak to that 19 hours  
21 in terms of what happened?

22                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think it's pretty clear what happened  
23 up until 11:25.

24                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** M'hm.

25                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't think we need to go over all that  
26 again. And at that point, it transitions to a Major Crime scene, and admittedly, there  
27 were a lot of areas to search, a lot of places to go, and a lot of crime scenes to manage.

28                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. And are you aware of any records

1 prior to 4:46 that show someone turning their mind to Cobequid Court?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm not, no.

3 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And even, like, the hand-drawn map that  
4 was put up, the other streets have handwritten names. I don't see a handwritten name  
5 next to Cobequid Court even on the 11833.

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay. I can't comment on that.

7 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** That's the map you didn't see. But you  
8 did see a hand-drawn map, it's just not this one?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

10 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** So there was another hand-drawn map  
11 in the Command Centre?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

13 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. Just a few other quick questions  
14 here, so just on air support, I just want to make sure I heard you properly. In regards to  
15 air support, did you say knowing what we know now, air support, having air support  
16 wouldn't have made a difference?

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't believe I said that.

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I'm sorry, say again?

19 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. Just in terms of air support, did  
20 you say that knowing what we know now, air support wouldn't have made a difference?

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Are you saying would or wouldn't?

22 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Would not have made a difference?

23 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I don't think we said that.

24 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** I thought I heard that on direct. You  
25 didn't?

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

27 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. You agree that having air support  
28 would have made a difference?

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think what I said was that it would  
2 have been -- every piece of equipment that we can have at our disposal is going to  
3 enhance our response. I don't know if it would have made a difference because I can't  
4 speculate to that, but I know it would have been nice to have it.

5                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah. Well, it could have located Mr.  
6 Ellison hiding in the woods; right?

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Potentially.

8                   **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** It could have located Ms. Banfield within  
9 Portapique?

10                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Potentially.

11                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Yeah. It could have been used to locate  
12 the perpetrator at Glenholme very quickly?

13                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Potentially.

14                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** You indicated that the evacuation efforts,  
15 I think when -- you said when things cooled down a bit; is that when ---

16                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** When we -- I think I had mentioned that once  
17 we had the opportunity to start working on an evacuation plan, once we saw how it was  
18 going to be a protracted event, we started to work on our evacuation plan.

19                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And that was at roughly 2:50?

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think, no, I believe we had conversations  
21 throughout the night about evacuation and all that, but once -- it was later in the morning  
22 when we started to have our discussions as to how we were going to make -- facilitate  
23 an evacuation plan.

24                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I remember being part of those  
25 discussions, so it was after 5:40.

26                  **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** And finally, just a question, you were  
27 asked several questions in regards to public alerting, but I'm just wondering if you have  
28 any information to know why the province was apparently on standby, why EMO was on

1 standby in case RCMP wished to use the Alert Ready program?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm not able -- there's no comment I can  
3 make on that.

4 **MR. JOSHUA BRYSON:** Okay. Thank you. They're all my  
5 questions.

6 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Bryson.  
7 We'll take a 15-minute break.

8 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. The  
9 proceedings are now on break and will resume in 15 minutes.

10 --- Upon breaking at 3:29 p.m.

11 --- Upon resuming at 3:47 p.m.

12 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Welcome back. The  
13 proceedings are again in session.

14 **JEFF WEST, Resumed:**

15 **KEVIN SURETTE, Resumed:**

16 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you.

17 Ms. Miller, I believe you're up next.

18 **--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. TARA MILLER:**

19 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Afternoon, S/Sgt West and Surette. My  
20 name is Tara Miller, and with my colleague, Alix Digout, we represent one of the family  
21 members of Kristen Beaton. So I'm going to ask you just a couple of themes of  
22 questions. I shouldn't be too, too long.

23 I want to start first with getting a better appreciation of your arrival,  
24 S/Sgt. West, at the Command Centre in Great Village. I think you had said in your  
25 evidence this morning, when you arrived in terms of its setup, it was effectively empty.  
26 And would you have expected that more would have been done to get that ready for  
27 you when you had arrived at 1:02 in the morning?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, typically, the Command Post is not up



1 and running with everything there for us. It usually -- it kind of coincides with resources  
2 starting to arrive in the sense that it's -- usually, a lot of our resources are headquarters-  
3 based, so it's kind of as we get there, it starts to get ---

4 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Hopping.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And in terms of the resources that  
7 were there, you know, I get a sense that some of them were rudimentary, and if ---

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm. Yeah.

9 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- I can use that word, paper that was on the  
10 wall, markers.

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

12 **MS. TARA MILLER:** I did hear you, I think, S/Sgt. Surette, talk  
13 about a screen that would have broadcast a map up on the wall, so were there  
14 computer resources for you in the headquarters, the Command Centre?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** In the Command Centre, when Kevin spoke  
16 of the screen, no, that is technology, tech equipment that is brought to the Command  
17 Post by the tech support person that comes with the Emergency Response Team.

18 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. With the ERT team?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

20 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. So in the absence of the ERT team  
21 being there, you wouldn't have had any of that technology?

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** From the computer base, no.

23 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And had they -- my understanding is  
24 that ERT arrived before you did, S/Sgt. West.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MS. TARA MILLER:** So was the tech person there when you  
27 arrived?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I don't believe -- I think -- can't say

1 exactly when Cpl. McDougall showed up, but he was not there when I arrived.

2 **MS. TARA MILLER:** And Cpl. McDougall was the tech person with  
3 the ERT team?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

5 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. So the technology that did arrive was  
6 with the ERT team?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

8 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And that would have included  
9 computers, screens. Would it have included access to emails?

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe it would have, but I guess it would  
11 be cellular based, so I assume it would have had access to emails.

12 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. So but for you two gentlemen, would  
13 you have access to emails if people were trying to email you?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, we did not have computers with us.

15 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Or I did not have one with me.

17 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Did you, S/Sgt. Surette?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Nor did I.

19 **MS. TARA MILLER:** So you would have been reliant on a phone  
20 or radio?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

22 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And do you feel in hindsight and with  
23 a forward-looking mandate that having access to emails might have been helpful for  
24 you?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'd see it as being a benefit, in the sense that  
26 it's available to us. It's not something that would replace that phone call for that  
27 important information, those radio transmissions, and recognizing that if and when you  
28 have the ability to refer to email, but ---

1                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Were you aware if there was any Pictometry  
2   resourcing in Command Centre in Great Village?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe that's one of the software  
4   applications that the tech guy for ERT has access to.

5                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Do you know if a Pictometry was accessed  
6   that evening or that morning?

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speak to that.

8                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And then the boards, the paper  
9   boards, how often would they have been updated? I think I heard your evidence to be,  
10   S/Sgt. West, you or your scribe would update those ---

11                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

12                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- correct?

13                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. And I can't say how often it was.  
14   They'd be updated at various times throughout the operational period.

15                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Thank you.

16                   Now in terms of people in Command Centre, I appreciate that there  
17   were a large number of people.

18                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

19                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** People were sort of flooding there in terms of  
20   a contact point, but I'm going to narrow in on what you had said earlier, from your  
21   perspective, you wanted uniformed command -- or, sorry, uniformed command at the  
22   headquarters, and that was S/Sgt. Halliday?

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, at the Command Post, not at  
24   headquarters.

25                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Sorry, yes, at Command Post. And I think  
26   you said the benefit of that is it's face-to-face for information flowing, you can catch  
27   everything?

28                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

1                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And so in terms of other uniformed  
2 command, would S/Sgt. Carroll have been at the Command Post?

3                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. Once they transitioned from Bible Hill  
4 Detachment, I believe, S/Sgt. Carroll was there as well, S/Sgt. MacCallum was there as  
5 well.

6                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And how about S/Sgt. O'Brien, was he  
7 present at Command Post as well?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't recall when I would have saw -- and  
9 it's Sgt. O'Brien, when he would have been there.

