



The Joint Federal/Provincial Commission into
the April 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Casualty
MassCasualtyCommission.ca

Commission fédérale-provinciale sur les événements
d'avril 2020 en Nouvelle-Écosse
CommissionDesPertesMassives.ca

Transcript of Recorded Interview

INTERVIEWEE: Lisa Croteau, Public Information Officer (RCMP)

INTERVIEWER: Scott Spicer, Lead Investigator
Paul Thompson, Primary Investigator
Krista Smith, Research And Policy Team

LOCATION: NS RCMP Headquarters, 80 Garland Ave, Dartmouth NS

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Scott SPICER [00:00:04] Okay. So, it's Thursday, September 16, it's 10:11 a.m. We are at the RCMP Headquarters in Dartmouth and today we have Lisa Croteau with us today. And I guess we could go around the room as well and introduce ourselves for the audio and then we'll move forward from there.

Patricia MACPHEE [00:00:36] Patricia MacPhee for the Attorney General of Canada.

Scott SPICER [00:00:41] Okay, we'll go one more time for you, it was just out of the order.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:00:44] Lisa Croteau with the RCMP here in H Division.

Scott SPICER [00:00:48] And I'm Scott Spicer, and I'm with the Mass Casualty Commission.

Krista SMITH [00:00:52] I'm Krista Smith with the Mass Casualty Commission.

Paul THOMPSON [00:00:55] Paul Thompson, investigator of the Mass Casualty Commission.

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Scott SPICER [00:00:59] Okay. So, I think in terms of where we are right now, we'd like to just sort of go through a number of questions and ... and we'll just let you speak and sort of tell us what you know and we'll go from there, all right. So, if you could just first give us a little bit of background about you, you know, how long you've been on with the RCMP and what your roles have been over that period of time and what brought you here to this point in your career?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:01:35] So, I graduated Depot September 18, 20 ... 2000. I got posted to Banff, Alberta. I was a general duty officer in Banff for six years. Then I moved to ... I was transferred to the Calgary Federal Drug Section and I worked in Calgary there for two years as an investigator. Following that, I got promoted to Corporal in Cheticamp, in Nova Scotia. So, I transferred there, that was in 2008. I worked in Cheticamp as a supervisor there, the detachment for two years. And then in 2010, I was transferred to Bible Hill Detachment and I was there as a supervisor there, watch Super ... street ... I guess the Corporal there, one of the road supervisors for ... I was there for four years. Then in 2014, I transferred to Traffic Services in ... the office is out of Lower Sackville detachment but it's the provincial highway traffic services for the north ... sorry, no, it's south ... Southeast Traffic Services, I think it is. They all have their different names, so. And through Traffic Services,

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I came back in 2016, worked in Traffic Services until 2018 and then I transferred to the Strategic Communications Office here at Headquarters, where I'm at right now. So, I've been here since December of 2018 when I started the role as a public information officer.

Scott SPICER [00:03:47] Can you elaborate a little bit? So, what is strategic communication? I know we talk about media relations, public relations, strategic communications. Can you elaborate a little bit on ... on the specifics of strategic communication?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:04:00] It's getting the information out to the public, what the RCMP does, to the membership, internal messages. We do have social media. So, any good news stories or any news releases of charges or people being arrested or any incident happening. It's to provide that information to the public, to the members of what the RCMP is doing.

Scott SPICER [00:04:25] Okay. And so, how would that be different from media relations?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:04:31] It's ... I think it's just a name play. I think when I first got to the unit, our position was media relations officer, and then they changed it to a public information officer. We didn't want to be the person that only the media call because we

do want our members to call us as well to ... basically when they've done something, like they did a bike rodeo or they have information that they want to provide to the public. They want ... we want to be their basically middle person between them and the media or between the public. So, that's why the name change. Since I've been in that role for, I guess, the ... the ... the strategic, the name is just in order for us to provide information, we have to make sure the information is correct and they do have strategies and that's more the advisor's role. As the public information officer, my role is to provide information to the public, to the media. We do work a little bit with doing strategy, but that's mostly the adviser, the advisor role that would do that.

Scott SPICER [00:05:35] And so, who would be an advisor?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:05:37] So, in our office right now, so like the Director, she's off right now, but Lia Scanlan, I believe you spoke to her. So, she would be one of the advisors, Director. We have Cindy Bayers, who's another adviser; she's the Acting Director at the moment. We have Cindy MacKenzie, who's another adviser, and we have two new advisers that just started in the last few months, Paul Service and Matthew Howes. At the time of the incident, we also had Regis Dudley, that was our ... she did mostly social media stuff, but she was one of our advisors as well.

Scott SPICER [00:06:12] Okay. So, with respect to the strategic communication, you said you started in 2018 in that role. So, what ... what gets you to that position? Like, is there a training program that's associated to that, or is it because of your you know, your ... your ... the history of your career path that's gotten you to that?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:06:37] No, it was ... there is a media relations course that I did take in 2012 while I was in Cheticamp just because I was doing some interviews over the phone and stuff for the current media relations officer due to my French, just because it was a French community, so, it was just something that you did. But just for the position itself, I just ... I applied for the position when it came out because it fit more of my schedule. I was looking for a Monday to Friday job. So, that's ... for the most part, it is Monday to Friday and then some on-call stuff. C1 - Personal Information

C1 - Personal Information So, when the job came up, I applied for it not because I had the background or ... it's just something that I chose to apply for.

Scott SPICER [00:07:25] Okay. With ... with respect to the time in, so what ... how long would it take or would you be looking to go towards an adviser role?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:07:43] No, no. So, the advisers have education in communication. And for ... for the officers, it's ... it's just you're there as a police officer, you're representing the RCMP as a police officer. It's just more for you're aware of the laws and you know what ... like, if you get media or public questions about what police

officers do or that type of thing, we provide that background to the unit. But the advisers are the ones that have the education in communications that ... and they support us because a lot of the stuff like and even my grammar I like when you writing releases, they usually review them because we don't have that education background to provide ... some people may; I know I don't. But they would review that stuff to make sure it's written properly, and it communicates well. Like our ... our role in our office is when you're sending out releases, is usually like at a Grade 6 level so that most of the population will be able to understand it. So, and that's what ... they're all there to make sure that we provide information in that way.

Scott SPICER [00:08:50] Kind of like a journalist.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:08:51] Yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:08:52] So, and are they typically civilians that are in that role?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:08:57] Yeah. The only two police officers in our unit is the two public information officers.

Scott SPICER [00:09:02] Okay. And so, based on what you're saying, so French is your first language or your second language?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:09:07] Both. I was brought up with both. I went to French school from Kindergarten to Grade 8 and then I went to English school Grade 9 and then university in English as well. So, I have both kind of from the beginning.

Scott SPICER [00:09:20] That's fortunate.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:09:20] But my grammar is ... kind of sucks in both languages, so.

Scott SPICER [00:09:26] Well, I think it's a win to ... to have that fortunate bilingualism. I don't have it and I wish I had, so, and it's something that bothers me.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:09:36] I know people can tell right away. Sometimes ... I'm getting better because it's been a year now and I've been corrected so many times that now I'm getting better at the structure of my sentences and stuff. But when I first came to the unit, when they saw my Resumé, they knew right away I was French.

