



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: Lia Scanlan, Director of Strategic Communications with the NS RCMP

INTERVIEWER: Paul Thompson, Primary Investigator
Chris Lussow, Primary Investigator
Krista Smith, Policy and Research

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

DATE: Tuesday, September 14, 2021

START TIME: 12:40 PM AST

END TIME: ~02:18 PM AST

TRANSCRIBED BY: Trint Software

PROOFREAD BY: Lynn Sorensen, Transcriptionist

PROOFREAD BY: Chris Lussow, Primary Investigator

SCANLAN, Lia_20210914_AUD_Interview.MP3

Paul THOMPSON [00:00:04] Okay. It's 12:40, RCMP Dartmouth. I'm Paul Thompson. If everybody could introduce themselves for the purpose of the record.

Lis SCANLAN [00:00:10] Sure, I'll start. I'm Lia Scanlan, Director of Strategic Communications with the Nova Scotia RCMP.

Steve MACDOUGALL [00:00:16] Steve MacDougall, here to support Lia.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:00:18] Patricia MacPhee, counsel for the Attorney General of Canada,

Christopher LUSSOW [00:00:22] Christopher Lussow, investigator for the Mass Casualty Commission.

Krista SMITH [00:00:26] Krista Smith, legal counsel on the Research and Policy team.

Hallifax
1791 Barrington Street, Suite 310
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3K9

1791, rue Barrington, bureau 310
Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse B3J 3K9

Truro
128 Esplanade Street
Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 2K3

128, rue Esplanade
Truro, Nouvelle-Écosse B2N 2K3

Paul THOMPSON [00:00:35] Okay, I just ... I know there's going to be a series of just general questions and just I think if you just want you to introduce yourself and what your role was. Bring back ... bring back your mind to the April 18 and 19, what your ... your title was back at that point in time and what your role was. So, you can start off that way.

Lia SCANLAN [00:00:54] Sure. And if I go down a path that is useless, just let me know. So, April 18 and 19, I was the Director of Strategic Communications Unit. So, within that unit, there are two Corporals that they're the public information officers or media relations officers. They handle most of the on camera and ... anything on camera we'd have a police officer speak to it. Also, within that unit, I've got an assistant who reports directly to me as well as the senior adviser, and there was two advi ... two other communications advisers. So, that's the unit that I oversee, and I report directly to the Commanding Officer. So, that was all in place on that day. So, that day ... Do you want me to just speak to, like, when I became engaged?

Paul THOMPSON [00:01:50] Yeah, sure. Feel free to-

Lia SCANLAN [00:01:52] Sure.

Krista SMITH [00:01:53] Can I ... I want to get a better sense of who exactly is on your team. Just as ... because I've looked at emails and I want to connect names to-

Lia SCANLAN [00:02:01] Do you want names?

Krista SMITH [00:02:02] Yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:02:02] Okay, sure thing. So, myself as the Director and then my assistant, her name is Kayla, Kayla Rees, R-E-E-S. The senior communications adviser is Cindy, C-I-N-D-Y, last name Bayers, B-A-Y-E-R-S, so she's like my 2IC.

Krista SMITH [00:02:21] And she's civilian?

Lia SCANLAN [00:02:24] Yeah, yes. Then-

Krista SMITH [00:02:26] As ... as you are?

Lia SCANLAN [00:02:26] I'm a civilian member; she's a public service employee, yes. But yes, we're not police officers. And then the ... there's a communications adviser named Regis Dudley, so D-U-D-L-E-Y. She has since moved on, so she's not with the organization anymore. She's within the federal government but moved on. And another communications adviser, Cindy MacKenzie, so that's M-A-C, also C-I-N-D-Y, and then

the two Corporals, who are the public information officers, so you have Cpl. Jennifer Clark, a regular member and a Cpl. Lisa Croteau, who's a regular member.

Krista SMITH [00:03:12] And while we're ... we're still in this area, can ... can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

Lia SCANLAN [00:03:18] Sure. So, in terms of education experience, like work related. I have a degree from St. Mary's University that I achieved in 2004. That was an honours degree in psychology with a focus on forensic psychology. I took a stint and travelled Europe. Then I came home, was trying to get into a Master's PhD program for forensic psychology, didn't work. So, I was employed for a year at Xerox North America. They had their headquarters here at Dartmouth, and I worked there for one year and absolutely despised it. So, I quit a year to the day and went back to school as a mature student at 20 ... I think it was 27 I went back to Mount St. Vincent University and earned a degree in public relations. And it was while I was in school for the public relations degree that the RCMP hired me. So, I started with the RCMP in 2009, initially as a student, but I never ... I never left. And when I was a student, there was actually nobody else in a public relations role at that time. There was just a ... his name was Cpl. Mark ... well, Sgt. Mark Gallagher. He used to be the public information officer at the time, so he ... the function was a lot different in 2009, so he was the spokesperson. And then yeah, I became ... they advertised the position, I think a year after I was here to get a senior ... like a director type ... it was a senior adviser. I didn't apply for it because I just felt like I could learn from someone that had a lot more experience just learn in the field, not policing, but just who had more experience. Anyway, so she came in, her name was Paula Sibley-Fox. She was a phenomenal adviser. And we both ... we were co kind of leads, like we didn't care about titles or who did what, we were just creating something within the force that actually ... You know, social media was just ... it's 2010, so, you're just building something. So, over the course of the next few years, we ... we establish a team. I was always the primary with the CO, just relationship wise, it seemed to just go that way. And then in 2014 ... So, we built up a team where you'd have ... we had a Sergeant as a spokesperson, and we had here and there, like another adviser. Yeah, it's hard to remember everybody. And then in 2014, under Assistant Commissioner Alphonse MacNeil, he was the CO at the time, I was deployed to Codiac in that shooting, so I deployed the morning after the shooting. So (inaudible) so I ... the City of Moncton was already shut down, I went lights and sirens up with the Sergeant. Al LeBlanc was spokesperson within our unit at that time, I was not the Director; I was the senior adviser then. But like I said, it was ... we were very much equals. So, the decision was for me to go and I gladly went. So, I went into the Codiac detachment and took over the comms role there. It was to relieve their Director so he could ... his name was Paul Green at the time, so he could get some sleep, and. Their CI ... their Centre of deployment was actually in the Codiac detachment and that's where the members had left from and worked out from, there was a lot of emotion. So, it was just an emotional

set up, is the best way to put it. So, I moved into the office right across from roll call, their command ... not their command post that was out in the field, but it was where they were deploying. And so, did ... yeah, I took over the external communications. So, when I say I took over there, what I mean is so that's all of the ... the Tweeting and all of the, you know, managing what we're saying publicly, but most importantly, what we're saying to the public, because the gunman was at large. So, Justin Bourque was still at large and the community was shut down. So, that evening he was apprehended, past Midnight, I forget, and I stayed, I think; yeah, I stayed the following day. I helped out a little bit and then helped them from here with the reg funerals.