10                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

11                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** It was after seven. I believe he arrived  
12 after seven o'clock.

13                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. A.m.?

14                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

15                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** And would that have been valuable for him to  
16 have been there earlier?

17                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it's dependent on what roles and  
18 responsibly would be tasked down to him as a uniformed Ops NCO.

19                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And then lastly, S/Sgt. Rehill, he was  
20 the Risk Manager. Would he have been in the OCC?

21                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

22                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Is that where he was located?

23                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He remains in the OCC.

24                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** He never comes to Command Post ---

25                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

26                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- or the Risk Manager?

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

28                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Thank you.

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

2                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** That's what I wanted to be clear on.

3                   My friend Mr. Bryson asked a few questions about air support. Of  
4 course, we know that the RCMP asset in Moncton was not available, but what we really  
5 haven't heard about, and I wanted to hear from you two in terms of your experience is,  
6 had that asset been available, what would it have brought to the search?

7                   And I'm going to suggest it would have had a spotlight. Would that  
8 have been accurate?

9                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess it depends on what apparatus is  
10 attached to the asset at the time.

11                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** We're talking about the Moncton RCMP.

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. And they have various what they have.  
13 I think it's called an array, what they have attached to it, so it could bring a spotlight. It  
14 could bring FLIR. It could bring what -- those type of technology.

15                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** So these things like a spotlight, FLIR, they  
16 would all be helpful from an operational standpoint in terms of searching for victims, for  
17 the perpetrator, for -- for anything from the air. Is that fair to say?

18                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think it's fair to say, and I think Kevin  
19 alluded to that earlier, what the -- what an air asset would bring. It's just another  
20 avenue of -- of being able to get better situational awareness of what you have.

21                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Fair enough.

22                  And I do appreciate that, but what I'm trying to do is drill down in  
23 terms of what are the components that would make it -- that would make more  
24 complete, so like a spotlight.

25                  Like would it have a loudhailer? Would like the TAV had a  
26 loudhailer to call out things? Would it have that?

27                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I honestly don't know what all the pieces of  
28 equipment that they'd have on that asset.

1                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** What about -- there would be an RCMP  
2 member, I would assume, there with a gun who could act in a sniper or sharpshooter  
3 role? Is that fair to say?

4                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think that would be more of a question  
5 directed to our Emergency Response Team as to what the capabilities from an aerial  
6 platform when it comes to sniper, if that's what you're getting at.

7                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Staff Sergeant Surette, sorry, go ahead.

8                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah. In some cases -- and I think  
9 even to fly, the last time I had any exposure to that, they do come -- I say they. The  
10 pilot comes with a spotter in the -- in the aircraft, but I would have to think that if we had  
11 deployed that asset that night that we likely would have explored the possibility of  
12 putting an ERT member in that helicopter as well.

13                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Thank you.

14                   Okay. I'm going to move from that to an area that my friend, Mr.  
15 Burrill, reviewed with you this morning.

16                   He asked you about discussions and decisions around roadblocks  
17 and checkpoints, but the timing of his review was from approximately 10:15 to 10:25 on  
18 -- a.m. on, and this would have been, of course, after both Kristen Beaton and Heather  
19 O'Brien were fatally shot on Plains Road.

20                   So what I want to do at this point is go back in time and work  
21 through some other points through the morning and get some information from you two  
22 in terms of what CIC's role would have been earlier in the day.

23                   If I understood your evidence this morning, I think you said that at  
24 10:15, 10:25 when there was this discussion and dialogue around where are we going  
25 to block a road, are we going to put checkpoints, what are we going to do, it became  
26 ERT's -- it became the decision of ERT or the responsibility of ERT. Did I understand  
27 that correctly?

28                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Not the responsibility. I think -- I think

1 what we said was that the decision on where to place ERT in what we would call  
2 strategic locations to supplement the GD members, the general duty members who are  
3 more numerous and more spread out that we would allow the ERT to position  
4 themselves where they felt they were in the most advantageous position.

5 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. So in terms of -- I appreciate that.  
6 Thank you.

7 I'm going to go, like I said, back in time. I understand from the  
8 timeline that -- and we can pull up, Madam Registrar, if we could, the Command  
9 Decision Foundational Document at page 131, paragraph 272.

10 And gentlemen, this is going to be pointed at you, Staff Sergeant  
11 West, because Staff Sergeant Surette, you wouldn't have been there at this point. But  
12 this was, my understanding is, when Staff Sergeant Halliday arrives at the command  
13 post at 2:20 a.m. in the morning. And at that point, he's talking about understanding  
14 that the perpetrator had previously threatened to kill his parents and there was a  
15 concern that he may target them again.

16 And obviously, there was a concern about where his parents would  
17 be in Moncton.

18 And then also concerned, later on in that paragraph, that the  
19 perpetrator might try to escape to his residence in Dartmouth. And so he engaged Staff  
20 Sergeant MacCallum with respect to containment efforts in Dartmouth.

21 And at this point, if we go down, Madam Registrar, to paragraph  
22 273, we see that Staff Sergeant Halliday also reviewed perimeter around Portapique  
23 with maps. And I think what I was looking for is a reference to a checkpoint at the  
24 Cobequid toll area.

25 Seeing that there?

26 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** In the second line from the top.

27 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Thank you.

28 So at that point, Staff Sergeant West, would you have been aware

1 of that information from Staff Sergeant Halliday?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall that -- having that conversation  
3 with him.

4 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Would you have been aware,  
5 regardless of how it came to your attention, that there had been a checkpoint set up at  
6 the Cobequid toll plaza?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I do not recall being informed that there had  
8 been a checkpoint set up at the Cobequid ---

9 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- toll plaza.

11 **MS. TARA MILLER:** So you weren't aware of any information  
12 about checkpoints as of 2:20 in the morning.

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, that's correct.

14 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Did you give any -- okay. Well, if you  
15 weren't aware, I'll move on from those questions.

16 So at that point, whose responsibility would it have been, Staff  
17 Sergeant West, to task and action checkpoints throughout the province?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Typically that would have been funneled  
19 down through me through the uniform side of the house.

20 **MS. TARA MILLER:** All right. And we understand that, of course,  
21 Staff Sergeant Halliday was taking care of that, but you don't have any awareness of  
22 having that ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

24 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- information passed back up to you.

25 So if you had a concern, for example, that there hadn't been a  
26 checkpoint set up to get into Halifax, for example, because we knew that that was a  
27 concern, that the perpetrator may go to his property in Dartmouth, you would have had  
28 no awareness of what was or wasn't in place at that time with respect to that identified



1 potential location for the perpetrator.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess, really, at that time, Staff Sergeant  
3 MacCallum had been heavily engaged with Halifax Regional Police to make them aware  
4 of that, but I was not aware of checkpoints at that time.

5 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And the purpose of checkpoints,  
6 again, my layperson understanding of it, really is to monitor entry and exit points and ---

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

8 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- major transportation routes ---

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

10 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- where you believe the suspect may be  
11 going.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. And using the terminology  
13 “checkpoint”, is that actually -- what is actually happening is that a matter of some -- a  
14 vehicle roadside watching traffic go by or is it people in vehicles, checking vehicles? So  
15 when you say “checkpoint” in that context, I’m not even sure what would have been  
16 taking place at that checkpoint.

17 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Well, what would have been your expectation  
18 for a checkpoint set up at the Cobequid toll pass?

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Basically, that would be monitoring traffic.

20 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Right. Yeah. Looking for the perpetrator.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. Yeah, so whether you call it a  
22 checkpoint or stationary vehicle roadside, it’s monitoring traffic looking for the suspect  
23 vehicle.

24 **MS. TARA MILLER:** It’s different from a roadblock because ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- a roadblock stops traffic.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

28 **MS. TARA MILLER:** But a checkpoint is a member who is

1 assigned specifically to monitor an entry and exit point on a major transportation route.