Scott SPICER [00:09:54] Yes. Oh, very good. Okay, so, with the responsibilities that you had on the 18th, can you describe what those were on the 18th and 19th ... well, I guess the 19th?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:10:06] So, in our unit every ... we work Monday to Friday and then on the weekend we have an on-call public ... we call them PIO's, Public Information Officers. So, sometimes it's us from the unit, the two that are in the current role as PIO's, but we do have on-call people as well from the division that helps out just because we can't do every weekend. So ... so that weekend of April 18 to the 20 was my weekend to be on call. So, what that entails is I go through ... like in the mornings or ... I read the reports of what happened through the day, see if any kind of releases needs to go out, any ... anything to the public, any missing people. If the Risk Manager who's on duty or an officer that's working on the road needs information to be sent out to the public, they would reach out to us and then we would get that out on social media or whatever the ... whatever they require, we're there to help them out. So, I was working the weekend of April 18, 19. I received a call around 11:30 and that was, I believe, Friday night ... no, Saturday night. So, Friday ... Saturday night at 11:30, I received a call from Andy O'Brien in Colchester County. He advised me that he wanted me to put out a Twitter message saying that the people needed to shelter in place in the Portapique area. He provided me the name of the two streets, the ... the beach road ... I don't have the current ... right off the top of my head, but the two ... there was the two streets in Portapique, Portapique Beach Road and another road that basically the people living on that street to shelter in place, that they had a situation ongoing. He did mention there was some people that were ... that were dead at the scene. I didn't get into too much of the detail, he just wanted that information sent out. So, I ... what we do when we're on call too, is we have a list of ... we call it a Tweet bank. So, we have different tweets that are pre-translated because we have to send everything out in English and in French. Even though I'm French, we try to ... it's sometimes when it's a little bit more ... stuff's going on, we want to have it there so we don't have to be thinking about it, make sure it's correct. So, I went through our Tweet bank and there was some that we already had pre-translated stuff regarding to shelter in place. So, I just had to enter basically the community. And then I read those to Andy O'Brien, Sgt. O'Brien, to make sure that was correct, and he said, "Yeah, just send that out and we'll be in touch." So, I sent those out on Twitter, French and English. And I was in bed when he called, so I just kind of was laying there kind of wondering if we're going to get more calls or ... So anyway, I think I ended up dozing off for a little bit. I did receive a call at 3:00 from CBC asking if it was still ongoing, if there was any updates. At that point, I didn't ... I let them know that there was no updates, we're still asking people to shelter in place. And then at 5:00, I got a call from Halliday ... S/Sgt. Steve ... is it Steve Halliday, I think so. He called and said that they had ... the situation is still ongoing, that because of daybreak, media were going to be starting to attend scene, so he requested that I attend the scene. So, at that point, so I guess it was 5:00 in the morning, so I tried to call the ... my ... my Director, Lia Scanlan. I got her voicemail, left her a voicemail. I tried to call the act ... the second person, Cindy Bayers, I got her voicemail as well. So, I jumped in the shower, got ready, headed to ... because I had come to Headquarters. I lived C1 - Personal Information so it was about a 20-minute drive. So, I continued to try calling

them, but I was still getting voicemail. So, I left my house, came straight to Headquarters, got geared up, grabbed a police car and as I was leaving Headquarters, I got a hold of Lia. And then she said, "You go ahead, I'll get a hold of the CIC and just you go there and I'll take care of if we need to send anything else out." So, that was good. They took care ... So, from then on, I didn't do anything on social media; I didn't send anything else. My only thing to do with sending out to the public was that first original Tweet. So, then I headed out to Portapique. I met up with the CIC there, Sgt. West. I believe Steve Halliday was still there as well, and I met them in the ... where they were set up in the firewall, I believe. So, I met up with them there, asked if there was any update, no update at that point. They had a potential suspect, I believe, there was ... they were working on something. But the way I looked at it is I didn't want to know too much because I wanted to be able to help the media, like I would be afraid without having to confirm the information, to have something slip. So, my infor ... whatever we can release, you tell me that stuff and I don't want to know the extra detail. So, I told them that I'd be out waiting outside if they needed me to let me know. CBC showed up. So, then I went back inside, and I asked where they wanted us to set up. So, I went out to ... the way the firewall is in Portapique, there's a bit of a ridge and up on the ridge is the highway or the main road coming in. And there was a bit of a flat part, almost like a little pull off area up there. So, that was the best place that we believed for CBC to set up, because then they would have a visual of the members, like all the cars and stuff at the firehall and the coming and going. So, they were a little bit away from the scene. This was away from the scene anyway, but they were safe there and we could do media interviews and be able to see what was going on and a little bit there at the same time. So, I sat there with CBC for some time. I got at Portapique ... when I first got there, I think it was just before 8:00, I think I mentioned that, but I don't think I recorded the time that CBC showed up, it wasn't very long after. My phone was ringing quite a bit because media from everywhere else, even abroad, was calling to find out information. So, at this point in time, I was in contact with the Director and then some of the advisors. I can't remember which one it was that I was speaking to, but they were updating social media. So, what I was doing is whatever social media posts that we sent out, I would take a picture of it. And then when the media calls, that was the information that I would provide. So, any updates, so anything that would go out, I would have it in front of me that way I couldn't ... I had it there in front of me, I couldn't go off script. And so, I continued doing media interviews and then once ... I did a few live or camera interviews with CBC at the scene as well, and was in constant ... I was outside with them, speaking with them throughout. And then once the first call came in of the woman being deceased on the highway and more information started coming in about a police car being involved, that's when I was getting more calls from the media and then trying to figure out what was going on. I did have a radio with me, but I had kept turning it down and so I could talk to the ... to the media. So, I was getting bits and pieces of what was going on. So, anything new that was coming on the radio that I could hear, I would automatically call our adviser to let them know this is what just happened. So, they

would call CIC to confirm, just to kind of avoid any kind of delay. We were trying to get the information out there as quickly as we can. I think ... I don't remember what time, it must have been around 9, 9:30, after we heard about Wentworth, when those calls were coming in, I started to get a little worried because we didn't know where this person was. We knew at that point that there was a police car involved. We were in the middle of the area where we didn't know if he was coming back. I didn't feel safe for myself or the CBC reporters where we were situated because if he came around the corner and we were there. So, I called the other public information officer who had come in because everybody got called in that morning, on Sunday, to help out, and she basically told me because she had more experience, this was my first big incident, first incident for me at a scene, so it was all new to me. So, when I was talking to her, she goes, "Lisa," she goes, "get out of there, you're a sitting duck. You shouldn't be there. Like CBC shouldn't be there either," like ... anyway. So, but it was hard because until we had all the information validated that this was what was going on, I couldn't tip off CBC because I didn't want to say something that unless we had it confirmed this is what was going on. So, once we were able to say for sure this was what was going on, and we sent the police car and the photo on social media, I went over to CBC and I said, "Look, you need to go somewhere. We don't know where this person is." I said, "You need to be somewhere a bit safer. This is not the place to be." So, they total ... they agreed with that. They got back in their vans and they ... they actually just was driving around. And at that point, I got into my police car and I told the CIC that I was heading back to Headquarters because there was no need for me to be ... One, I was driving a police car, that it's ... it's not the normal ... it was a Crown ... it was a Ford Taurus as well, but it's ... it was an Echo car, so it's not one of the main cars that the members use. No ... no computer in it, so nobody knew my location. So, to me, that was kind of a red flag because I didn't know at what point another member thought ... they wouldn't have seen me on their ... that I was there. So, I was worried that they'd think I was the bad guy. So, I just ... I had to get out of there.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:20:55] So, I started driving towards Truro and then my phone was constantly ringing because at that point we had released a police car and the person's name. So, I had calls from every ... the UK, from the States, everywhere. So, I kept having to pull over and I didn't think that was being safe either, so, at one point I just ... once I got to Truro, I just put my phone down and I just kept driving. And at that point, we also knew that he was around Onslow. So, I was keeping an eye for him, but also making sure nobody ... like if someone else, other officers came around me to make sure they knew my position so that I didn't want to have a situation happen where they thought I was the bad guy. So, I continued on, on the ... I turned onto ... from the 104 onto the 102 and I just started heading towards Headquarters. And that's at the point where Wortman was driving through Truro, Shubenacadie all that ... in that same ... So, I was behind but kind of parallel, I guess, too, so keeping an eye for that. And my goal was to ... I have to get to Headquarters because I need to be able to speak to media