[00:08:09] So, following that the Commissioner, Commissioner Paulson, ordered an independent review of the Codiac shootings, and so he hired an independent reviewer or consultant, and it was, as I said, Commissioner Alphonse MacNeil, who was retired from the RCMP. So, he gave Alphonse full rein to create a team of people to do an independent review of the shootings. I was assigned the strategic advisory role and the writer. So, what that meant is in September of 2014, if not sooner, I think I got engaged the end of August, I moved to Moncton and they had completed ... they ... they were still doing their investigation, but I spent the rest of 2014, up until like December in Moncton, and I wrote the report. So, the MacNeil report, I wrote with Alphonse. So, in January of 2015, we released the report publicly. And so, all that ... it seems weird because I'm an employee of the RCMP, but I was ... I was independent; I didn't report to the Deputy or anyone, just Alphonse. And so, there was a clear ... there was a clear line. So, in January 2015, when we did the release of the report publicly, so it Deputy Janice Armstrong, who flew down. Like I wasn't accountable to them, it's the RCMP. So, I put on the press conference joint with the RCMP where we released the report. And then a week and a half later, I had a baby. Yeah, it was intense, it was a busy ... I know, when I think back, I'm like, how did I do that? So, that was that. So, then I went on maternity leave, cameback, and then my ... Paula, the ... the Director, she went on maternity leave. So, I was the Director in her absence for a year, over a year. And then Paula left the organization in 2018, I believe, and I was appointed the Director of the unit. So, that's my experience as far as ... And you know, and throughout my ... my time ... So, I've been with the organization since 2009. I've been seconded to a few projects. Like so, I was the lead on the policing review for HRM, which was a significant undertaking in 2010. So, it's where they reviewed all the police services. Just in December of this year, I think I can speak more freely about it at this point because I believe it's been made public, but, I wrote a report for Commissioner ... well, Deputy Duheme, the Federal Deputy in Ottawa under Commissioner Lucki, in relation to Ortis, C2 - Privileged Information

C2 - Privileged Information

C2 - Privileged Information And then actually on April 18, Alphonse had called me

because he was hired to do that. And we were actually ... he had called and said that he wanted to make some changes to the report, and he was calling Lee the CO to get permission to release me again to assist with that. But then that was the 18th of April, so, that takes me to then. Is that enough about my background?

Krista SMITH [00:12:12] Yeah, I find that very helpful. And before we jump into the meat of things, because I don't know a lot about public relations, I'm interested to know what the ... the spokesperson did before you and what things you and Paula were implementing to kind of flush out the role?

Lia SCANLAN [00:12:35] So, the spokesperson before me, so you mean Mark Gallagher?

Krista SMITH [00:12:39] Yeah, yeah. So, like, how were you ... how ... you came in and sort of created something different, it sounds like?

Lia SCANLAN [00:12:44] Yeah, well, because then ... Yes, so and ... and there was a person, so there was a civilian person that was supposed to have been here when I showed up. So, that's a whole other story. She was ODS for a significant period of time. So, I don't know that circumstance, but I know that when I came, it was Mark Gallagher and that's ... it was old school reporting then, it was ... journalism was different, it was in 2009. Like, he would get a phone call and do an interview. There was no social media and you did wait for like five ... there was actual news cycles; it was old school, totally different. I mean, it sounds old school, it's lovely now, like I would take that any day over what it is today. But so, Mark, you know ... and yeah, Mark was a bilingual French member, Mark passed away, he died in the earthquake in Haiti. So, he was ... he was a great mentor, but he ... he was retiring, and he got what he wanted to do and he left. So, he left. So, he didn't actually ... you know, we had a lot of things that we were going to revisit and change, and that didn't happen. And when I say revisit and change, it was just more he had a passion and he had a lot of great relationships with media. So, when Paula came, it was ... yeah, it was just about establishing, just evolving with the media landscape, to be honest. Like it would be too much to explain what that is. But like, for example, introducing social media as the Nova Scotia RCMP. So, I felt strongly that we needed a Facebook page and the CO at the time allowed people to do their jobs and make recommendations and he wasn't risk adverse. So, under Alphonse MacNeil, I forget the year that he came here, but he allowed us to, you know, start Facebook for the Nova Scotia RCMP. And we were, I think only the second division ... I think E Division out West was the only division that might have had it at the time. So, we were ... for a small division and for a province, Nova Scotia, like, you know, we were kind of considered in the East, like, oh, nothing really goes on there, we were very well ahead of the curve on social media for policing at that time. And yeah, had always ... always

kind of created best practices in conjunction with E division that the force would then share or other divisions would you know, kind of piggyback on or see what worked and what didn't work, and yeah. Does that answer enough to that? Because the public relations function within policing, so I don't call it public relations like, that's why actually this unit used to be called the media relations unit or something, and it's so much more than media like, the media is but one component. Like it's strategic communications. So, it's communicating. We don't rely on the media to communicate to our stakeholders. That's the old school days, that's the Sgt. Mark Gallagher days where that's all you had, you had one in and out, or ... Strategic communications is about all the stakeholders. So, you know, whether it's your mayor or political, community groups, the citizens we serve. And, you know, public relations, in a sense, policing is such a reactive function, it's a reactive environment that a lot of what ... despite what I think the public wants to believe, a lot of what we do isn't trying to ... we're always so reactive, we're trying to just give information, kind of, there's enough to keep you just pumping out information. There's not a lot of time really to do like the traditional what you would call public relations. It's like what you go to school for. Most of the people that I graduated with, if we were to all sit in a room, it's night and day what we do. Not just me and them, but amongst all of us, yeah.

Krista SMITH [00:16:59] That's helpful, thank you.

Lia SCANLAN [00:17:06] Okay, yeah.

Krista SMITH [00:17:07] Sorry, Paul. I didn't mean to hijack this.

Paul THOMPSON [00:17:09] No, that's good. And we were sorry to hear about Mark, too. I didn't know the story.

Lia SCANLAN [00:17:14] Yeah, no he ... he was wonderful. He flew home for Christmas and he landed; 10 minutes after he landed, yeah.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:17:23] Hence the Gallagher boardroom?

Lia SCANLAN [00:17:28] Yes, that's ... it's named after Mark.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:17:29] I'll have to look at his picture the next time, that's-

Paul THOMPSON [00:17:30] Yeah, good to know the story, yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:17:30] Yeah, that's the story.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:17:30] I didn't notice yeah, but.

Lia SCANLAN [00:17:30] Yeah, he was awesome.

Paul THOMPSON [00:17:41] You're caught up in the story, you ... gives you a break.

Krista SMITH [00:17:45] No, I'm good.

Paul THOMPSON [00:17:45] Yeah, so that is really helpful for all of us, I appreciate that. It kind of sets the ... where you are in the whole hierarchy of that day. So, I guess the next natural question would be like, April 18 and 19 come, your involvement there. And just try to paint a picture for us that ... certainly, we weren't there. So, you've done a really good job painting a picture of your background, so I'll leave you to it.

Lia SCANLAN [00:18:10] Okay. So, the ... April 18 and 19, so, there ... the way that our unit funct ... like, functions is that so, we're not like the OCC, but I'm always available. So, I feel like I'm the OCC a little bit, like I'm always available, I always have my phone, as ... as does the senior adviser and whoever is on call. So, we have an on-call rotational shift that we do that incorporates ... there's always an adviser assigned to an acting public information officer. So, this might sound confusing. So, if it's Lisa or Jan, those are the Corporals in our unit, they don't need an adviser assigned to them. That's their job, they do it all day, every day. But to give them a break, they can't be on call every weekend, we have acting public information officers. And when there's someone acting, there's always an advisor, whether it be me or someone else on the team that's assigned to ... to that on-call weekend also. So, that weekend it happened to be Lisa Croteau on call, so there wasn't an adviser assigned to her. But like I said, my phone's always with me. So, the evening of the 18, it was the ... I can't comment on the 18 because I was not ... Lisa was on call and Lisa ... so I became engaged on the morning of the 19. So-

Krista SMITH [00:19:35] Were you regularly scheduled to work on the 19, or did you come in because things were-

Lia SCANLAN [00:19:40] The 19 was a Sunday?

Krista SMITH [00:19:42] 19, yes.