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** It can take on that -- that meaning, yes.

3 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Madam Registrar, if we can go to  
4 page 191 at paragraph 397.

5 So that was at, you know, 2:20 in the morning and now as we  
6 understand from your evidence and others' evidence, through the night there was no  
7 sightings of the perpetrator and focus became on trying to evacuate people in  
8 Portapique, among other things.

9 But something critical happened at 6:44, and that would have been  
10 when Ms. Banfield came out of the woods and provided a host of information, but  
11 particularly with respect to checkpoints, she advised ERT -- and this is, we found, at  
12 paragraph 397 -- that the perpetrator told her he was going to go kill her sister, who  
13 lived in Dartmouth.

14 And you'd agree with me that for the perpetrator to travel from  
15 Portapique to Halifax, that would involve going through Truro.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

17 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Or through the highway, yes.

19 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Yeah. There's a pretty tight sort of access  
20 point there from the TransCanada Highway 104-Highway 102.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's correct.

22 **MS. TARA MILLER:** The second road, Highway 4.

23 And that that would have been an intersection that could have been  
24 covered with an officer, a mobile unit dispatched there to monitor that entry/exit point;  
25 correct?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

27 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And at that point when you learned of  
28 that information, was there any -- and certainly by this point I think -- Staff Sergeant

1 Surette, were you there at this point, or you came at 7:00?

2 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I was there at 5:40.

3 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Thank you, yes.

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

5 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Did either of you give any consideration  
6 knowing that you now had evidence from Ms. Banfield that there was an expressed  
7 intention by the perpetrator to head to Dartmouth to cause harm to her sister -- did  
8 either of you give any thought to establishing a checkpoint at that point?

9 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** So I think it's important to note where  
10 we are in the whole timeline at that point.

11 First of all, I don't want to give the impression that we are just  
12 throwing that information aside. We had members of HRP actually went and took Lisa  
13 Banfield's sisters, not into custody, but took them for safe keeping. So we took care of  
14 that and we had -- I know that we eventually did have members in the Moncton area  
15 find his parents and deal with that from that perspective.

16 And as far as a checkpoint, at 6:44, I mean, don't forget, we've  
17 already gone through the timeline where it's closer to 8:00 o'clock before we have  
18 confirmation that that fourth car exists.

19 So we were thinking about checkpoints at that point? No, we were  
20 thinking about everything that we had to do to safeguard the people on both areas and  
21 to determine -- ascertain if in fact there was a fourth car.

22 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Right. But as I think you'd said earlier, you  
23 were trying to cover off both eventualities ---

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

25 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- or possibilities, that he might still be in  
26 Portapique, but then he might be somewhere else. And I appreciate the efforts that  
27 were made to, you know, protect Ms. Banfield's sister and his parents, but at the same  
28 time, you did know that there was a possibility that he could be going to both of those

1 places physically to cause harm; correct?

2 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct.

3 **MS. TARA MILLER:** I want to move now, Madam Registrar, to  
4 page 248, paragraph 527.

5 And gentlemen, this is an entry for 9:31:13, OCC dispatch receives  
6 a call from Nicole Zyzes at the Intelligence Centre in New York State and she's  
7 conveying that they've received information that the subject has possibly fled and  
8 looking to see if there's any reason that he may be heading to New York State.

9 Would you have been aware of that inquiry from the individual from  
10 Intelligence Centre in New York?

11 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

13 **MS. TARA MILLER:** All right. So if you weren't aware of it, there  
14 could be no steps taken, I guess, to action anything arising ---

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

16 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- from that? Okay. And who would have  
17 been monitoring the OCC dispatch at that time?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't say. I don't know who it would have  
19 been. The Risk Manager? That information ---

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- is within the OCC within the setting of the  
22 Risk Manager. So as to ---

23 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Who -- apologies. Go ahead.

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Risk Manager or Glen Byrne.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, Glen was still on the ground, so.

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't think it's our position to say who  
28 would have been monitoring that information, from our perspective, ---

1                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

2                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- within the OCC. It's not ---

3                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** But within your Command Post, it was Glen  
4 Byrne who was there monitoring the radio for you; correct?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He was there for the Emergency Response  
6 Team. He's the radio operator/loggist for the Emergency Response Team.

7                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Then if we could go, Madam  
8 Registrar, to page 252/253, so it will be at the bottom of page 252, and this is paragraph  
9 539. This is the 9:42 OCC call which broadcast the information that there is a fatal  
10 shooting on -- in Wentworth. And the key piece of information there is that there's a  
11 female deceased:

12   "...heard a [...] bang, saw an RCMP vehicle, left heading  
13   [to] Truro."

14                   Would you both have been aware of that broadcast at 9:42?

15                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I was.

16                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

17                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And at that point, having information in  
18 terms of who you reasonably believed to be the perpetrator in a marked RCMP car  
19 travelling in a southerly direction towards Truro, what steps were taken at that point to  
20 initiate a checkpoint, again, at that sort of Truro centre?

21                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** At that point, our efforts were directed at  
22 getting resources into the Wentworth area, with uniformed resources, as well as our  
23 Emergency Response Team.

24                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

25                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** There are a number of people though that  
26 you have working below you on your team, and I guess my question is, I appreciate that  
27 was the immediate response, deploy resources, but was there nobody available that  
28 could also have, as a secondary duty, been focused on making sure that while we're

1 taking care of this, we're not forgetting this, and that we are taking proactive steps,  
2 instead of reactive steps? Proactive steps to make sure that we are monitoring an entry  
3 and an exit point, which the perpetrator may very well travel through, given that we have  
4 information that he's travelling to Truro.

5 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I ---

6 **MS. TARA MILLER:** No on place to do that?

7 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I think, like I said, I didn't think of  
8 that, that I was aware peripherally that there were members -- there had been a shift  
9 change between 7:00 and 8:00 at the various detachments along the 102. Everybody  
10 was aware of what was going on. The Risk Manager made everybody aware. So I  
11 didn't think, or I can't speak for Jeff, I didn't think of it, but I knew there were members  
12 through that entire corridor that were paying attention and responding.

13 **MS. TARA MILLER:** If every -- all your members are flooding into  
14 Plains Road in Debert, do you have any overall situational awareness about what is  
15 actually going on in terms of an entry and an exit point into a major transportation route  
16 ---

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

18 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- where the perpetrator may be heading?

19 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No. And I don't think -- I think the  
20 members in -- perhaps from Bible Hill up were responding to that, but I'm fairly certain in  
21 saying that members in Enfield, for example, in Halifax District, were not responding  
22 past Truro to go up to that call. There was enough members there. And I guess the  
23 only thing I'm saying is that they were all being deployed by the Risk Managers to  
24 various points, as is evident as we go through all this.

25 So all I can say is that it never occurred to me, can't speak for Jeff,  
26 to set up an actual checkpoint at that time.

27 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And did it occur to you, or to either of  
28 you, that it might be appropriate to engage the Truro Police at that time with all of your

1 resources being deployed to respond, that it would be -- it would perhaps be a good  
2 idea to engage the Truro Police, because that was their area? Did that occur to either  
3 of you?

4 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well I know that there was discussion  
5 about both Truro and Amherst Police at various times throughout the morning in the  
6 Command Post. And I know by reading the transcripts, that there was some contact  
7 with both of those police forces at various times. I don't have those times in front of me.  
8 I don't remember. But I do know that they were -- we made several efforts to ensure  
9 that they were aware of what was going on. Specific to that shooting, I don't think that  
10 happened. I think everybody's focus was on that response at the time.

11 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Reflecting back, gentlemen, with this  
12 information, of course now it's the benefit of hindsight, we know he actually did travel  
13 through that point, ---

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

15 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- travelling south, as was identified at 9:42.