when whatever happens. I don't want to be ... but at the same time, if they need my help, I'm there too. I just ... because I didn't have the equipment like they did, I didn't have a carbine, I didn't ... like I didn't have ... I had my hard body armour on. So, a lot of things going through my head, definitely feared for my safety. And just yeah, the situation is just something that we never in a million years would have expected. So, I was about probably in Brookfield when we got ... they radioed and said that he was ... they had located him at the Big Stop in Enfield. And throughout, too, when they were ... he had taken the other vehicle at the scene, I was able to call our advisers too, to let them know that he was in a different vehicle just in case they hadn't heard from CIC yet. So, because we wanted to get that out there as soon as we could, because he's in a different vehicle, so. But yeah, because on ... on the way between Truro and Enfield, I was hearing ... I didn't have my phone so I could hear what was going on, on the radio. So, anything that I could pass onto the advisers, I would ... I was doing that as I was going on too. But again, they couldn't use my information as key; they had to confirm with the CIC. That was just me giving them a heads up this was happening, so. And then when I got to Headquarters, the situation was pretty much ... it was dealt with. We had sent out that the suspect was in custody and then it was just for us as a unit was getting what ... what do we do next? First thing as a strategic communication, we have to send something out. So, we prepared ... we all got tasked with different things to prepare for the press conference. And yeah, so we ended up I think it was at 4 p.m. that day that we ended up doing a press conference and I was the one that opened it up and got the speakers and then did the French as well, so. And then, yeah, then we got ... I got home probably at 8:00 that night. Unfortunately, my phone kept ringing because our ... I guess someone in Ottawa kept providing different numbers of deceased. So, I kept getting phone calls because it was updated numbers all the time. So, I ended up calling Lia and said, "Look, I just ... I need sleep; I can't handle this anymore." So, she just told me to turn my phone off. So, I turned my phone off and had to be back the next morning because we had to do another briefing. Yeah, it was a tough couple of days.

Scott SPICER [00:24:56] That's a tough couple of days, absolutely. There's ... there's so much to be thinking about, and, you know, you're ... you're looking at it from a law enforcement perspective, but you're also looking at it from, you know, the communications piece, which, you know, is still part of law enforcement. But that's ... that's a ... there's a lot going on.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:25:15] Well, and the personal, too, because my family lives only about five kilometres from where this happened.

Scott SPICER [00:25:21] Is that right, wow.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:25:25] Not ... not where ... well, where got shot, where it ended.

Scott SPICER [00:25:26] Yeah.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:25:27] So, and I knew my husband was home with the two kids because of Covid, right. So, I know I emailed him at one point and said, "Stay in the house."

Scott SPICER [00:25:36] Yeah, you have to. Yeah. And there's one thing I didn't mention at the beginning. If you need a break or anything, please feel free. We're a low stress team and we're very interested in you being comfortable more than anything so. So, if at any point you're ... you need some time, please take it.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:26:01] Okay.

Scott SPICER [00:26:03] Okay. So, it's interesting, so when you talked about the CBC calling you, so it seems that ... that you're responsible for the direct mainstream media as well as the social media?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:26:29] Oh, yeah, yeah. So, like, CTV, CBC, like, we deal with it. And like we send out ... when we send out news releases, it goes to all the reporters, like there's like 300 contacts on our list.

Scott SPICER [00:26:38] So, is there someone else that would be doing that, or because you were on ... because originally you started with the ... the Tweets and then you made your way-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:26:49] Mm-hmm, yes.

Scott SPICER [00:26:49] ... to the command post, that, that naturally becomes your responsibility?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:26:55] No. So, once I went to the scene, I know that Lia called in all the members of our team to head back to ... to head to Headquarters. And then they ... the advisors, they were all doing that. I believe Regis Dudley was the one sending out the Tweets, but everybody would have a role. And I don't know what all those roles were, but my role was at the scene to ... to deal with the phone calls and the media there and then the social media part of it and the emails to our media group, that would be whoever's at the office. We can't ... we can't do the media group off of our phones, it has to be on our laptops.

Scott SPICER [00:27:31] Okay. So, you would obviously have ... you'd link that to your phone to do that as well, or you can only come back to an office to do that?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:27:41] Or ... or if you have your computer at home, you can do it from home as well. You just have to do it from your laptop, email for ... to email the whole ... like our press release group. But to do social media, we can do on our phones, like if we want send out a Tweet or a Facebook message, we can ... we can do that on our phones.

Scott SPICER [00:27:58] Did the car you have on that day have an MWS?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:03] No.

Scott SPICER [00:28:04] No, right, okay. And so, it seemed that you're also responsible for the safety of the media as-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:09] Yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:28:09] ... well? Is that ... is that normal that that would be your role-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:12] Yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:28:13] ... and not you know, somebody's else's?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:13] It would be someone that would be assigned. That day was me, because any kind of situation where we have media attend the scene, we try to have them in a safe location, but away from any danger or where we're doing ... if we have stuff that we're doing that ... so that they're not interfering with the investigation. So, there would usually be an officer with them. If there's a lot of media, they usually call the PIO to go do that. It could be just anybody there that's there with them. But they would ... probably wouldn't provide interviews, it would just be someone there just to monitor, make sure they're ... they're being safe.

Scott SPICER [00:28:49] So, you have a relationship with some of them? You probably do.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:52] Yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:28:52] You're familiar with some of them?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:28:53] Mm-hmm, yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:28:54] Okay. And how is that relationship with the media? How do you find it, you know, challenging or are they fairly respectful with the-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:29:06] Most of ... yeah, most of them-

Scott SPICER [00:29:07] ... law enforcement piece?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:29:08] Yeah, I ... I would say most of them are respectful; some of them are tough, but that's just they're trying to do their job as well. There's a few of them that, you know, if they don't respect our ... the way we're doing our job, or if they don't ... they're saying profanities or they're doing something that interferes or it's ... then, you know, we're not going to be giving ... Like, for example, we had ... Frank's Magazine was providing information that either I can't remember if ... I wasn't the one involved so, but they did ... they ... something that they did that they got removed off of our press release group because ... Anyway, so they email, they wanted it back. So, well ... we said, "Well, if you're going to be respectful and you're going to be ... you know, then we will put you back. But as soon as you cross that line again, you're going to be taken off," because it's ... there ... there's you know, rules in place and terms of use to what we do, too, right, so.