Lia SCANLAN [00:19:43] No. So, we're Monday ... yeah, we're not shift work.

Krista SMITH [00:19:46] Okay, you're Monday ... okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:19:46] Yeah. So, we're Monday to Friday. I'm typically ... like I start at 7, but so no, I wasn't regularly scheduled, but Lisa was on call, so she was. So, I woke up that morning and looked at my phone. So, I had a personal phone and a work

phone, and they were on my night table, and I saw that I had missed calls, so I went ... from Lisa. So, I called her back, and this was in ... late 5 ... the late 5 a.m.'s, early 6's. And I called her, and she was on her way to an incident or scene, she said she was on her way to a scene. And, you know, I said, "Well, what ... what scene, like, where are you headed?" She said, "I'm headed Northeast Nova ... I don't know if she said Portapique, I really don't know what she said. But she was en route to a scene. And normally I would order someone out to a scene unless it was significant. So, then I said, "Okay, so what happened?" And then that's when she just said, "Listen, there was a firearms incident last night. There are ... there's ... there was people murdered, and I'm heading out there." And I could just tell that she didn't ... like I know Lisa very well and she was driving, and I could tell she was tired. So, I said, "Okay, who's engaged?" and she said, "Well, just call the Risk Manager or." I said, "Who's ... who were you talking to?" She said, "Well, they're switching shifts, I think it was Brian Rehill ... Bruce Briers overnight or Brian Rehill." So, I called the Risk Manager. So, when we're on call, we always call the Risk Managers or the member on the ground. So, like we're ... we have a well-oiled machine here about like receiving information, it's not like an environment where you're like, "Oh, are you calling, you're needing people?" That's not what it's like. So, I called the Risk Managers and Brian ... Brian Rehill explained to me that they were switching shifts, him and Bruce Briers, and that there was an incident that occurred, I don't really know exactly what he said, it was there was an incident that occurred. It's best if you talk to the CIC's on the ground right now to get the most accurate and up to date information. So, I said, "Who's ... who's the CIC?" So, he said, "Call Jeff West." So, I called Jeff, I spoke to Jeff very briefly and Jeff was finishing up his shift. He said, like, "I'm ... I'm finishing up." And I said, "Okay, I need to speak to someone to get what happened." So, he said, "Steve's calling you right now," so that's Steve Halliday, and that's ... that couldn't be a better person to speak to. I was like ... like Jeff and Steve, both solid. So, and Steve's just information and even keel. So, I spoke with Steve and he was trying to summarize what he knew. So, it was about 6:45 in the morning now, and he was saying, you know, "This is the circumstance, we've got structures on fire," he was talking a lot about a helicopter flying around because that was really bothering him, that there was a helicopter flying. It was the media ... it was a News helicopter flying around. And his ... he was, you know, concerned that they would be taking images.

Lia SCANLAN [00:23:23] So, he explained to me, I believe, that he had the air space shut down, or he had someone assigned to that task. He was talking about, you know, just what occurred overnight to the ... but he didn't get into a lot of detail. I didn't really care about a lot of the de ... I care about like what happened, what should I be saying? Like, I'm trying to get information to filter, like, what do I need to tell the public, if anything? So, Steve explained ... I asked him the question, I said, "Do we have ... do we have a gunman?" And he said, "No, not ... we don't have one in custody." You know, there's structures burning, and he explained to me about the vehicles burning, that there

was homes burning. And so, I just said, "Okay, so we have dead people. We don't have a ... the gunman," and I said, "so I'm call ... like, I'm calling this an active shooter situation." He said, "Yeah." So, I got off the phone and I literally just ... so, I'm at my house in my room, but I ... I can fire up my computer in minutes. So, I was already ... fired up my computer and I literally just closed the door and went back to actually like Codiac because I said to Steve ... Sorry, one of the things I said to Steve, I said, "What's bothering you right now?" And he said, "That we are all over the place here and people can't see us." Because it was dark and so, and he said like people were sheltering in place or if they were hiding, like he said, "We're here, and if you didn't know anything, you wouldn't know that we're here." So, I put out the first Tweet ... not the first Tweet, sorry, Lisa had put out a Tweet, but I wasn't involved in that first Tweet that went out the night before. So, then, that's when I put out the Tweet that we remained on the scene in Portapique, this is an active shooter situation. Residents in the area stay inside your homes and lock your doors. Call 9-1-1 if there's anyone on the property. So, that's the first one I put out and-

Paul THOMPSON [00:25:22] Just at what time there, to interrupt you, sorry?

Lia SCANLAN [00:25:24] That was at 8:02.

Paul THOMPSON [00:25:25] 8:02, okay, just so we.

Lia SCANLAN [00:25:27] Yeah. Because I spoke ... when I spoke to Steve, I needed ... I knew I needed to wake people on my team up, like another communications advisor. And part of the challenge, you know, for what it's worth at this time, I don't know if it's still the case because I haven't had my RCMP cell phone on, but the amount of robocalls that we get, so like they're plentiful. So, all night, your cell ... your work cell phone will ring from like Singapore and these places, so, that's problematic. So, I've actually advised people to, you know, at 2:00 in the morning, if you need to get some sleep, get some sleep, like it's just absurd. And there's not ... there's not really a solution for that, so, that's ... So, anyways, I woke Regis up, Regis Dudley, who is the one I mentioned that moved on, and I explained to her that there was a situation going on. When I'm looking at the timing here, I realized that I said I spoke to Steve Halliday at 6:58; I didn't. Steve Halliday was 7:20, and what he said is there's six-plus dead, containment ... he ... he explained a lot about the containment, the outer perimeter, the ERT in the hot zone, families are sheltering in place, so. Yeah, and then so, I went rightback to Codiac, to be honest, because it was very similar for me in what my function is, is that I'm about what am ... what am I telling the public and what am I asking them todo? Like, what's the call to action, like, what is it that we're saying? And so, a lot of whatwe did in Codiac when Bourque was ... we didn't know where he was or he would justappear in different places, it's just ... it's reassurance. So, for me, it's about I envisioned ... I closed the door and I remember I was like, if I was hiding in my house, because most people hide

with their cell phones and most people in Nova Scotia, like we have a ton of Twitter followers, and a ton, so I thought we're there with you, like just to comfort them in some way. There was no new information; there's nothing really to tell them, it was ... So, that was that. And then I called the CIC. So, this is still like when there's not a lot of like. the gunman hasn't come back to life yet, you know what I mean? So there's a period of time there where I'm getting information and just connecting with the CIC and advising like, Regis that, you know stay on, like, don't move, don't go anywhere, stay on your computer, start monitoring social media. So, what I mean by monitoring is so when we put up that first Tweet, tons of people comment underneath and it gives you a sense of what people are wanting to know or it's just the tone. Like it almost directs your comms in a situation where there's not really any new information or anything to say. So that's where you get a lot of questions and it kind of leads stuff. So ... so that's why you'll see at certain spots, if you examine the tweets, there's different periods of time where we are addressing something. It's ... it's ... it means that there was a ... that was the tone being set by the question, so that was the monitoring.