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

17 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Do you think there's something that, if you  
18 were doing this over again, you would be able to execute something that would have  
19 made sure that we respond proactively, but we also manage these entry/exit point  
20 proactively as well?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, in hindsight there's probably a few  
22 things we'd do differently.

23 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And it's interesting too because we  
24 know, and I looked at the earlier excerpt from the Foundational Document, that there  
25 was a checkpoint at the Cobequid toll pass that was in the place early in the morning.  
26 And if we go to, Madam Registrar, page 222 at paragraph 467, this is at 8:02 on Sunday  
27 morning:

28 "..."RM Briers received a phone call from OCC

1 commander Glen [Buyer (Phonetic)].”

2 And is that who you said was the ERT ---

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Glen Byrne.

4 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Glen Byrne, sorry. Was that who you said  
5 was the ERT operator?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He's ---

7 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Yeah.

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, he is the radio person, loggist, for  
9 ERT.

10 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Yeah. And so he is advising Risk Manager  
11 Briers that he is going to update J Division in New Brunswick, and also that he wanted  
12 to make sure that the toll booths at the Cobequid Pass were notified.

13 And then if we go down to paragraph 468, Madam Registrar, it's  
14 right there, we know that not only were the Cobequid Pass toll booths notified, but there  
15 was actually an RCMP vehicle parked at that toll booth.

16 So it looks like with thought ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** M'hm.

18 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- about that, and action, there was a car  
19 there to monitor that entry and exit point, and it had been there perhaps since 2:20 in  
20 the morning.

21 So the exit out of Nova Scotia through Northern Nova Scotia into  
22 New Brunswick was taken care of there, and that looks like it was as a result of  
23 somebody turning their mind to it. Is that fair to say?

24 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

25 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. Thank you. I'm going to turn now,  
26 gentlemen, to some training, but in the context of the MacNeil Report. And I think  
27 earlier this morning, you referenced the Moncton tragedy.

28 The MacNeil Report, as we know, is the report that was dated



1 December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, after the tragedy that took place in June of 2014. It was a review  
2 with a variety of recommendations.

3 You both, of course, I would assume, are aware of what happened  
4 in Moncton; correct?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Yes. And did you -- either of you have any  
7 involvement in Moncton?

8 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

9 **MS. TARA MILLER:** In terms of responding.

10 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, I did not.

11 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Did either of you have an opportunity to read  
12 the MacNeil Report after it was published?

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I read parts of it.

14 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I did as well, but it was quite some time ago.

16 **MS. TARA MILLER:** And did you read parts of it on your own or  
17 was it in the context of training that was provided to you through the RCMP?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** On my own in my case.

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** On my own.

20 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. So that was going to be one of my  
21 questions. Do you know if any of those recommendations were actually implemented  
22 and actioned in Nova Scotia?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speak to that.

24 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't know either.

25 **MS. TARA MILLER:** And are you able to say, maybe you can't,  
26 this might be a question for somebody else, who would have been responsible for  
27 implementing those recommendations in Nova Scotia?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Can't answer that.

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't know who it would have been  
2 directed to.

3                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And are you able to say, maybe you  
4 can't, how would this information -- outside of your own self-initiative, but how would this  
5 information have been transmitted or shared with RCMP members in Nova Scotia?

6                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I really don't know.

7                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I don't know because it was never -- I  
8 don't think -- like, in our group, as incident commanders, it's not something that was  
9 presented to us or anything like that.

10                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

11                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I would think that the Emergency  
12 Response Team members would have had some sort of it, but I can't speak for them  
13 either. But a lot of them were tactically-based, all the recommendations.

14                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. In terms of your CIC training, I recall,  
15 Staff Sergeant Surette, that you were trained in 2010?

16                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

17                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** And Staff Sergeant West, you were 2015?

18                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

19                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** So for you, Staff Sergeant West, was there  
20 any component of your training, your CIC training, that would have woven in any  
21 components of the MacNeil Report?

22                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not that I can recall.

23                  **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And then again, moving forward from  
24 2015 to 2020, again, I believe I have your evidence on this, I just want to be clear, there  
25 was no training offered to you, there was no sharing of this information, there was no  
26 actioning of these recommendations outside of -- by the RCMP in Nova Scotia, proper,  
27 outside of what you took on to read ourselves?

28                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Took on to read ourselves or discussed

1 amongst our group, or something like that, but nothing formal ---

2 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And I believe ---

3 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** --- that I recall.

4 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- Staff Sergeant Surette, you said you did  
5 actually try to—my words, correct me if I'm mischaracterising you—you did actually try  
6 to implement something out of the Moncton report. You said there was training that  
7 came out of the -- or "something coming out of the Moncton report. It's part of our  
8 training to get pertinent information out." Do you recall ---

9 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I think ---

10 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- what you's were talking about at that  
11 point?

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes. I think I said that that  
13 recommendation came out of Moncton. I don't think I said there was any training, but I  
14 think I was referring to the communication on the radio by the Incident Commander.  
15 And, you know, getting on the air and saying that you're -- this is who you are and that  
16 you're in charge or that type of thing, that was borne from -- I know that that had its --  
17 kind of its genesis through the whole Moncton thing.

18 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Right.

19 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

20 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Right. Yeah, in Moncton, I mean, there is no  
21 apples-to-apples here, but there were some similar components from what happened in  
22 Moncton. You had an active shooter, there was -- there were a number of resources  
23 deployed. It was not an -- not something that was a -- probably a scenario that had  
24 been table-topped before. Is that fair to say?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's correct.

26 **MS. TARA MILLER:** And what I would like, Madam Registrar, if we  
27 could, this document, the MacNeil Report, has not yet been exhibited, but it is a --  
28 COMM Number 50877. If we could make that an exhibit, and if you could bring it up.

1 And I'm going to start with page 42 of that report.

2 **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** That's Exhibit 1622.

3 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Thank you.

4 **--- EXHIBIT NO. 1622:**

5 (COMM0050877) MacNeil Report

6 **MS. TARA MILLER:** So gentlemen, I appreciate this was  
7 sometime ago that you perhaps reviewed this. This is a recommendation, 3.6, which  
8 falls under a category, Supervision During Entire Incident, and the recommendation is:

9 "...where it does not already exist, each Division  
10 [should] establish a policy and protocol  
11 through...Emergency Operational Plan to identify  
12 entry [and] exit points and major transportation routes  
13 that should be alerted and monitored in the event of a  
14 relevant crisis."

15 Those words, the entry/exit points and major transportation routes,  
16 were the words I have used with you earlier in terms of Truro and Amherst and Halifax.  
17 Is that something that you can say has been done in the Halifax or in the H-Division?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm not aware of, as it states here, an  
19 emergency operation plan, to identify. I've been retired for a year, I'm not sure, but I'm  
20 not aware of any emergency operation plan that's been established for that.

21 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay. And up until -- sorry, just before I go to  
22 you, Staff Sergeant Surette.

23 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

24 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Up until your retirement a year ago, were you  
25 aware of anything that had been done to that point?

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

27 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

28 Staff Sergeant Surette?

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I'm not either. We do have an  
2 emergency management section within the RCMP Headquarters, H-Division  
3 Headquarters, so I would think that that query should go to that office.

4                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Yeah. So is the first time both of you were  
5 aware of this recommendation coming out of the MacNeil Report?

6                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I probably read it at the time, but it  
7 doesn't -- it doesn't look very familiar to me kind of thing. I probably read it at the time,  
8 but that's it.

9                   **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay, thank you.

10                   And Madam Registrar, one last location to go to. If we could go to  
11 paragraph 56 -- sorry -- page 56. Thank you. And at the bottom, we see Military  
12 Assistance.

13                   And what I want to draw your attention to is that:

14                                   "Provisions exist for the RCMP to request the  
15 assistance of the Canadian Armed Forces (CF) in  
16 operations where specialized or unique capabilities  
17 are required. This can also extend to the use of  
18 specialized equipment in [the] possession of the CF.  
19 In relation to this incident there were several areas  
20 where this may have applied."