Scott SPICER [00:30:06] It can be busy, it seems?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:30:09] Yes, yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:30:09] So, you mentioned Headquarters a number of times throughout that last part of your discussion. And so, I just want to confirm, so Headquarters would be?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:30:22] Eighty ... yeah, 80 Garland Avenue, our suite is 2900, so, that's where we are.

Scott SPICER [00:30:27] And this is just a question that's coming to mind, so, you know, to come back here or to go to Truro, would that be an option to go to Truro instead of coming back here? To the OCC, meaning.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:30:44] Oh, for that day, if I would have went to OCC?

Scott SPICER [00:30:54] Yeah.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:30:54] I don't know if we would have space there, like, I wouldn't have a computer or anything. I've ... we've never ... I know here in the new building with our new OCC, we do have a location where we can set up. I don't know if we ... I wouldn't be able to say if we had a location there at the time.

Scott SPICER [00:31:09] So, you went with what you knew?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:31:11] Mm-hmm.

Scott SPICER [00:31:11] Okay. Was just a curious question more than anything. Okay, so-

Krista SMITH [00:31:13] Can I ask her a question?

Scott SPICER [00:31:13] Yes, go.

Krista SMITH [00:31:22] Was ... was there a helicopter that was circling in the area around Portapique and all ... like media ... a media helicopter-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:31:34] Not that I know of.

Krista SMITH [00:31:34] ... and the air space were shut down?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:31:35] Not that I know of. The only ... the only reporters I was aware of was with the two from CBC that were there with me.

Scott SPICER [00:31:50] Can you tell us a little bit more about the communication and notification platform? So, you mentioned, you know, Twitter. I mean, can you really ... I'm horrible with social media, so it's more of me trying to understand this a little bit more. But and I know since being here myself that ... that some social medias are what the communities really gravitate towards, but I don't quite understand that completely, and why. So, can you explain the social medias that you use traditionally and even if there is something that you may use outside of what's traditional. I'll leave it at the social media for that question.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:32:36] Yeah. So, Twitter and Facebook is what we primarily use. We do use YouTube once in a while, but that's only for projects that we do, if we do videos and stuff. But yeah, to notify the public would be Facebook and Twitter. And then if we do send out a news release, that's something we want to send province wide, we have the press release group, which is a group email, and that's usually for news releases. And I know we were using it as well to notify people ... to notify the media on that day as well, because anything that's not just like a road closure or anything like that, if there's something more to it then we would send it through to all the new ... because it goes to all the news agencies, all the reporters. So, we would send it there.

Scott SPICER [00:33:24] So, is it for the general public that you use that mostly?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:33:27] No, that's just for media.

Scott SPICER [00:33:31] Oh, okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:33:31] We do get ... there are some counsellors and people who are interested in our news releases that are on that list, but it's mostly just reporters.

Scott SPICER [00:33:39] And just to be clear, that one's Twitter we're talking about?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:33:42] No, this is an email that we send out.

Scott SPICER [00:33:43] Oh, the email. Okay, I'm sorry.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:33:44] Yeah. So, for Twitter and Facebook, it would just be our followings, whoever ... like, and I don't know what the numbers are, but whoever follows us. And I know that most of the reporters follow us anyway because they'll see us post something on Twitter and they'll give us a call. So, and yeah, they probably follow us more on Twitter than Facebook, the reporters.

Scott SPICER [00:34:07] So, who would your posts be on Facebook be geared towards?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:34:11] The public.

Scott SPICER [00:34:11] The public. And is there a ... is there a reasonable following with Facebook?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:34:17] For both of them, actually, yeah. A lot of the public does Twitter as well. I don't know ... as for demographics, I think it changes between the two. But I don't ... I wouldn't be able to speak on which demographics follows each ... or what the numbers are because I don't have that.

Scott SPICER [00:34:32] Fair enough, fair enough.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:34:36] I knew they grew it quite a bit since that event. So, we do have a lot of people there, but.

Scott SPICER [00:34:42] Okay. So, then, with regards to other communication systems, is there ... are there any other communication systems that you would use beyond those?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:34:53] Prior to Portapique, no, not that I'm aware of that.

Scott SPICER [00:34:57] And what about afterwards, then?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:34:59] Well, now, since with the alert, the alerting, the emergency alert-

Scott SPICER [00:35:03] The ready alert?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:35:04] What's that?

Scott SPICER [00:35:05] The ready alert system?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:35:06] Yeah, depending on what ... on the situation, if it meets the criteria, then we could use that now.

Scott SPICER [00:35:11] Did you-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:35:11] But that's not up to us either, because that's not our unit that does that. That would be the ... the Risk Managers or the CIC team.

Scott SPICER [00:35:19] Okay, good to know. So, did you know anything about the ready alert system prior to the events that happened on the 18th and 19th?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:35:26] Not much. It's not something really our office ... because it was never used for policing before. I knew for the Amber Alerts that we used it for that, but that was ... that was my basic understanding on that one. As a ... as a Corporal, even on the road, it's not something that ... that's something more higher management would be looking into more than...

Scott SPICER [00:35:52] Okay, thank you. Do you make any decisions or does your group make any of the decisions to ... to drive the narrative that you're trying to portray for the media and the community, or does that come from outside your group, typically?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:36:18] Well, the way it works is if the detachment wants us to send something out, they would provide the information and we would usually word it. Like, if it's a news release or if it's ... we have a certain format or a different ... like I said, we try to speak to Grade 4, so we try to ... or Grade 6, my apologies, but so we'll ... we might change a few like, words just to make it sound better. But it's the information that comes from the detachment or ... or if it's something more serious, then the CIC or whoever.

Scott SPICER [00:36:57] I don't know how much you know about the mock police vehicle that the perpetrator was operating, and I know you had used some alerts to ... to give the public information. Can you explain you know, why you know, some of that information was not maybe pushed out sooner than it was?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:37:25] No, that's ... I wouldn't know anything about that. So, that would ... that would be up to the CIC or ... yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:37:35] Okay. Do you know anything about the 9-1-1 mapping system?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:37:41] Not really, no.

Scott SPICER [00:37:42] No. I kind of figured that now that I'm understanding your role a little bit better. So, and I know you touched on this, but I'm just trying to understand it better, so what makes the mainstream social media a good tool for critical incidences?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:38:07] Well, and that's the thing. As a PIO, when I started that role, that's what we used. So, I can't really speak to why ... We get a lot of people commenting on our comments, a lot of people seem to be aware of it when we send something out, it gets around. So, I don't know, that's just what's been used here when I started and I didn't question it.

Scott SPICER [00:38:31] Okay. So, now knowing what you know and what you've experienced, because I find that oftentimes that's when we really get the "Aha" moment in our careers where, you go, "Oh, that really could make a difference." Is there anything that you feel now based on your experience, you know, even before the events, but now working together with you events, do you feel that there's something else that you might do or consider in the future or recommend, even?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:39:00] I still think Facebook and Twitter to notify the people and if we can use them, if the criteria are met for the Read ... Readily Alert, then great. But if those criteria aren't met, then definitely Facebook and Twitter are still ... that's the way to go.