Lia SCANLAN [00:29:08] So then, yeah, I'm just connecting with the CIC, got my team up. I called Lisa again just to check in on her and say, like, "Okay, what's going on there?" And Lisa was on the scene near the command post, so near where ... and her function on the scene is to keep the media away, essentially, keep them away from interfering in any sort of operations because that's what her ... and provide any information that she can provide, but she can only provide information that she has or that she's authorized to provide. And when I say keep them away, because the reality is, you know. I don't know if it's always been this way, it hasn't always been my experience with the RCMP, but I've seen it evolve, is the media being that close to the command post. Like, if this ... that concerns me always because I don't trust what's taking place, so, like with recorders and just forgetting them in bags and just dropping them in places and just getting them in places. So, that's what she's focusing on at that time. And members being able to just do their job and not have to deal with the questions that they get. So, I spoke with Addie MacCallum, who is just a solid head. He you know, was telling me a lot of the same stuff like that ... that Steve had told me. He was just saying like they were talking about operations, so, it's an emerging and evolving situation. And him and I established, I said, "Well, I'm going to get my information directly from you. It's going to be me or Regis or whoever on my team that calls," because I knew that I had assigned, like Regis, to start calling the other people on the team. Like it didn't matter who called, it's a direct line to the CIC. So, we establish a direct line with the Risk Managers and the CIC's, as well as Archie Thompson. He was the Superintendent of Northeast Nova at that time, he since retired. He and I were speaking. So, I had my personal phone, my work phone, and as did Regis. And then the rest of the team became engaged like they ... everyone was up and briefed up. I had a conference call like, so everyone ... that's where I was telling people, "Okay, we've got a situation here. I don't know ... they don't have the gunman." I was

very careful not to say like ... I'm the leader of the team, so, I wasn't ... I didn't want to panic anyone or make it seem like anything other than what it was at that time. But I was very clear that this is an active shooter situation. So, they know what that means. So, that means we all stayed at our houses and didn't move from our computers. There was no ordering people into work like, you know, you had to be able to communicate. So, everyone was assigned different tasks, but it's not as if we're all just ... me and Regis just were the primaries for the first bit and then ... yeah. Then ... I'm just looking at my notes. These are my notes from that morning, which, you know.

Krista SMITH [00:32:40] Do you remember about what time you convened your team, had that conference call? I don't remember seeing that in your notes.

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:55] Yeah, because I wasn't ... yeah, I did. Well, no, I don't. My answer is no, I don't remember the exact time we received confirmation, so it would have had to have been ... yeah, it was definitely before-

Krista SMITH [00:33:11] Things ramped up again.

Lia SCANLAN [00:33:20] Yeah, yeah. And part of the reality too, is that like these are people ... just people at their houses that aren't on call and like really they don't have any ... they could have been in Timbuktu that weekend, do you know what I mean. So, the fact that everyone was available and answered their phones was wonderful. So, that ... And so, Jen Clark, she's the other Corporal, she wasn't on call, but she was part of the team that got engaged too. So, yeah, and then it just happened. Addy called me, Addy MacCallum, he's the CIC, he called me and said that the girlfriend had been, you know, located at the house, like she had called out on (inaudible) members there, and then he said we were getting it, we have a photo ... we're getting a photo. The family's providing a photo where they were able to get a photo. So, I said, "Okay, I will sit here and wait for it." And they got it to me really quickly. He just ... I don't even know ... I don't know how it got to me so quickly. I don't know if they had an electronic copy. Either way, Addy flipped it to me and ... because I remember thinking that was at 8:54 that Tweet went out. So, you got to remember, if I say a Tweet went out at 8:54, I didn't receive ... it takes a second to put it together and just ... like a minute. So, Addy had said ... like Addy's on the phone with me, we don't disconnect from one another. So, Addy said that's a picture of him; I believe he said it was last night at their anniversary dinner. So, I knew right away that I needed to get her out of the photo. So, I called Regis as Addy's on the phone, and said, "Crop her out right now and send it back to me." Regis is savvy, she just did it in 10 seconds, sends it back to me. And I'm still getting the details of 51-year-old Wortman and just reading them out to Addy. So, I'm writing and then I type it. And then I read it out to him, said, "Okay, I'm hitting Send, I'm hitting Send," because I knew, like, that was a big moment for me, like it was ... sorry. Yeah, it's very ... it's a very odd feeling, I can't describe it. I don't even know what to call it to know that you

have information that's going to change a lot of people's lives. It was ... and I made it real, like. I don't even like looking at his face. Yeah. So, yeah, that Tweet went out, and then I feel like he just ... that's when he just started. So, as soon as we put that Tweet out, you would have to ... look, I'm good. You have to look at the metrics and stuff, but what's important for me to explain, if it's not already apparent, is that ... do I need to explain anything about Twitter? Like ... no, in terms of like the amplification and how many followers we have and the reason why we've always communicated on Twitter?

Krista SMITH [00:36:49] No, I don't mind hearing it.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:36:52] Yeah, actually, because-

Krista SMITH [00:36:53] It's your record, so.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:36:54] ... why Twitter versus other methods. I mean-

Lia SCANLAN [00:36:56] Sure, okay.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:36:58] we'll go down that road later-

Lia SCANLAN [00:36:58] And I'm happy to do that.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:36:58] ... but ... that is fantastic.

Lia SCANLAN [00:36:59] Okay. So, for our social media accounts, we only have Facebook and Twitter and that's a good thing. There's other platforms, TikTok, they don't serve a function in policing right now, as far as I can see. We have YouTube also, but it's evolved ... Facebook and Twitter evolve themselves. When we first had them, Twitter wasn't basically for news and Facebook wasn't basically for this, but they've evolved so that Facebook is more of a platform where you can write lots of things, put pictures, people comment, there's no shortage of characters, and it can be more of a public relations tool, like a traditional public relations tool. Whereas Twitter, there's very much an expectation with Twitter by any organization or corporation that exists in that platform, that it's ... it's breaking news, it's relevant, it's current, it's ... So, within our world, it's ... for us, it's news. For us, it's our way to tell our own story. That's what it evolved to for us. So, we have been for, I can't tell you how many years now, I'd have to ... but let's say eight or nine years, using Twitter as ... Twitter and Facebook as our primary means of communicating to the public. So, it allows us to not have to pitch a story to the media, hope that the facts get correct. What we do is we Tweet out ... so, let's say right now, so, there's the fire yesterday, six people are dead, like we do a news release on that, post the news release to our website, and as soon as it's posted, we

Tweet it out to drive people back to our pages with our factual information so that if you're sourcing the RCMP like ... or, we'll pull quotes out and use Twitter for that. So, we use Twitter as a tool to amplify whatever it is we're communicating, and every news outlet has followed us for as long as we've created the tool like, when we ... when we started using those tools, we sent out a news release. And it's just the way we've done business here for years. So, but Twitter on its own, separate to the RCMP, that's very much what it is. It's about news and informing yourselves on current ... and so, that's why Twitter over Facebook. And Twitter, because of the restriction of the characters in the ... in the platform itself, it allows media ... you get clipped like you, it allows the sound, but it ... you know what I mean? They can just take it versus like a Facebook post. However, Facebook does have followers also that don't use Twitter. So, we in this incident, you would have seen ... in other incidents we ... we replicate it, like we do it on Twitter first, but we've got a team. So, whatever we put on there, you mimic it on Facebook, but it goes on Twitter first. So, if you look at the ... that day at the sequence of events, that's exactly what we did. And ... and we advised people for information, follow our Twitter accounts because that's what we're doing. So ... so that's why Twitter. So within ... you have to remember that, like I'm in it, and it's an evolving type thing, so I'm not paying attention to what media is reporting or what News is saying, but, you know, my mom and him were there in the living room and every major news outlet was following our Twitter page and just retweeting, just showing, like what we were ... what we were Tweeting. So, it turned into yeah, exactly what he did like. So, I could go through the series of the Tweets, I don't know what's best way to go about this right now, so.

Krista SMITH [00:41:09] Can I ask one question?

Paul THOMPSON [00:41:10] Yeah. No, this is good.