21                   And then the report goes on to talk about armoured vehicles,  
22 aircraft and ground trackers, if we see the second last paragraph:

23                                   "The CF also possesses aircraft and ground trackers  
24 who may have been able to assist both in the early  
25 stages or if the matter was prolonged."

26                   Do either of you remember reading that part in the report prior to  
27 today?

28                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall, and it's been quite sometime

1 since I would have read that, so I don't -- I don't recall reading that.

2 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Okay.

3 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I can say that from experience that  
4 it's -- it's fine for an RCMP review or something like this to say that. The military  
5 themselves, I would suggest, have likely not been consulted in the authoring of that  
6 paragraph because -- we have a good relationship with the military, don't get me wrong,  
7 but -- for example, they will not -- they are very reluctant to becoming involved in  
8 domestic affairs, you know, criminal type domestic affairs. We have had their  
9 assistance in the past over long protracted periods, but as far as calling them and  
10 getting some assistance right away, especially in what we would call a "hot zone" or a --  
11 where there is firearms active, has been -- has -- in my experience, has been denied as  
12 opposed to approved.

13 **MS. TARA MILLER:** So I guess we're importing, I guess, the --  
14 what the author was -- the author of this report was saying, but when I take:

15 "The CF also possesses aircraft and ground trackers  
16 who may have been able to assist both in the early  
17 stages or if the matter was prolonged."

18 If that's accurate, that certainly would have covered both of the  
19 scenarios you found yourselves in on the 18th and 19th, correct, with an active shooter?  
20 Because the Moncton incident involved an active shooter as well.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Correct, and it's -- I guess it comes down to  
22 it's not a matter of simply a phone call and saying, "This is what I need". There's  
23 processes in place with requesting military assistance.

24 **MS. TARA MILLER:** Right. And that is, I would suggest, perhaps  
25 an area for more exploration for the Commissioners and in terms of our  
26 recommendations moving forward. But I did want to highlight that for you ---

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

28 **MS. TARA MILLER:** --- and the Commissioners' attention. Thank

1 you. Gentlemen, those are my questions.

2 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Ms. Miller.

3 Mr. MacDonald?

4 **--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. TOM MacDONALD:**

5 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Good afternoon, Staff Sergeants. I'm  
6 Tom MacDonald, and I am the counsel to Tara Long. Tara Long was Erin Tuck's  
7 sibling. They have the same birth mother.

8 I wanted to ask some questions from your perspective as Critical  
9 Incident Commanders relating to those first few hours in Portapique on the night of the  
10 18th of April. So we know, Staff West, that you got a call at 10:42 from Staff Halliday on  
11 the 18th asking it be declared a critical incident, for lack of a better word. And you were  
12 the on duty Critical Incident Commander, and then you're the Critical Incident  
13 Commander once that call comes. Am I right?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. However, I'm not in control or  
15 command at that time.

16 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Understood.

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

18 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** You were in command and control at  
19 1:19 ---

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

21 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** --- on the 19th when you arrive in  
22 Portapique?

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Correct?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that is correct.

26 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Yeah. What is your understanding of  
27 who was in command and control of the critical incident in that two-and-a-half, roughly,  
28 timeline that it took you to take the call, leave Dartmouth, get to Portapique?

1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe it would be the risk manager  
2 working in conjunction with the person on the ground, who I believe that Cst. Beselt was  
3 the on scene commander, for lack of a better term, and the senior member.

4                   **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** For the IARD group?

5                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

6                   **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Right.

7                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's correct.

8                   **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay. Is it fair to suggest that  
9 Staff Rehill was also a temporary Critical Incident Commander?

10                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, it's not a fair statement.

11                  **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay.

12                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think he is -- at that point, Staff Rehill is  
13 helping control the initial critical incident response. He's not a Critical Incident  
14 Commander in the sense of training, skillset that goes with it. So he's working as -- and  
15 I believe Kevin referenced it early on this morning, talking about the Initial Critical  
16 Commander course. It's a one-week course that I believe all risk managers, even when  
17 I was in the OCC, the risk managers take it, and most senior NCOs, and most uniform  
18 members in this division have taken that course.

19                  **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** So I heard you say that this morning.

20                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

21                  **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** But having said that, is there a gap there,  
22 then, for that two-and-a-half hours that there is no onsite Critical Incident Commander in  
23 command and control; is that a gap?

24                  **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, because your Critical Incident Package  
25 is not in place at that time, so it's actually dealing with the frontline, the uniformed  
26 general duty policing response and addressing what's being done at that time. So when  
27 we're talking about the critical incident, the Critical Incident Response is the Critical  
28 Incident Package and the response that it brings. So, I would fall back on that, is as --



1 whether it's the Risk Manager or whoever the senior NCO that's taking charge, they're  
2 controlling their resources, their initial Critical Incident Response to this matter.

3 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** So this is, as you've both, I guess, today,  
4 something that wasn't table-talked. It's -- it was a one-off at that point in time what  
5 turned into this mass casualty. Is it your view that a Risk Manager had the appropriate  
6 training to deal with a situation like that on April 18<sup>th</sup>?

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, you stated right from the start, it's the  
8 one-off. How do you table talk exercise that? I guess how do you control it? What's  
9 your response? I guess you're dealing with what the initial response is. You're getting  
10 your members there. You're getting containment, and you're getting set up, knowing  
11 what you have, and awaiting the Critical Incident Package.

12 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** But is the Risk Manager properly trained  
13 to deal with that situation on the 18<sup>th</sup>, would you say?

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I can't speak to what Brian's training would  
15 be.

16 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Generally. A Risk Manager generally in  
17 that situation.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Generally?

19 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Yes.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** He's in the position with a situational  
21 awareness to best control those resources and response until the Critical Incident  
22 Package is in place, yes.

23 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Sure, but you're in a unique position  
24 because you were a Risk Manager before you were a Critical Incident ---

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

26 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** --- Commander.

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct.

28 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** So from that perspective, you've worn

1 both hats. Would a Risk Manager have had enough training to deal with this situation?

2 I realize he didn't take the ---

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

4 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** --- Critical Incident course.

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

6 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** I know that.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe so, yes.

8 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay. You mentioned both that when  
9 you took your Canadian Police College training, the Critical Incident training, and I think  
10 it was Staff Surette who said, at the end of the exercise, which is at the end of your two-  
11 week training, there's a simulation, I guess for lack of a better word, and at the end of  
12 that exercise, there is a lessons learned session.

13 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I believe -- I don't know ---

14 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Did I get that right this morning?

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I ---

16 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** You know, in other words, a review of  
17 everything you've done in the two weeks and at the end of the simulation?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, it -- the simulation itself, the  
19 scenario itself is a pass/fail.

20 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And then you -- but you are debriefed  
22 at the end of that, regardless of whether you've passed or failed, so I guess, in some  
23 sense, yeah, they would critique your performance and offer points of improvement, if  
24 any, or whatever the case may be.

25 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** I thought, and if I got it wrong, I'm not  
26 trying to trick you, I thought ---

27 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

28 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** --- you used the words lessons learned.

1 But let me ask you this, so there was a debriefing, I believe, Staff West, you said after  
2 the perpetrator was apprehended, for lack of a better word, back in Bible Hill?

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, at the Bible Hill Detachment.

4 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Right. And would there have been best  
5 practices -- I realize it's right on the heels of this whole incident, but a discussion of  
6 things that could have been done differently throughout the two days? Would you ---

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not at that time.

8 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay.

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That more was to wrap up the Critical  
10 Incident Response and to hand over to the Major Crime because now it's gone from  
11 being a critical incident to a Major Crime investigation.

12 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** And are either of you -- we'll start with  
13 you, Staff West, aware of whether the RCMP in Nova Scotia has conducted an internal  
14 investigation two years on now, to see what, if anything, could have been done  
15 differently?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I'm not aware.