Scott SPICER [00:39:30] Okay. So, I know I'm staying with the media concept here, but is there a way, or maybe you have it in place and I'm just ... I'm not aware, not being an expert in this field, to sort of marry it up to be more or less simultaneous to ... to put the information out?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:39:48] What do you mean?

Scott SPICER [00:39:49] So, that you'd be using your social media platforms together all at once in one push of a button or something like that? I'm not really sure myself.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:39:59] It doesn't take very long in between the two, between like sending a Tweet. We got to go do the French, the English in both Twitter and Facebook.

Like when we send out a release, for example, it might take us ... like it depends how long it is, but it's just a cut and paste. So, you cut and paste it and post, cut, paste and post, so it doesn't take that long to do it. We do have a program called Hootsuite, but it's more for to program stuff and it's all in one, but you still have to put in all ... like all the different ... so, it's the same, it'd be ... it's almost the same. I don't think there'd be much difference between the two.

Scott SPICER [00:40:34] So, technology that's supposed to make it easier, but really, you might as well stick with what you know?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:40:39] Well, that's the thing, right, it depends. And when you're familiar with something, it's way quicker too, than trying to ... and you know how technology works sometimes, no matter how hard you try, there's always glitches.

Scott SPICER [00:40:51] Yes.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:40:51] Yeah, but and we always do the English first as well, too, so because they're following and there's more English people. So, there would be a few seconds delay before the French would go out, but the English would go out first. Unless ... if we didn't have the translation, then we have to get the translation, so it might take a couple of minutes but, yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:41:15] Okay. So, again, so like, do you feel that this ... the social media and the media work that you did, do you feel like it went well, or do you feel like there ... there is something else?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:41:29] No, it ... the thing is, it was the time of day, too, right. Happening ... if it would have happened during the day when that first original post would have went out, everybody would have seen it because they were awake and they would have seen it, and it would have been more out there. At that time of night, it was the reporters that were still ... and the same, even if we would have sent it through the email, or if we would have ... it would still be the people that were up that would have seen it. So, I ... I ... I don't know if there would have been a big difference. The alerting ... if ... if the alerting was an option, then maybe, I don't know.

Scott SPICER [00:42:08] I still have a few more questions, but Paul, do you have any?

Paul THOMPSON [00:42:11] Yeah. Like Scott said, when you guys ... your team had a heavy day there, certainly Sunday morning, when you found out, and I did have the privilege to speak to Lia the other day and got a lot of information about your roles and you explained it really well. Just one thing just to clarify is when you arrived on scene of the fireball, how are you receiving your information, like was it ... like from other

colleagues, was it from a police radio or a cell phone? I was little unclear on how you were getting information.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:42:41] So, when I ... and ... that I was calling there, our office, that was through the radio. So, I could hear stuff happening, so I would just give them a heads up to, "You got to get a hold of CIC," because I know they're busy in there, too. And I just didn't want that information ... just to make sure that they were still in contact. And I know they already were in contact with someone there, but I just wanted to make sure that-

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:02] Were you on a channel that was common to police officers on the ground in Portapique?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:06] Yeah, I was on a-

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:07] You can kind of hear-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:08] I was hearing what the members ... what was going on.

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:09] You could hear yeah, okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:11] Yeah. Yeah, I was on Colchester channel.

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:13] Okay. And then some other communication was via cell phone, let's say, to ... to your other colleagues within your unit?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:20] Mm-hmm.

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:20] Okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:23] Yeah. I think I was ... I was speaking to Regis some and I think ... I think I only spoke to Lia the first one or two times and after that because I knew she was busy, so everybody had roles, and I know I was talking to Regis at some point. And then Jennifer, the other PIO, I talked to her a couple of times, too, just to...

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:45] Did you ever experience any traffic problems on the radio to get through for yourself or listen?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:51] Not that ... no. And but, like I said too, I had it down quite a bit while I was taking media calls.

Paul THOMPSON [00:43:56] Fair enough, yeah.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:43:57] So, when I was listening, I didn't find it that it was an issue.

Paul THOMPSON [00:44:00] Okay. Yeah, that was my only question right now, Lisa, just how the information was sent and received from ... the physical talking. It's all right now, Scott, that I can think of.

Scott SPICER [00:44:12] Okay. And I think you have alluded to this piece, but with regards to the EMO, do you have a link to the EMO or is that outside your responsibility?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:44:31] That would be outside of my responsibility.

Scott SPICER [00:44:35] Okay. Just trying to understand how all these processes work, so.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:44:41] Because I know there's a comms person there that would be maybe in contact with, but I don't know if that's what you're referring to, but.

Scott SPICER [00:44:51] A communications-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:44:51] Yeah, they have a communications person that like, if we had something, we could run it by them, but it could be anybody on our team that could call them to see. Because we ... if they needed something ... if we were sending something out that might impact them, we would usually give them a heads up or something like that. But that day, I don't know what-

Scott SPICER [00:45:08] And so, when you say communications, would that be the OCC or would that be your Strategic-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:45:16] No, so the ... Sorry, you were talking about the EMO, they have their own communications person. So, our per ... once someone from our unit would speak to them-

Scott SPICER [00:45:24] From your unit to their communications person?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:45:28] From ... yeah, to their unit, yeah, communications to communications.

Scott SPICER [00:45:28] Okay. Are you aware of any MOU's between the RCMP and other agencies, other municipal police services and, you know, the EMO for the Ready Alert?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:45:50] No.

Scott SPICER [00:45:51] No, okay. And you described your reporting structure. Can you just go over your reporting structure again, how that works?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:46:02] Yeah. So, there's the two ... In our office there's the two PIO's and then there's the advisers. We do have an admin assistant too, but. So, we report to the Director, the two PIO's, so we ... at the time was Lia Scanlan. My position is actually Halifax District, while the other PIO is for the province. So, I do also fall under the Halifax District umbrella. But I do report ... my supervisor is the Director.

Scott SPICER [00:46:32] And that's a direct report?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:46:33] Yeah.

Scott SPICER [00:46:34] Okay.

Patricia MACPHEE [00:46:49] Can I ask a quick question, and I ... probably asked you this already. The other PIO deals with the rest of the province and you deal with the Halifax Regional Municipality?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:46:59] Yeah, Halifax District. But we do ... if she's away ... well, it's a him now, Chris is there now. But if they're away, then I would do his duties as well. And when I'm away, he would do my duties, or if ... like right now, Chris is taking care of the Halifax District while I'm here. So, we do kind of ... so, sometimes you're doing the whole province.

Patricia MACPHEE [00:47:21] Right, okay.

Scott SPICER [00:47:21] Do you have any questions, Krista?

Krista SMITH [00:47:28] Yeah. I'm wondering about what you might know about next of kin notifications and how the timing worked with the public release of information like, to the media and trying to coordinate that.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:47:42] I know that there was a family liaison officer assigned to the families and any releases that we would send out, we'd send to him prior to, to make sure the families were notified. I'm not quite sure like the exact day of, but I know anything after the press conference that would have been the ... once the officer was assigned as the family liaison, that was the the protocol that we had.