Lia SCANLAN [00:41:12] Because I'm all over ... like, yeah.

Krista SMITH [00:41:12] No, it's ... that's how it always is, really, or it feels that way.

Lia SCANLAN [00:41:18] It does feel that way.

Krista SMITH [00:41:18] Yeah. So, I guess one thing we've wondered about is the ... the Twitter verse is not necessarily accessible to some people or a lot of people, potentially in rural communities or older people who may not, you know ... some older people love Facebook, but others don't. And so, I think I know the answer, but I want you to ... you to talk me through it, is ... and part of it hooks back to where we started this interview of what did it ... what was it like before Twitter? You know, like if this situation had been happening pre-2009, how would you have made sure people in rural communities with a radio and a couple channels knew to stay home and-

Lia SCANLAN [00:42:09] Right. So, it would be ... so we ... So, prior to Twitter, and it's what we still do today, so every time there's ... so, the fire yesterday, goes out in the news release system, goes on Facebook, goes on Twitter. So, it's we never dropped that old school off, although we kind of do it just to appease the media. So, the way it would have been done before is a news releases system, so it would have been faxed, that's ... so it was faxed.

Krista SMITH [00:42:38] That's cute.

Lia SCANLAN [00:42:38] Yeah. So, it went faxed to all the news outlets. So, when I came, that's what was happening. It was just like your news release would go in fax and appear in all these news outlets, who then had to type it and turn it around into a story. And only radio is really ... it would be any network or platform that had the ability to just stop what they were doing and report it. That's why a lot of the times if something was a real time, it might have ... it would have appeared on whatever was a, you know, live broad ... or constant News channel. But other than that, and it would have probably been on the radio. So-

Christopher LUSSOW [00:43:25] Like an intrusive broadcast, like, done on their own volition. So, like, whatever media outlet, they say radio would be the simplest rather than television for interjecting and say, "We're leaving our scheduled programing right now for this"-

Krista SMITH [00:43:39] I'm thinking back to when I'm a kid, you know, "We interrupt this program."

Lia SCANLAN [00:43:42] Yeah, it would have been like that. Now, I don't know, though, if it ... I don't know if I would use the word intrusive, like, I think it might have-

Christopher LUSSOW [00:43:51] Well, they call it an intrusive broadcast because you're ... you're intruding on somebody's broadcasting capability-

Lia SCANLAN [00:43:54] Oh, I see what you're saying.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:43:54] ... not intruding in your home but it's intruding on that-

Lia SCANLAN [00:43:58] Right. Whatever that program was, you got it.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:43:59] Right.

Lia SCANLAN [00:44:01] Yeah. So, yeah, if that was ... so, you know and I ... I can't ... I never had that experience, so, but that is how it would have been done. So, then when

we morphed away from fax machines, like we just sent out a news release to the media and just said we're not doing fax, like, that's just ridiculous. So, when email became like the accepted practice, we have a news ... we call it our news release system. Essentially, it's ... it's called RCMPNS; anyone can subscribe to it, and we've been using this for ... we're in 20 ... for probably 10 years, and it's got not just media. So, you as a citizen could ask to join. So, there's a lot of like mayors, councillors. So, you've got this distribution list that is maintained within our unit. It is ... it goes into a separate kind of email, so there's Lia Scanlan, I've got my own e-mail, but RCMPNS has its own email and we send the news releases out that way. So, we went away from faxes and then sent them so people would receive them electronically. So, prior to Twitter, Facebook, that's how they would receive them. So, we still do that. We still do all that, and we did it that day; we did it during this. But because we had so many hands on deck. But if there was just one person, me, that ... that would have fallen off, it's Twitter that I would have focused on. So, the people in rural Nova Scotia who don't follow Twitter and Facebook, the ... the TV or the radio and the TV and radio, all the News outlets follow our Twitter, so it's kind of like Twitter and Facebook are surplus to what already existed. It's the best way I can put it. And it allows people ... like I know post Codiac that those who were hiding in their homes, we were their lifeline because that ... that was a long period of time, and so, they took their direction from us like every 30 minutes. And a lot of the time and again, it was not ... that's how that ... it was a great ... we learned a lot and it's a great tool to use. So, yeah, that's ... that's it. And I mean, he just went on his rampage and we were on the phones with ... So, this was a team approach. So, it's myself, Regis, Jen Clark and Cindy Bayers, those four, it was us four that were doing it. So, you had Cindy MacKenzie didn't ... she ... she became engaged later, we didn't need that many people, so I asked Cindy McKenzie to go to work. I said, "Just you get ready, we're going to do this, you go to the office and because we're going to need someone starting in the office." And then I knew ... I mean, I didn't know how long this was going to go before, I didn't know, but Cindy MacKenzie went to the office. And my assistant Kayla, she was not engaged in ... in like, sending out Tweets or any of that type stuff. So, it was us four and it's a ... it's a tag team approach. So, for example, what I mean by that is like when Addy ... Archie had called ... So, when they ... whenever they receive the information, like, for example, that his PC was 22B11, the call number, Jen had already received a call from the Risk Manager or the CIC. Archie was the DPO of Northeast Nova, he's just making sure that ... that I was aware of that. We were already very well aware of that, like the CIC, they call us ... any ... any new information, immediately call us. So, Jen was already doing that image of the vehicle with the circle around the call number to Tweet that out. So, any information that we were given, we Tweeted out. And that's essentially what formed all of our information to the public.

Krista SMITH [00:48:07] So, I was trying to track kind of the timing of every ... of all of that. Just a second, let me check my notes. I think your notes ... your handwritten notes, it looks like you talked to Addy at 7:45 and then that was when you did the 8:02 Tweet

that said, "...remains on scene, active shooter situation. You may not see police, but they're ... we're ... we're with you."

Lia SCANLAN [00:48:39] Yeah.

Krista SMITH [00:48:41] And then I had understood that ... I guess this is what I want to get from you, is like before 8 a.m., did you ... did you know ... like when did you find out that Lisa Banfield was out of the woods and that he might very well have a mock PC?

Lia SCANLAN [00:49:05] Not before 8 a.m.

Krista SMITH [00:49:08] Not before 8 a.m.?

Lia SCANLAN [00:49:10] No. Not that Lisa Banfield. Yeah, I mean I-

Krista SMITH [00:49:14] So, yeah, you said 8:54-

Lia SCANLAN [00:49:16] Was the Tweet. So, that means that-

Krista SMITH [00:49:19] So, it wasn't that first phone call-

Lia SCANLAN [00:49:20] ... that I would have found out at like, 8:45 ... yeah, no.

Krista SMITH [00:49:21] Okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:49:23] Well, because they would have told me that ... like Addy's job is to get ... Addy's job, you know what I mean, he gets the members to go there. The members go there, they're gathering the information. So, when he has information back from the members, that's when I get notified. He's not calling me right away to say, you know, like that's a ... I don't need to know ... I need to know information that I can send out. So, when he called me, that's when he said, "Okay, we've ... members have information, families gathered a picture, I'm sending you the picture right now." So, that's when we had information that we could send out when ... as soon as he acquired the picture and the descriptors.

Krista SMITH [00:50:13] Okay. I'm just getting your notes real quick.

Lia SCANLAN [00:50:16] And Addy must have recorded that time and given it to you, because I don't have that time recorded in my book. I don't-

Krista SMITH [00:50:22] Oh yeah, I think I did get that from Addy's notes.

Lia SCANLAN [00:50:24] Yeah, that's good.

Krista SMITH [00:50:34] So, that was ... that was what I wanted to pin down is if ... is if ... how much of a lapse was there between kind of you knowing about the police car especially, and ... and when the ... the Tweet went out.