17 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Are you, Staff Surette?

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No, I'm not aware of that at all.

19 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** If the Commission wanted to find that  
20 information, where would they go? H-Division ---

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I have no idea really.

22 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think it would start with our own  
23 headquarters, yes. I mean, I don't know where else you'd start.

24 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Right.

25 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And perhaps Commissioner Lucki, I  
26 don't know.

27 **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Yes, well, I would think the buck might  
28 stop with her, but H-Division would be a start ---

1                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yes.

2                   **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** --- do you agree?

3                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I agree.

4                   **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay.

5                   Are either of you aware of specific operational changes the RCMP  
6 has made as a result of Portapique, whether it's in Nova Scotia or across the country as  
7 the national police force?

8                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I am not aware of anything.

9                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Nor am I.

10                  **MR. TOM MacDONALD:** Okay. Those are my questions. Thank  
11 you very much. Thanks, Chief Commissioner.

12                  **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. MacDonald.

13                  Ms. McPhee?

14                  **--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:**

15                  **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** Good afternoon, gentlemen. I know you  
16 know who I am, but I'll say it for the record in any event. It's Patricia McPhee, Counsel  
17 for the Attorney General of Canada. And I know it's been a long day, so I'm just going  
18 to keep it really brief.

19                  This morning, my friend Mr. Burrill was asking you some questions  
20 about a change in circumstances that occurred around 9:42 the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, and  
21 that would have been the Wentworth call. And I think, S/Sgt. Surette, you mentioned  
22 that that changed the nature of the response at that point, and it became more -- there  
23 was more of a focus on the IARD response.

24                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think we used the term of vehicular  
25 IARD response, yes.

26                  **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** Can you tell us what that means, or just  
27 elaborate a bit on what that meant?

28                  **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Well, we finally coined the term. I don't

1 think it's anything we've used formally, but I guess my point was, and I think we'd agree,  
2 that at that point, the -- to backtrack, I'm sorry, it -- the -- this wasn't your typical -- what  
3 we would call a typical ERT/CIC call where you didn't have the stronghold, you didn't  
4 have the person contained in a house, or a building, or a small geographical area, and  
5 we were actively searching for him. So when 9:42 came along, I think at that point, it  
6 even became even less of a critical incident, a typical critical incident call. It transitioned  
7 to basically a manhunt to stop the threat, which we've used that term a lot, but we don't  
8 use it lightly. I mean, everybody who was out there wanted just to get to this guy and  
9 stop this guy from killing more people. And at that point, it becomes a much more -- in  
10 the Command Post, it becomes a much more collaborative type thing.

11 Overall, I think we both agree, the Incident Commander is still in  
12 command. It has to be ready to step in to take over the scene if we have -- if it  
13 becomes a barricaded suspect again or something like that. But when there's that  
14 many moving pieces, I think our focus became on where can we move resources for the  
15 best chance of success in stopping him, which is not a typical CIC call; right? A typical  
16 CIC call, as I've said, repeating myself, but you know where he is, you've got him  
17 contained, and you're doing all of the things that you can from both a negotiation and  
18 tactical perspective to cover off all your bases. In this case, it became basically a  
19 manhunt. And people were responding, some were on contact with us, some were not,  
20 I believe. So that became very difficult to manage. Although everybody had the same  
21 goal, it became difficult to manage. I think that's what. So does that answer your  
22 question?

23 **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** I think so. Does it mean that, then, at  
24 that stage, that the people on the ground, the general duty officers, for example, have  
25 more autonomy because of the nature of what they're doing at that stage?

26 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think perhaps, you know, they may  
27 have viewed it that way. I know the Risk Manager was engaged in trying to direct them,  
28 we were trying to direct ERT, which was an easier task than directing all the GD

1 members. I don't think autonomy is the right word. I think they probably all would still  
2 see themselves as confined by the geographical area of their detachment. If they had  
3 been told previously to monitor one or two exits or intersections, they probably  
4 continued to do that. So it wasn't a free-for-all, don't get me wrong. It's not just throw  
5 caution to the wind and everybody floods an area. I think there's a bit more control than  
6 that. But as far as physically having time to decide where you're going to place your  
7 resources and give them a defined expectation at that location, that's impossible to do  
8 under those conditions.

9 **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** But just one more question. One of the  
10 Counsel this afternoon had asked you if anyone called, or if you specifically, either of  
11 you, actually, had called the HRP CIC that night, or, I guess, the morning. And would  
12 there be any reason for you to call the HRP CIC that you can think of?

13 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No.

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

15 **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** And you're aware, from I think your  
16 testimony and your answers this afternoon, that HRP had been notified of the ongoing  
17 events; correct?

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** They were notified early on. I believe S/Sgt.  
19 MacCallum was ---

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- the point of contact with HRP early on.

22 **MS. PATRICIA McPHEE:** Okay.

23 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And much as described by our ERT  
24 members, the interoperability piece is huge. So even though, presumably, the HRP or  
25 Cape Breton Regional Incident commanders have the same courses we do, they  
26 operate under different standard operating procedures within their own organization as  
27 well. So that interoperability piece would probably be something that I would be  
28 concerned with if we were -- just as I wouldn't be comfortable going to Halifax Regional

1 and taking over a critical incident from one of their Incident Commanders, not knowing  
2 the capabilities of the team or how they're trained and all that terminology that they use,  
3 all that type of thing.

4 **MS. PATRICIA MacPHEE:** Okay. Thanks very much, gentlemen.

5 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you.

6 **MS. PATRICIA MacPHEE:** Oh, one second. I think I may have  
7 one more question.

8 One question we wanted to ask you about that I've neglected to  
9 bring up, there's been some characterization of the Command Post and that the  
10 resources at your disposal, you know, they were rudimentary, to use a term used this  
11 afternoon.

12 Specifically, I think we talked a little bit about the use of flip charts.  
13 Do you have any comment on the use of flip charts? Like does it meet your needs in an  
14 event like this?

15 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** For me, they meet my needs. It's low tech, it  
16 works every time. It makes it very easy for the oncoming person to read what you have,  
17 it's not computer-based, anything like that. It's been a tool that I've used all along.  
18 Kevin's been involved in the program longer than I have. I find that it's -- for me, I find it  
19 very effective and -- effective and it -- the ease of use for us.

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I agree with that. And I would say the  
21 problem, if any, with the boards is the same as if we had to input it by typing. It comes  
22 down to what you have the time to do, and if that's the priority you're at at this given  
23 moment.

24 So there are times when not enough information gets onto the  
25 boards because of other things taking priority, but that would be the same if somebody  
26 had to sit there and type it into a document of some sort. It makes no difference. It's  
27 the same -- it's the same principle.

28 **MS. PATRICIA MacPHEE:** Okay. Thank you very much.

1                   **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Ms. MacPhee.  
2                   Mr. Burrill?

3                   **MR. ROGER BURRILL:** That concludes questioning from counsel,  
4 Chief Commissioner.

5                   **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, Mr. Burrill.  
6                   Commissioner Fitch?

7                   **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Thank you, Commissioner MacDonald.  
8                   Gentlemen, thank you very much for your sharing today. I can only  
9 imagine the chaotic conditions that you were trying to manage. And I know everybody  
10 is tired, so I'll keep my questions pointed today, and they're mostly forward-looking  
11 questions, looking for suggestions for improvement and that type of thing. So I'll have  
12 to dig a little bit into them.

13                   So I'm going to pick up, first and foremost, from Ms. MacPhee  
14 about the use of the boards.

15                   Recognizing the value of them, they're only as valuable as the  
16 information that gets put on them, the information that gets observed on them, the  
17 decision points that get shared from them, and the certainty of people acting upon those  
18 and closing the loop.

19                   I think -- would you agree with that?

20                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I agree completely with that.