Krista SMITH [00:48:09] Yeah, so you ... on the 19th, there wasn't necessarily a ... a family liaison officer assigned yet?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:48:15] Yeah, I'm not ... yeah, so I'm not ... at that point I think it was more getting the information out rather ... But once we started sending out more information after that original day, I think whenever that person was assigned then, yeah, we were sending it to that person.

Krista SMITH [00:48:32] So, would ... I know the original number that was spoken about was 10, and then later it went up to say, 13'ish, and that came from Ottawa, is that what you said?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:48:45] Well, and I can't remember the exact number. We had said in our original press conference that there was I believe at least ... I don't know if it was 10 or there was at least 10 victims or whatever the number we said. And then Ottawa ... I know I was getting calls from media in Ottawa and all over the place saying, "Oh, the number count is now XXX." I'm like, "Well, all I can tell you is this is what we released, is this is the amount of numbers we have." So, after about five or six journalist calls, my phone dies for ... not dies, but it slows down. And then I start getting more calls from the same journalists saying, "Oh, well, this ... this spokes ... or this person just released this number." And so, I got three different kind of groups of calls saying that the numbers kept changing. So, it was quite frustrating because ... and I kept telling them, "Look, we've confirmed there was at least this number, and that's all I can say." I said, "Whoever's sending out this information that you're getting, you call them, because I ... that's all I can tell you at this point."

Krista SMITH [00:49:54] And did you know who was sending out that information?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:49:56] He ... they did say a name and it was a male ... a male's name, but I ... I can't remember what it was.

Krista SMITH [00:50:05] Like, within the ... within the-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:50:05] I ... I don't know. I-

Krista SMITH [00:50:07] ...Someone for the Commissioner?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:50:07] ... think it might have been, I don't know. I think it was someone in Ottawa like, I don't know if it was someone for the Commissioner, but their comms people, maybe.

Krista SMITH [00:50:17] Okay. And when ... I'm just going to make sure about this, did ... is there any connection between notification of families and going public with just the number, not actually the identities of the victims? Did ... did ... were you-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:50:35] I wasn't involved in that, so I ... yeah, I wouldn't be able to say, yeah.

Krista SMITH [00:50:46] Okay. I'm thinking there's some questions we could ... we could talk about in the days and weeks that followed events. I know if ... if you have some questions on that or if I should go ahead.

Scott SPICER [00:50:58] Maybe I can just touch on one question that's still here, and then, yeah, then we can do post. In terms of, you know, Facebook, Twitter, etc., like the other medias, like, do you know if the RCMP or your office keeps records of those documents or what was sent out?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:51:29] I know we did record ... we sent out that day. It wasn't my job to do that, but I know we did keep a record. On a regular ba ... you mean for a regular basis or just for that incident?

Scott SPICER [00:51:42] On a regular basis, but specifically this incident, like, is that part of your procedures?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:51:47] Yeah. So, any ... any major incident, what we would do is we would screenshot all the information that was sent out. We would take a ... or record it, like, take a screenshot of it. And because we don't want the public to think it's still active, we would delete it after we ... after we captured it because we don't want stuff that's out there that people think, "Oh, this is going on now," because if someone just shares it tomorrow and it happened a week ago, we don't want people to think something's going on. So, our policy is to ... to screenshot it or to record it somehow and then take it off after we ... I don't know if there's a time period or ... but we do remove it after a while, but we do record it.

Scott SPICER [00:52:32] Okay, great. Yeah, in terms of the events, I don't have anything else now, other than the post.

Krista SMITH [00:52:43] Yeah, I don't think so, too.

Scott SPICER [00:52:46] Paul?

Paul THOMPSON [00:52:46] No, I don't think so, Scott, that's fine, that's very good.

Scott SPICER [00:52:46] Okay. So, I'll leave it to you to ask your questions, for your post.

Krista SMITH [00:52:58] Oh, okay, okay. And again, this may not fall to you, but to what extent ... to what extent was your ... the team that you're on responsible for kind of monitoring the media and seeing what was being said and thinking about what the response needs to be?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:53:25] Yeah, and I guess for that incident, we all take kind of our own role, like when ... if it's something that you sent out, you kind of monitor what was going on. For that event in particular, I wasn't monitoring. We did have people in our office, but we were ... like, I know our admin person was monitoring and I believe Regis was monitoring as well. But I ... I can't say who all else was.

Krista SMITH [00:53:58] What were you mostly consumed by during this?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:54:03] Well, the ... so, once we got back to the office, was the pre ... because we had to get a press conference, so the room set up, their remarks for the ... for the ... I think that was one of the advisers that did that, but we had to get the phone line set up. We had to do a media advisory sent out and then get all the ... get everything ready for the press conference. So, that was kind of our job to get that ready. Because by the time I got back was probably 11 or 12, so grab a quick bite to eat and then trying to get it ready for 4, and then get the approvals and get everything set up downstairs. And I think that was pretty much our afternoon trying to set that up.

Krista SMITH [00:54:46] And ... and in the ... you know, in the days and weeks that followed, was that also your role, press conferences?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:54:54] Yeah. So, like and the other people in our office were doing other jobs but that was mine. So ... so the first day, I did the press conference and then we had a debrief after. The next morning, we came in, again decided the task, who's doing what for the ... because we did another press conference the next day, I have no idea what time. And again, it was making sure everything's ready for that. We also had to ... because we still had to do our day-to-day stuff as well. I did the sec ... because the next press conference was on the Monday. So, yeah, so I did that one as well; I did that press conference, so I had to get ready for that one. The next day I was actually off. I was ... I had a day off [C1 - Personal Information] and I ... because of COVID, I ... was my one day a week [C1 - Personal Information] So, I stayed home the Wednesday. And I know that Jennifer Clark, the other PIO at the time, she dealt with most of the stuff that day and then she started doing the briefings, the days coming on the file. And pretty much from the Wednesday on, Jennifer was assigned the H Strong file and I basically did the day to day.

Scott SPICER [00:56:13] Sorry, what was Jennifer's last naming again?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:56:18] Clark. Yeah, because someone still had to do the day-to-day stuff.

Scott SPICER [00:56:22] Yeah, imagine that.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:56:29] I know, right.

Krista SMITH [00:56:29] Okay. So, you know, I've ... I've looked at some of the documents that we've been given, and it looks like there was a ... there was kind of a contingent of people from Ottawa, the Ottawa office, helping out in this situation. Can you explain how that worked?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:56:47] Yeah, I know that the ... so the first two days of the press conference, I don't think we had any help. I can't remember, maybe ... maybe Alex ... So, Alex Vaughn from New Brunswick came. He came pretty ... almost immediately.

Krista SMITH [00:57:05] What was Alex's last name?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:57:08] I think it's Vaughn, V-A-U-

Krista SMITH [00:57:08] Oh, Vaughn, okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:57:08] ... N-G, I think. He's ... he's a comms advisor in New Brunswick because he had done press conferences in the past. So, that's why our first two press conference weren't as professional as they could have been, because we just didn't have the expertise to ... we got it ... we got it out there, but with his expertise, we were able to make it way more professional and have it in the theatre here ... downstairs here, and have all the ... like everything set up properly, and the audio and the better teleconference and all that.