Lia SCANLAN [00:50:51] So, lapse in knowing about about the police car. So, the police car-

Krista SMITH [00:50:54] But it sounds like you got the photo of Gabriel Wortman and ... and then immediately turned it around.

Lia SCANLAN [00:51:02] Yes, yeah. So, photo ... so, whatever information that he had ... so I don't know how it went for him, like, I don't know how he acquired the information, but when he had information, and let's pretend there was no photo, but even if he just had the descriptor like that's ... the photo was just a bonus, really, to have it that quickly. So, when he had information that he could call solid that we're putting out, yeah. That's when I-

Krista SMITH [00:51:28] So, when ... when ... when you had your first conversations with Steve Halliday and Addy MacCallum, did they ... did they say the ... the suspect was Gabriel Wortman or did they-

Lia SCANLAN [00:51:44] No.

Krista SMITH [00:51:45] ... just say ... okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:51:45] No, not at all, no. I didn't ... no, because I remember, like, sitting there saying his name out loud, like just thinking, like oh, my God, like, when I saw this picture. And Steve Halliday, that definitely wasn't said either.

Krista SMITH [00:52:01] Okay. That's part of what's not clear, I think, for us is we know that ... that name and the dentist from Dartmouth, that was identified from like, the first 9-1-1 call, and over again. So, we've been trying to understand-

Lia SCANLAN [00:52:17] Yeah. So, that was not said to me.

Krista SMITH [00:52:18] ... how it filtered through.

Lia SCANLAN [00:52:21] Yeah. So, I can tell you that was not said to me. Steve Halliday mentioned that they were exploring a lot of different avenues. You know, I hate ... so he was you know, they mentioned a member that was apparently working.

So, that's ... yeah, so Dave Lilly, that's when I was like, "Oh, okay." So, that's ... Steve had said, "You know, we're exploring a lot of things right now, you know," like ... you know, I think he might have even said, "Fuck, we're even looking at Dave Lilly," and I was like, "Dave Lilly." So, I ... to be honest, I was like okay, it's...

Krista SMITH [00:53:01] Okay. That's awful.

Lia SCANLAN [00:53:01] But then he confirmed that Dave was accounted for or like had ... yeah, I don't know. But no, Gabriel Wortman, dentist, no. In fact, I probably didn't even know he was a dentist when I sent that picture, to be honest. I think that ... that I found that out ... we find that out by people. Like, so when you put something on Twitter, that's when people are like, "That's that asshole dentist from down the st-," like, literally, that's how ... and it's ... And so, my team is relaying that stuff to me, and that's why you'll notice in our Tweets there was a point in which clarity had to be provided. Like there was an old article being circulated and we had to say, "No, that's a 2013 article," because then it just people did start, you know, creating their own hash tags and everyone around the world starts following, like, misinformation. So, we were reminding people, like for accurate information, follow us, but.

Paul THOMPSON [00:54:01] Directing them back to the RCMP website?

Lia SCANLAN [00:54:02] Yeah, and we created yeah, Portapique RCMP NS, and I've got this. Do you guys have the ... or is it helpful to receive the ... the sequential order of the Tweets and the timings or anything? Have you guys ... given that?

Krista SMITH [00:54:18] I mean, we've ... we've-

Lia SCANLAN [00:54:20] Oh, you've got it all.

Krista SMITH [00:54:21] We've pieced it together. I never mind doing a double check.

Paul THOMPSON [00:54:25] Yeah, if you've got them all, yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:54:26] It's just not ... it's because it's not an easy ... like I had this done when it was over. That was the first thing I assigned the assistant to do. I said, "I want a timeline of everything." Because-

Krista SMITH [00:54:40] Yeah, that would be helpful.

Lia SCANLAN [00:54:41] Yeah, and I think ... so, it will help maybe when you see the timing to when you know what I mean, like because you would know from other

conversations when information was received. So, I can give you that. I wouldn't want to give you this copy just because I've got my own crap on it.

Paul THOMPSON [00:54:59] We can get that from you later.

Lia SCANLAN [00:55:00] Yeah, okay, yeah.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:55:00] Maybe when we do that, we'll send it through us, so we can get it through the document management-

Paul THOMPSON [00:55:01] Yes, sure.

Patricia MacPHEE [00:55:01] ... if it's not already-

Lia SCANLAN [00:55:02] Okay, yeah. And you'll also see on ... So, and it ... it's a lot. You'll see what we did on Twitter and then Facebook. So, what we did on Facebook is we just mirrored it.

Krista SMITH [00:55:17] That's going to be a great help, like a cross check for us.

Lia SCANLAN [00:55:20] Yeah. And I find if you're ... visually it helped me ... like, it helped me. When I received this, I was like, okay, and it'll be good because that is ... that's a timestamp really, just like a video.

Krista SMITH [00:55:30] Yeah, okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:55:38] And then so it went on until it was over, and when I say on, it was any information that ... that came to the CIC, so. Again, I'm not asking how they're getting the information, I frankly don't give a shit. I would put on ... in a situation like this, in our normal workday to day, you have a little bit more ... like the fire yesterday, the (inaudible) CS - Graphic Images or Potentially Harmful Information there's no threat to the public. It sounds crass, but it is what it is and you just put it out. So, you have time to like, fact check and all the stuff. In this situation, like I was even okay with, like errors. There was none of that. Like, all of that stuff went out the window. It was we ... we would read it out loud once to the person on the phone and that's it. It's like that's the last concern in something like this.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:56:34] It's not your responsibility to vet the information for authenticity-

Lia SCANLAN [00:56:38] No.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:56:38] ... or reliability.

Lia SCANLAN [00:56:40] Right.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:56:41] You're going to correctly put it out in-

Lia SCANLAN [00:56:43] What's told to me in something that they can digest.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:56:45] ... make sure it's like, grammatically correct, etc., so, it's easy to digest. It's within your number of caricatures or whatever you can put on that-

Lia SCANLAN [00:56:52] Caricatures, yeah.

Christopher LUSSOW [00:56:53] ... information and provide it succinctly to the public?

Lia SCANLAN [00:56:55] You got it. So, what I do want to say then, that it is likely, I'm not speaking on anyone's behalf, but it's likely ... so, because we work so closely with like the Addy's and the Steve Halliday's and anyone that we were engaged with, especially the Risk Managers also, they don't give a shit either, like they don't give us crap information. So, they would have made sure ... So, if you know, I can only assume when Addy's getting this information, he would have been like, "I want to be clear, this guy's got green eyes," like, we're sending this out, this is going. So, he would have taken that time, which saves us from having to do it. Like a day to day, we might do it, like we'd be like, "Okay, are you sure about this?" because we taught ... we deal with members that aren't as experienced as those guys. And then the shooter was ... the gunman was killed and the information like kind of underscores the point that you just said that, you know, we were told he was in custody. We didn't care. We were just told it was over, he's in custody. And that was the information they had at that moment. So, we put it out; there wasn't like waiting, let's confirm that he's dead, like, you know, because, you know, Lisa had availability to radio and all that stuff, but she had turned all that off. Like she's ... she's not a ... she's an on ... she's a police officer, but she's not on duty in that capacity. So, I ordered Lisa out of there. As soon as he resurfaced, I ordered it, like I said, "Get the fuck out of there," because when it was confirmed that he is dressed as a member, you're immediately concerned for blue on blue and ... or just we're in rural Nova Scotia, someone killing a police officer, so.

Krista SMITH [00:58:51] Where did Lisa go?