21                   **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** In the SMEAC design, the E, as you had  
22 ---

23                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24                   **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** --- indicated earlier, stands for the  
25 Execution.

26                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That is correct, yes.

27                   **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** And of all of the boards, and  
28 understanding that you, as Critical Incident Commander, and the scribe, are the only



1 ones that are responsible for putting information down on that board, deciding what  
2 goes on it, the exception to that is the E in the Execution piece, which I understand to  
3 be really the purview of the ERT Team Leader?

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. In a certain sense. On that -- under  
5 the Execution, at times, we'll have a bunch of abbreviations on there for ---

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** IA ---

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** IA, immediate action, deliberate action, all  
8 the other ones, surrender, break out, and what other plans. And usually that will be a  
9 checkbox to say that, "Yes, I've gone to the ERT Team Leader, I need your IA plan."  
10 Okay. He gets back to me, tells me what it is, my checkbox. He's got to document it.  
11 So I don't document his plan, but I'm populating that document, saying, "Yes, we now  
12 have an IA." And as it goes through, you'll get plans coming through at different times,  
13 depending on what the situation is. But yeah, that's information that populated after  
14 plans have been developed and the tactical plans are developed by ERT component.

15 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Right. And I understand you were  
16 having some communication issues during your role as Incident Commander.

17 I'm concerned about the fact that it wasn't only once, but twice, if  
18 not three times, but most definitely twice, that the ERT Team Leader did not follow  
19 through on your request to come to the Command Post. And as one of the points on  
20 the command triangle, ERT is very prominent in that triangle.

21 In hindsight, and I know that's difficult, to look at it through the rear-  
22 view mirror, but isn't there value in having the people that you require at the command  
23 post to stop, come in, get up to speed on all of the information that is shared knowledge,  
24 to develop a plan, before they go out to do their activities?

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I guess I'd take it one step further. Their true  
26 value is in having the adequate resources in place to have what we call TacOps in the  
27 Command Post, because really, that addresses the issues that you have with getting  
28 people back, taking them out of the operation, and getting them back to have the

1 briefings, develop the plans.

2 That night, we did not have a large component of ERT members  
3 available to us, so that was a decision that was made at the time.

4 But if we're talking about looking forward, moving forward as to  
5 things that are -- that we can take forward from this, that whole component of having  
6 TacOps, having that ERT, whether it's the ERT Team Leader or the 2IC that's in the  
7 Command Post with us, with that direct point of contact for us.

8 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** So on that specific note, I would expect  
9 that having S/Sgt Surette there with his ERT experience would provide some added  
10 value?

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes. And like I say, we have a luxury, like,  
12 and we're a small division here. And I've worked with Kevin quite some time. And  
13 some of our Incident Commanders are former ERT operators. Some are not. But it's  
14 just another source of information, for lack of -- or expertise that brings to the table. And  
15 not that we would ever develop the tactical plans, but with Kevin being there with me, or  
16 even available to me throughout his drive up there, it's another very valuable resource  
17 that I have to help me through the process.

18 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Thank you. On the issue of setting up  
19 the Command Post, is there a standard or an accepted standard of time that a  
20 Command Post should be set up?

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Not that I recall seeing. Like, and I think  
22 back to my Critical Incident Command Course. We talked about Command Posts. But I  
23 don't recall where there's kind of -- well, what an acceptable time would be or anything  
24 like that. It's -- I guess it's very situation dependent on -- comes down to travel time to  
25 the facility you're at. Like I say, before we've had Command Post set up on the side of  
26 the road in a Suburban as well before.

27 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Okay. Thank you. The cross -- or the  
28 training that you do when you come back to your home unit after Critical Incident

1 Command, I understand, is very flexible, depending on what province, what division you  
2 work out of.

3 Here in Nova Scotia, with your Critical Incident Command training  
4 and any tabletop exercises that you do, do you involve your other public safety partners,  
5 like ambulance, fire, and emergency operations?

6 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I believe -- I'm just going by memory now.  
7 Like, once a year, we typically, pre-COVID time, we'd have a large-scale operation.  
8 And I believe that some of those large-scale exercises, we've had both parts with some  
9 of our other outside, as well as we've done large scale operations with the military, as  
10 different partners working with partners within the, I guess, Canadian Armed Forces,  
11 Coastguard, Navy, yeah, we actually had ones involving the U.S. Military as well.

12 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, we also did a large-scale training  
13 operation in Yarmouth, of all places, because of the ferry, and we involved Transport  
14 Canada and CBSA as well.

15 So those things, those take a lot of time and a lot of planning, and  
16 as we've said, unfortunately we all do this task off the side of our desk in conjunction  
17 with our substantive role.

18 And those things take a lot of time and effort. So should we do  
19 them more? In a perfect world, yeah, absolutely.

20 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Was there any consideration given by  
21 either of you, or perhaps somebody further up in the command structure, I'm thinking  
22 specifically the Support Service Officer, yeah, I think that's the right ---

23 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes.

24 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** -- acronym, of -- and this is aside from  
25 the public alert issue. Any consideration given to asking EMO to stand up in  
26 Emergency Operations Centre to work in conjunction by having a RCMP liaison officer  
27 stationed there?

28 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I -- I do believe that -- I think the

1 answer to your question is no, not from our perspective. But I do believe that when  
2 Steve Halliday was tasked with setting up the comfort centre at the firehall, that his first  
3 call, I believe, was to EMO.

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I think it was their local representative, I  
5 believe ---

6 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- but I can't speak to what that was.

8 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah, I think I read that.

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

10 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** But as far as representation or  
11 anything like that, it's certainly not something that we thought of at the time in, you  
12 know, in a busy Command Post. Whether someone else thought of it and initiated it or  
13 didn't or acted on it or didn't, I -- we can't say.

14 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Okay, thank you. That's all my  
15 questions, gentlemen.

16 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Thank you.

17 **COMMISSIONER FITCH:** Appreciate it.

18 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Thank you.

19 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you.

20 Commissioner Stanton?

21 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Thank you. I just wanted to ask a  
22 little bit about the information that you were briefed on as you're coming on to take  
23 command. You mentioned that you didn't recall if the car that you were driving had a  
24 mobile workstation in it.

25 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I don't recall, and if it did, it wasn't -- wouldn't  
26 have been fired up; it wouldn't have turned on.

27 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** And why would that be?

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** I just -- I -- I don't know why, I just did not

1 turn it on that night.

2 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** And so if I understand correctly, the  
3 mobile workstations are where the CADs come in, the ---

4 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** The ---

5 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** --- dispatch from OCC that provides  
6 information to the units that are out on patrol ---

7 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, yeah, that -- the ---

8 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** --- with what's happening?

9 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- yeah, the dispatches, yeah.

10 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Okay. And you didn't have a laptop  
11 with you, so you weren't getting emails?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, that's correct.

13 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Okay. And in the car, did you have  
14 a -- I guess you were listening to the radio, so you had the car radio on. Did you also  
15 have a portable radio?

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, I would have had both.

17 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Okay. And you had Officer Lewis  
18 with you. I'm afraid I can't recall his rank.

19 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, Sergeant Lewis.

20 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Sergeant Lewis. And -- so I just  
21 wondered if -- what channels you would have been monitoring on the way ---

22 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** We would have been monitoring Colchester  
23 talk group.

24 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Okay. And you had the call from  
25 Staff Sergeant Halliday at 10:42, and you said it was a brief call and he just gave you  
26 some general information, people are shot, houses are on fire?

27 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yes, that's correct.

28 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** And so did no one -- and I guess

1 the other thing is that once you then get to your Command Post and you put up your  
2 boards, and no one can use a marker to put stuff on the boards unless you direct it. So  
3 how do you get briefed about the information that would have been in that first hour that  
4 would have prompted the call from Staff Sergeant Halliday?

5 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Well, that would be coming from Staff  
6 Sergeant Halliday through my conversations with him up to that point on the phone, and  
7 then when he came to the Command Post.