Krista SMITH [00:57:43] Okay. So, I did see a note in ... by Lia Scanlan and she ... on the 20th, so, the Monday and it said something ... someone named Christian, does that ring a bell? She just said, "How can we make press conferences go better?" and like, I didn't know what that would mean-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:02] Yes, yeah. So, that ... he was probably IT, I think. I think that might be Christian Gallant, I think he's our ... in our IT department. Just because we weren't set up for short notice press conferences before.

Krista SMITH [00:58:16] Okay, that's helpful to know.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:16] I know, eh.

Scott SPICER [00:58:18] It will be a thing.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:20] Yeah, I know, right, yeah. Well, and like ... and the members of our team too, I think ... I believe we were short one person, but none of us had that expertise, really, too, with all the equipment for ... on short notice like that.

Patricia MACPHEE [00:58:41] Sorry, Krista, what was the name of that gentleman you said Lia was was emailing with?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:46] Christian.

Patricia MACPHEE [00:58:47] Oh, it was Christian.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:47] I'm thinking-

Krista SMITH [00:58:47] It was a note that I saw handwritten in Lia Scanlan's-

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:52] I'm assuming Christian Gallant.

Krista SMITH [00:58:53] ... a handwritten note of the 20 ... April 20, 2020. It just had Christian scrawled, so.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:58:58] I'm assuming it's Christian Gallant because he's IT.

Krista SMITH [00:59:01] Yeah, no, but that ... that would make sense, yeah. Anyway, so when you talk about setting up for a press conference, are you also talking about the content or were you mostly logistical?

Lisa CROTEAU [00:59:14] Well, I had to do my opening remarks, so I had to do those contents.

Krista SMITH [00:59:19] I remember those.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:59:19] The advisers were doing ... with the speaker doing their remarks. But then I had to do the French as well and then, yeah, everything like the advising, the media advisory, all that has to be translated as well. So, everything has to go through to our translation team to translate the releases and everything, the remarks, although the remarks didn't come back in time. So, I had to read them with an English.

Krista SMITH [00:59:46] Oh.

Lisa CROTEAU [00:59:48] In case you read it and you think, like, what is she doing? I had the English version and basically reading one line and speaking it in French. So, that's ... I still don't know how I did that, but anyway.

Scott SPICER [01:00:03] It's a skill I don't have and wish I did.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:00:05] I had a few people ... a few family members going ... asking, "Hm, did you have French words in front of you?" I was like, "No." Because if you ... like ERT, I had no idea what ERT was in French, so I just said, "ERT." Like, as long as I was getting the information to the people, that was my main concern. I didn't care if I was going to get in trouble from official languages about saying wrong French words, so. It was ERT, it was ERT. The French people know enough to know that's what I was trying to say, so.

Krista SMITH [01:00:31] Right. There was one ... I wanted to look at an email with you just because I ... maybe just to put it in context for me. It's ... I'm loading it, dated May 7, 2020. You email Lia and the RE line of it is called, or at least I called it, Catalyst. I think ... I think that was the RE line-

Lisa CROTEAU [01:01:01] Okay, yeah.

Krista SMITH [01:01:01] ... Catalyst. And it says, "Before I take" ... you wrote this, "Before I take questions, I've asked about the assault and escape of his common law partner as setting off events. This investigation does not point to that as a single motivator leading to the rampage that followed. I use the word catalyst to speak about giving us a clearer picture of the threat by learning us to exactly what we were dealing with and what to look for. Gender based violence is something we as police know exists and work hard to counter."

Lisa CROTEAU [01:01:33] So, I think that might have been because the word catalyst was by Darren Campbell. He said that in one of his Q & A's, I believe, in the press conference. And someone ... it came up I don't know if it was a reporter or someone, so .. and I can't remember the context of that email. But the word ... yeah, so the word catalyst was from his first, I believe, his first briefing. And that's why he brought it up at the second briefing to specify that. So, I think she might have wanted to know what he had said. So, I probably cut ... I don't know if I had cut and paste what he had said and sent it to her because she was asking for that.

Krista SMITH [01:02:14] Oh, so, those weren't your words, necessarily?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:02:15] No, they're not my words.

Krista SMITH [01:02:16] Oh, okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:02:17] So, I'm ... because they were trying to figure out what he had said in this Q & A's, so that we could address it or write the remarks for the second one in order to ... because I believe the second press conference he did ... he started off with, "Just want to let you know, I said this yesterday, but this is what I meant," or because yeah, it was ... I think that's the ... that was probably not the right word that he was trying to come across, but when he was doing the Q & A's, that's what he said, so.

Patricia MACPHEE [01:02:47] Krista, did you have the doc number right there of that email? I'm probably looking at another email, but it was just because-

Krista SMITH [01:02:53] I delete it and write over a note to myself, so I don't know what it is. But if you ... well, if you're using a different system than we are, hey-

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:07] That's all right, we should-

Krista SMITH [01:03:08] May 7.

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:08] Yeah, I can look it up by the date.

Krista SMITH [01:03:10] May 7, 2020-

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:10] May 7 and it was an email from Lisa Croteau to-

Krista SMITH [01:03:17] Lia Scanlan. And do you want the time?

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:20] Am I mispronouncing-

Lisa CROTEAU [01:03:20] Just ... just like crow, the bird, and a toe.

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:20] Croteau.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:03:20] There you go. C1 - Personal Information

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:26] An email to Lisa Scanlan and again, it was-

Lisa CROTEAU [01:03:26] Catalyst was the-

Krista SMITH [01:03:26] RE line.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:03:26] Yeah. So, that's probably why. I'm assuming, that's the only thing that comes to mind.

Krista SMITH [01:03:33] Do you want the time?

Patricia MACPHEE [01:03:37] Yeah, if you don't mind, it just makes it easier for me to have.

Krista SMITH [01:03:38] Yeah, that I didn't delete, 11:35:01, and then it's like space-0300.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:03:52] That was May 7, eh? I can't remember, it could have been the first press conference, then. I don't know which one that would have been.

Krista SMITH [01:04:01] You know, we ... we look at all kinds of documents that aren't necessarily connected, and it's like well, what's that all about?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:04:06] Yeah, but I remember because the word catalyst was used in a press conference, and it was like, "Oh-oh," like that probably shouldn't have been used, that word. So, that's why they addressed it at the next press conference. So, that's the only thing I can assume that because I never said it, it was Darren Campbell that had said it, at a ... from a Q & A.

Krista SMITH [01:04:24] Right. No, that totally ... that totally makes sense.

Patricia MACPHEE [01:04:25] Do you mind if I just follow up this because I'm not familiar with this off the top of my head, but so what was the issue? Was it readdressed in the second-

Lisa CROTEAU [01:04:34] Yeah, it was readdressed. So, it was said in the Q & A on one ... I thought it was the first one, but because it's May 7, I'm not sure exactly which one it was now. But one of his conferences, of the ... of the ... one of the Q & A's, he said something about ... I'm not sure if he ... there was ... he used the words catalyst of when the girl ... when the wife or ex ... or common law came out of the woods and it almost suggested, I think, to the public that that's what made him do this, which we didn't think that was the case. So, that's why we wanted to address it, to make sure that people didn't think that was the ... that's what had happened. But yeah, it was addressed on the next press conference after.

Patricia MACPHEE [01:05:27] Thank you.