Lia SCANLAN [00:58:54] Back to her house ... well, she she came back ... or back to headquarters. I just ordered her ... so she was not doing any of the Tweets and stuff; she was driving. She could have come right into the office.

Krista SMITH [00:59:08] Yeah, it doesn't matter, I was just trying to ... just trying to picture it.

Paul THOMPSON [00:59:18] So, I guess ... so the balance of the morning then, how did your day look then, from there?

Lia SCANLAN [00:59:23] From there, well, I was finding out that Heidi was dead, so that was ... and I had also ... I thought Chad was dead, too. I knew that we had another injury, and I think it was first relayed to me, maybe I misheard, I don't know, but I just ... in my mind, Chad was dead, and Heidi was dead. So, it was ... once it was over, I asked the whole team to go in, I didn't say anything, I didn't want to say to them on the phone. So, I just said, "Go in, we're all going to the office," and I said, "You guys be prepared for a long haul." And I said, "So what I can tell you today is that ... and I don't ... didn't talk to the CO or any of them, I just said, "What I can tell you is that today we will be hosting a press conference. We will have my recommendation is the CO and CROPS Officer speaking to it." There's no other ... I just know how to do it. Like you have a member that's died; that's how it's going to go. So, everyone came into work. Cindy MacKenzie was already here, and everyone was here in short order, like 30, 45 minutes. And yeah, and then it just ... that was the beginning of like what was ... at work until like, January. Yeah, for me. So, when an incident ends, that's when the ... as if that wasn't heavy lift, the heavy lift for us starts after ... the after math, because and on something like this, when it was a, you know, protracted in the sense that it wasn't all in one house or a small area, it was an investigation that spanned a lot of area of northeastern Nova Scotia. So, and you had to ... at that time, I realized that internationally we were being like ... I realized the scope of it, yeah. And then as the days unfolded, it was just hundreds and hundreds of ... thousands, I'm not exaggerating if I say that, media calls from across the world and yeah. And things were pretty good, like the first press conference, I mean, Lee and Chris did the best that they could do. They got up and did what was required of them, and it wasn't easy for either one of them despite, you know, the criticism that they received for how things were delivered and the personal attacks on them. People were pretty decent, I think, like, publicly and just like politically. And then on the 9th ... or sorry, on the 21st, I forget, but whenever the Premier of this province started making comments, I think he changed the narrative. And then things got really muddy.

Paul THOMPSON [01:02:22] So, the period of time after April 18, let's say, to the three months, six months, you carried the same role?

Lia SCANLAN [01:02:27] Yes. Yeah, I didn't ... I'm currently off duty sick. I was ordered off work in January ... January 16 the CO ordered me off.

Paul THOMPSON [01:02:38] Well, we thank you for this today, it's important, so.

Lia SCANLAN [01:02:40] Sorry, I just ... [crying while speaking] I hate being off work, so it's tough. But again, it's ... it's you know, it speaks to the ... the ... like, I'm proud to say that I was ordered off because it speaks to the people I have around me. Like, I didn't see how bad I was. So, the management team and everyone's been phenomenal. It's been tough, yeah. But so, for me, you know, we did a ... we did a lot of ... I say a lot of press conferences; really, it should be called long press conferences. I don't recall. Like we did three, I believe, three, two-and-a-half-hour live press ... live to air press conferences. So, we did the one with Lee and the CROPS officer, that's just early days. I'm talking as it ... as it went ... as it went on when we were able to, you know, further the investigation and give further updates based on what we could say with an ongoing investigation. So, we did live press conferences that were coordinated around ... that was during the time when the Prime Minister would speak everyday at 12:00 or 11:00, I don't know, so we had to coordinate with that office to make sure that people would be paying attention. So, it was a lot ... like, that was a lot of ... that's heavy lift to do those live press conferences and get the information to a point where you could stand behind it. So, it was a lot of ... a lot of work for Darren Campbell and myself and my team and the entire team. Yeah, and you know, I ... yeah. And then ... and it was a lot of ... it turned into ... well, we all know what the public sentiment, like and I've ... I've sheltered myself from it since January, but it was bad. [pauses, crying] Yeah, it was just bad. I care a lot about the Force and the people I work with and to see the media spew the misinformation and amplify it, disgusted me, and it still does, yeah. It's at the centre of like what I feel like what a lot of the problems are right now. And you could get me in a room with the media and they would say, "There's a common belief, oh, you guys didn't say anything." Well, you show me where any other police agency ever that has had an ongoing investigation that has done six hours of live press. Showing, dia ... like, I even said to Darren ... I'm ... I'm a storyteller, like that's just what I am naturally, if you read the MacNeil report, it reads like a book for a reason. So, I said to Darren, "We have to tell this like a story to the whole world." Like, if you're in Japan, you don't know ... I don't even know what Portapique looks like. So, I think Darren did a bang-up job and I think we were as forthcoming as we could be, and it wasn't ... it was never enough, and the misinformation just grew. Every ... every piece of it grew its own legs and then the people like and just the lies. And then you have ... so, one thing I noticed significantly in this, and this didn't exist in Codiak, like I get it was totally different circumstances, but, even six years ago, there was way better ... there's more credibility in journalism. Like, you didn't have source ... like Paul Palango, how are we calling these people sources? You didn't have ... you wouldn't have a reporter just take someone who walked in off the street and say, "Well, I did ... I saw him in 2016 and I called the police." No, you didn't, no, you didn't. And they ... they would just ... that person would be on national news that night. So, there's just ... what turned into a shit show for us because you're then not responding to questions related to the investigation, you're responding to questions that are related to 85,000 stories out here that have no basis in fact, but I can't say ... I can't determine that. I can't say that's bullshit. So, every time we would get these questions,

I'm talking hundreds, hundreds upon hundreds a day where you're then filtering it through this whole team of people that are involved in the investigation. Like eventually we had to put a stop to it. It was ridiculous for ... well, first for wellbeing. We're a team of however many people I've got there and it was to no end. Didn't surge, it didn't even make a difference. Like, when I realized ... when I started to feel like [crying, speaking through the tears] work was meaningless, it was super tough. Darren Campbell does a press conference and you know, I didn't ... I didn't sleep, I would go home every night for three hours. And he does all this, and that night on the News, they're saying the complete opposite. It's really shitty, and it impacts all police officers. It's not about the RCMP, it's about police officers.

Paul THOMPSON [01:08:31] It's pretty vicious when they-

Lia SCANLAN [01:08:33] It's vicious, and you know, criticizing Heidi, like... And then ... and then unrealistic, like I'm disgusted by the media, like, I don't ... I haven't gone and it's just because I find it hard to deal with the subject. But I haven't gone on your website and I haven't looked at, you know, the scope, but I hope to God there's some accountability or something about the media, and how they revictimize the families. It's disgusting. They used the families; unlike I've ever seen it done. And I mean, I've dealt with a ton of murders, a ton of high profile, like this just happened to be a mass casualty; I've been involved in tons of high profile and this is ... this is disgusting, disheartening.

Paul THOMPSON [01:09:31] Just compared to those ones back that you can remember, where do you think the disinformation comes from? Is it the social media? Was it the old traditional media releases?

Lia SCANLAN [01:09:44] One hundred percent.