8 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** So there's no systematic review of  
9 the information that would have already been available to, for example, the people who  
10 formed the IARD formation or -- is anybody reviewing those CADs and that information  
11 that's going out in that first hour?

12 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** On the critical incident side of the house, no  
13 there's not.

14 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** I think it's important to note that we're --  
15 at that point, we're fully tasked with setting up or taking command and setting up our  
16 Command Post, gathering the information that we can. I know what you're saying. But  
17 to stop and fire up the computer and read the files at that point is an impossibility.  
18 Same with emails. It's one thing to say, "Oh, okay. It would have been nice to have the  
19 laptop." We didn't have time -- anytime that I was in the Command Post did I have time  
20 to check my emails.

21 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** So I guess I'm just wondering,  
22 because it appears there was critical information in that first hour ---

23 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** M'hm.

24 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** --- coming from people who either  
25 were making 9-1-1 calls or who were shot by the perpetrator themselves and observed  
26 him and what he was driving, I'm just trying to ascertain how best to ensure that that  
27 kind of information does end up on the board.

28 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah, and that's -- I think -- what's a simple

1 answer? I don't know if there's a simple answer. But yeah, definitely, could there have  
2 been a better flow of information, to have pertinent information with -- that's been,  
3 whether you say, clean, processed or whatever, the important information coming  
4 forward? Yeah, it would be of benefit.

5 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** And I think, not to make excuses, that's  
6 not what I'm trying to do, but I think the magnitude of information coming in from all  
7 angles made it difficult to keep it all straight too. So I don't want to blame anybody for  
8 not passing their information on, but clearly there's a gap there, yeah.

9 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** I'm just even thinking I saw both of  
10 yours' expressions earlier when you were asked if -- why you didn't have a driver. And  
11 it occurs to me that if you had a driver and a mobile workstation that was fired up and  
12 someone reading the information on that during your travel to set up this Command  
13 Post that you would have been pretty up to speed with at least what information was  
14 available in the -- in the CAD system by the time you arrived.

15 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

16 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

17 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** If they were going to provide me with a  
18 driver I'd come out of retirement.

19 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Is that right?

20 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Yeah.

21 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** But -- no, but it's a fair statement, like, how  
22 do we better get that information to the people that need to know.

23 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Well, I'm just wondering if there is  
24 something quite simple in terms of ensuring that somebody's reading the information  
25 that's actually been provided so far. Because it's a bit surprising that you would arrive  
26 and take command three hours in without the information about Andrew MacDonald  
27 reaching you, and certainly that it doesn't reach you until the following morning. So I'm  
28 trying to ascertain what is the gap in -- what is the structural gap that would ensure that

1 that kind of information is captured and shared with the person at the top of this triangle  
2 as opposed to, you know, just hoping that you catch the broadcast.

3 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah. No, that's a fair statement. And I  
4 think I mentioned this earlier today when we talked about is it a real-time crime analyst?  
5 Is it somebody that has that task to review that information and provide that? I don't  
6 know what the answer is, but is there a value in having somebody that can go through  
7 that? Because like Kevin had said, there is information that's just coming, it's coming,  
8 it's coming, it's coming, that it's -- it needs to -- there is value in having somebody,  
9 "Okay. Here's what -- here's what has come in up-to-date", and not just relying on ---

10 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Word of mouth.

11 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** --- word of mouth.

12 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** So there's -- there is no one that is  
13 assigned to that task as far as you're aware currently that's not in ---

14 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** That's ---

15 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** --- a position or a role that is part of  
16 this structure that ---

17 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** No, not that I'm aware of at this time.

18 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** No.

19 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** I see. Okay.

20 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Yeah.

21 **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** Okay, thank you.

22 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** Thank you, and thank you again,  
23 Officers. It's been a long day, it's been a difficult day for you, and we very much  
24 appreciate you being here and helping us with our difficult and important work. It's --  
25 you're -- we very much appreciate it, and thank you for being here.

26 **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Thank you.

27 **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Thank you.

28 **COMMISSIONER MacDONALD:** And you're free to go.



1                   **S/SGT. JEFF WEST:** Okay.

2                   **S/SGT. KEVIN SURETTE:** Thank you.

3                   **COMMISSIONER STANTON:** I think it's also been a long and  
4 difficult day for the ASL interpreters and the French language interpreters who have  
5 been really worked to the max today, and I just want to acknowledge their contribution  
6 to ensuring that members of the public have access to these proceedings when it's not  
7 always that easy to accomplish. So I just wanted to acknowledge your efforts. Thank  
8 you so much for that.

9                   And of course, it's been a long and difficult day for the folks who are  
10 Participants in this process, and who are deeply engaged with the material that we're  
11 reviewing. And I know sometimes it is dry when we are trying to understand the  
12 processes and procedures and standard operating policies, and so on, and it's not easy,  
13 too, to have this information that is retread on a daily basis for you in so many ways.  
14 And so I just want to acknowledge as well that this is not easy for any of you. Thanks  
15 so much for participating in this process, for engaging in it here in person and also  
16 remotely.

17                   With the help of witnesses and Participants, we do continue to build  
18 on our understanding of what happened on April 18th and 19th, along with how and why  
19 it happened. As of this week, the Commission has presented a total of 18 Foundational  
20 Documents supported by over 1,200 source materials. These Foundational Documents  
21 are a way to navigate through the mass of material that has come into the Commission  
22 pursuant to the subpoenas that we've issued over the months.

23                   This week, we've also heard from five witnesses, all current or  
24 former RCMP officers, adding to the over 200 witnesses we've spoken to in our  
25 investigation to date, and the many voices we're hearing from during public  
26 proceedings. While proceedings continue, the Commission team and the Participants  
27 continue to prepare for coming Foundational Documents and witnesses.

28                   In the weeks ahead, we'll also continue to explore how and why

1 things happened as they did, with more commissioned reports, roundtables, and our  
2 first small group sessions to come.

3                   To do our work well, we're calling for public submissions focussed  
4 on the kinds of recommendations that you would like to see. You could share  
5 something you've read that you think is relevant to our work, or you can propose a  
6 change that you'd like to see in your community. Public submissions will inform our final  
7 report, and the development of recommendations to help make our communities safer.

8                   So far, we've heard from individuals and organisations across  
9 Canada. Thank you for everyone who is speaking up, and remember, you can make  
10 more than one submission. We want to hear from you because we believe community  
11 safety is a shared responsibility and it's an opportunity. By sharing your input, you can  
12 help to inform our work and findings and recommendations and play a role to help make  
13 our communities safer once our work concludes later this year.

14                   Your continuing engagement is particularly important because once  
15 we've completed our work and shared our final report it will be up to Canadians,  
16 including policymakers, public institutions, community groups and members of the  
17 public to take the recommendations and make them into action.

18                   As noted yesterday, there will not be any proceedings tomorrow.  
19 We'll be seeing you when public proceedings resume next week, on Wednesday, at  
20 9:30. I believe we'll be in Truro as well. So thank you very much.

21                   **REGISTRAR DARLENE SUTHERLAND:** Thank you. The  
22 proceedings are adjourned until May the 25th, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

23 --- Upon adjourning at 4:55 p.m.

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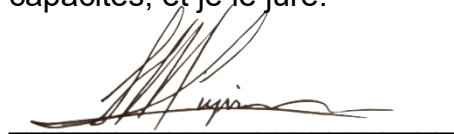
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**CERTIFICATION**

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I, Sandrine Marineau-Lupien, a certified court reporter, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an accurate transcription of my notes/records to the best of my skill and ability, and I so swear.

Je, Sandrine Marineau-Lupien, une sténographe officiel, certifie que les pages ci-hautes sont une transcription conforme de mes notes/enregistrements au meilleur de mes capacités, et je le jure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Marineau-Lupien', is written over a horizontal line.

Sandrine Marineau-Lupien