Krista SMITH [01:05:27] Another area I wanted to ask about is ... and that we're ... we're interested in with the Commission is, just how to support a team when they're ... when they're living through such a difficult series of events. What can you say about ... about your team and how you were in the days and weeks that followed and what supports were offered?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:05:53] It would have been nice to have more ... more people come in to assist our unit because we were all ... like basically, our day-to-day was basically the bare minimum because we were so focused on this file and we like ... I had the Wed ... Tuesday or Wednesday off, and that was the only time I took off. I'm sure I probably could have taken more time off if I really needed it, but there was not really anyone to do the job to help out. So, it would have been nice to be able to have more support that way. But as for the advisers, too, I think that we all end up getting like a week or so off in the summer, but it ... you know, just to ... it was still ongoing, so it's kind of hard to take people out of there that are dealing with it and knows what's going on. But I don't know, it's ... I don't know if there's much more we could have really done on that part of it. As a unit, as we were ... like the support, it was actually great that we all ... instead of ... because we were working from home prior to, we all came back into the office and we're all working full-time from the office because we needed to know what everybody was doing. And that was actually really good because when we were dealing with anything, we had the people there. You weren't sitting at home by yourself, basically dealing with it on your own. So, no, they were ... it was very ... that was good.

Scott SPICER [01:07:22] So, coming back to work was useful?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:07:25] Yes, oh, yeah.

Scott SPICER [01:07:26] To work straight ... working from the office.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:07:27] The one day off that I had the next day was actually probably the best thing that ever happened because I was able to focus on my husband and my kids that were ... go out with the kids and stuff. But then coming back and then I got kind of put onto the day-to-day rather than the file, so I had to go on ... you know, I could still ... I knew it was there and I could see the headlines, I could see all that, but at least I wasn't, you know, right forefront. But it's still ... yeah. And even now, it's just watching this stuff, just ... when stuff starts coming out, or if they ... someone posts a video or when they put out the 9-1-1 tapes, I just ... I can't even. Someone else has to look at that stuff because I can't.

Scott SPICER [01:08:13] Yeah, and that's okay. And it's great that there's something in place that you know, they're okay doing that, that's great.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:08:20] Yeah.

Paul THOMPSON [01:08:21] So, of course you got to debrief. So, when you have a press conference and/or any type of meeting, you ... how does your debrief ... debriefing, look from ... is it a formal process that you have a debriefing on a press conference or what does it look like, and who's there and who may run that?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:08:40] Well, so the first one we just had a little debrief, it was just our team, just what went well, what didn't go well, what ... what can we improve the next day, because we knew we had to do a next day one and start kind of get the balls rolling for that. And I think we did one again, it ... just kind of our team and anybody we needed to add on to, like sometimes we had some of the people that were doing their ... like the ... either Darren or someone who was speaking that would come in. You know, we'd let them know, you know, that they did a great job. And so, we kind of go that way with them as well. As for this incident ... incident, we did a debrief with the psychologists and stuff here for the wellness of our team, too, right, so, but that was a week or two after. I can't remember exactly when we did it, but we did do one of those debriefs as well.

Paul THOMPSON [01:09:30] Would any debriefs from a press conference, would the ... your RCMP command staff be a part of most of those?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:09:41] I know the first one, I believe it was just our team and I know Alex Vaughn was involved with the second one because he was here, and so, giving us what we could do for the next ones. I don't ... I think the Director would ... kind of did their ... her own debrief with the senior management team, like they weren't with our team, per se. But we would hear back from them, from the Director, if that's ... yeah.

Paul THOMPSON [01:10:22] Okay, good.

Krista SMITH [01:10:21] So, I'm just thinking, if after that Wednesday you were mainly tasked with day-to-day stuff, anything that came after that, you wouldn't necessarily have direct knowledge of with respect to-

Lisa CROTEAU [01:10:33] No, most of the like, any kind of media questions that would have come in, I ... I don't know if ... we had, like, a basic response that we would send out so, that ... I sometimes did some of those. But for the most part, I think any new information that came out, some of the responses I may have sent to the media, but anything ... that would be about it that I would have been involved with the file, I think. Unless you have something in particular that you're looking at, then you can ask, but I'm not sure.

Krista SMITH [01:11:08] I mean, I wondered a little bit about, you know, it was ... in the first couple weeks, I think after ... after the events that the 2011 bulletin came out about, you know, about there being some history there with the perpetrator. Did ... were you aware of any of that stuff going on?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:11:29] Not prior to when it ... I don't ... I don't think I was doing anything on that at that time.

Krista SMITH [01:11:39] Okay, yeah.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:11:40] I can't ... I'd have to go check in my notes, but I don't think so.

Krista SMITH [01:11:43] Yeah, okay.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:11:43] Anything we would have sent out, there would have been someone else that would have written it and we would have just sent it out on their behalf, type thing, I'd say.

Krista SMITH [01:11:53] Right, yeah, okay. I think I'm good.

Scott SPICER [01:12:07] You're good. Paul, anything else from you?

Paul THOMPSON [01:12:09] I don't think so, Scott. I mean, got ... basically there's a lot of good information there, on where things were with your role, so I appreciate it.

Scott SPICER [01:12:18] So, I think I mean, for me, the last thing I would ask you, and it's more coming from, you know, understanding what the Commission is about and ... and you know, moving forward to try to make a difference. Is there anything that you feel that maybe we didn't cover that you think that we should have covered and that would be useful to not only you, the RCMP and also the Commission, but the general public, as you know, the localized community and also our country as a whole. Like, is there anything you feel like you know, I've given a lot of thought and I really feel like we could have done this better. I mean, the way I look at the Commission is I look at this is an opportunity, and I've mentioned this to a few people throughout your organization as well, I feel it is an opportunity to be a bit of a springboard because sometimes it's difficult to get things to move forward as well, because we're busy, you know, other priorities come up, but sometimes that little push can maybe make that difference. Is there anything that you feel might do that? Is there something in your role or even outside of your role that you feel that we could help with?

Lisa CROTEAU [01:13:28] No, like I ... and it's because this is the thing that I go through all the time, because I ... I wish there was something we could have done to make not this happen, like but I don't know. I don't know what else we could have ... like at the ... while it was going on, I don't know what else would have prevented him of doing what he did. I don't know.

Scott SPICER [01:13:54] Okay, all right. Well, something else that's very important to us, and Krista was alluding to that as well, is that while we know you have support here, we also have people in the Commission that are trained and qualified to be helpful and also provide other support outside that would be, you know, hands off, really, so to speak. So, please know that we have that and you can reach out to all of us or you can find it on our website as well. And ... and, you know, I feel that that's something that should be out there to all your members as well, because sometimes, you know, as good as some people can be, it may not be the right fit for somebody else. And ... and that's no slight on anybody doing that work. It's ... it's difficult work as well. And so, know that it's there and we're ... we're available at any time as well to ... to reach out to. So, I don't have anything else. Counsel, do you have anything else?

Patricia MACPHEE [01:14:53] No, thank you.

Paul THOMPSON [01:14:55] No, I don't either, thank you.

Lisa CROTEAU [01:14:57] You're welcome.

Scott SPICER [01:14:58] Okay. Well, it is 11:26 on Thursday, September 16, and this concludes the interview.