Paul THOMPSON [01:09:45] Yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [01:09:46] Yeah, one hundred percent because everyone's got a platform. So, Paul Palango, he's an asshole who's always been a pain in my side. Back in 2010, this guy, just as an author, wants to sell books. Then it was about he was always trying to out our undercovers like Hell's Angels, like he was a thorn in my side. But nobody knew who Paul Palango was. And I remember one day he went on the radio show like Q104 radio show, and he's doing like something, and I thought, thank God nobody listens to the Q. Well, now this asshole has his own ... Well, a) the media is sourcing him as a subject matter expert, which blows my mind, they're sourcing Paul Palango. And this is just one individual that I just happen to have a ... I can't stand, but there's ... I could go on. Like Steve knows nothing about policing, he could be a subject matter expert, like that's what I'm talking about. So, it's the misinformation that then gets

amplified by the lack of journalism. And I get it in fairness to journalists, their newsrooms have become ... I don't care about what the problem is, is informed ... it informed people very incorrectly. And like, I could accept the public, like I could even accept because we live in a time that it's just how it is right now, like whether you're policing or whatnot. But I couldn't accept, and what I still can't accept, is the victims' families that they were the ... they ... they're relentless, like calling them. I mean, you could speak to them to find that out, but using them to their own gain and the families not even really being aware. Some of them were aware, some of them weren't, and some of it's mutually beneficial, I'll use you for this and you use me. But it's ... and then our ... our people, like our people, like they're the ones that you know, have to deal with it. Like there's going ... you know, you know there's going to be ... like this has impacted this Force and Nova Scotia for so ... this is not going away anytime soon and it's ... I don't think I can ever work in that role again because of the media, the thought of it disgusts me. I just feel like dirty, is the best way to put it. And that's shitty because whether ... whether the ... like I'm super proud of what was done that day, I'm very proud of ... like I think that, I'll just speak to, like, what we did, if this didn't go publicly, you know, or if it didn't go kind of sideways publicly and like the public sentiment or turn so political, I would have been being called from all over the place to do pre ... just like the Boston Marathon, and Codiak, doing presentations on how you do this and how it's done right, because that was done right. That's just my actions. But it's almost like because of the narrative publicly and maybe, you know, couple that with policing in general and other things that are taking place socially, it was like acceptable, it became like an acceptable thing just to shit on us, and it is gross. And I don't recall ever in the 12, 11, however many years I've been doing this, 13, that you had a Minister of Justice provincially, and the Premier, that spoke out publicly against their police. Yes, out West, that's the thing, in BC they do it, but it's pretty, pretty bad. And so, I one hundred percent percent think that the narrative became skewed as soon as the Premier brought up an Alert Ready and was misinformed, and it kept going down south, down that track, so.

Paul THOMPSON [01:13:53] Were things handled ... when you say things were different in Codiak, was the media strategy more contained, would you say then? Like you said things were different and when you compare-

Lia SCANLAN [01:14:06] It was the circumstance. There was no ... it was the ... it was the sympathy. It was ... it was like the dead were police, you know what I mean? There was no public outrage because of the innocent victims. So, there was a lot ... it was a different circumstance all together. So, it wasn't ... and no one was shot ... the whole thing, the incident was so different. Yeah, that's what I meant by that.

Paul THOMPSON [01:14:33] Okay.

Lia SCANLAN [01:14:36] But ... go ahead.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:14:37] Sorry. Do you think this ... and one of the things that we touched on in some of the other interviews with COVID implications on the relaying of information and people possibly being overloaded with information or struggling with, you know, not getting information based on COVID. There are so many competing things here that ... that may have somehow affected the whole-

Lia SCANLAN [01:15:06] Do you mean like post incident?

Christopher LUSSOW [01:15:09] Sorry. No, like with everything going on with COVID and then we have this occurring, does that ... do you think that may have driven some of the-

Lia SCANLAN [01:15:20] I think people had a lot more time on their hands, that's what I think one hundred percent.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:15:24] Exactly, yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [01:15:24] And I think that now more than ever, you know, we can just turn on the TV, you can take football, you can take anything, hockey anything, and everyone ... this ... we have always in policing have said, "Oh, the armchair quarterbacks." But now everyone it's like the word trolls and experts, everyone thinks that they ... like this cancel culture, like we're also dealing with that. Put it all together and it's a perfect storm, that it's a ... it's a battle you can't really fight. No one can really win it. It's just going to have to take care of itself. But that's why I'm ... I hope ... So, my biggest concern with the aftermath of this incident is that there's two things that really concern me. Public expectations, like the public has to understand the way that this works. And what I mean by that is, let's just imagine that I fucked up that day and my Tweets didn't ... let's just pretend the computer broke down and like, my computer didn't work. That's how it ... that's how it goes, like there's no ... there's no Situation Room, we're not ... we're not ... we're not a human being attached to the police officer in the field that's Tweeting live from the field, like it just doesn't work like that. And so, the public's expectations are so skewed right now as a result of a lot of the post-Portapique commentary and the whole conversation around Alert Ready and just misinformation that I ... I feel that there's a ... there's a problem with the public, the ... the public doesn't know what real ... reality is anymore in terms of communicating. This is how it's done. There's no other way to do it that anyone's invented yet. Like, I don't know what other way you're going to get information. Like, I don't think you I can't teleport it; like, I just don't-

Christopher LUSSOW [01:17:25] So, you're thinking the public's expectations-

Lia SCANLAN [01:17:30] Yeah.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:17:31] ... are unrealistic and not understanding the platforms?

Lia SCANLAN [01:17:31] You got it, a hundred percent. So, you can say ... you know what I mean, so that wasn't an issue in Codiak, right. It was like, oh my God, this is wonderful. Like the News outlets, they ... they loved it. Like you're getting it, it's like streaming to them. And so, this was no different. It's just the Premier brought up Already Ready, and then it changed the narrative. So, that I'm concerned about. And then the other thing I'm concerned about is that other police agencies in North America at this point, due to the scope of this, are going to think that there's a different way to do it. Like, it would be really shitty if anywhere in this country there is a critical incident that involved an active shooter and the police agency didn't take to Twitter because they're so concerned with fucking it up because of the public expectation, that's a problem. So, yeah, those two things concern me.

Paul THOMPSON [01:18:30] They're big concerns, or I know, from my experience-

Lia SCANLAN [01:18:35] Excuse my language, it's just how I talk.

Paul THOMPSON [01:18:36] That's fine, and that's what we're here for. We're here to get your information and move the information forward so the Commissioners can make their recommendations collectively with all the information that we're gathering over the tiers. So, we ... we really appreciate concerns from your point of view. You had a very important role that day and you consumed a lot of information in a short period of time. And it's information overload, is to get out a lot of information in a short period of time.

Lia SCANLAN [01:19:04] Yeah, and my team did awesome, they did. Yeah, they did excellent.

Paul THOMPSON [01:19:12] Yeah. So, you ... you said you could write a book on it and the way you did things that day, very impressive. Would you change anything, anything, or you would add anything to your team or assets you would ... to move that information out any differently ... any differently?

Lia SCANLAN [01:19:28] No, definitely not. So, I wouldn't change a thing, not at all. I thought about it a lot, like I thought, is there anything that ... you know, because it's like postmortem you're looking at, you know, after action, what ... what would we do differently? So, I wouldn't do anything differently. The only thing I created was a critical incident checklist so that ... I ... I'm one person, but if Lia Scanlan gets hit by a bus tomorrow, I don't know that you know, I ... I can ... I keep my cool and I believe in being a leader and keeping your team calm, and so, we just took exactly what we did that day and put it ... When I say a checklist, it's literally just we took what we did and put it on

paper so that everyone can have a copy and hard ... like, electronically on their desktop. Or, like I'm a paper person, so I told people, like to put it in your laptop bag, too. But-

Paul THOMPSON [01:20:25] That would be to the strategic communications team?

Lia SCANLAN [01:20:30] Strategic Communications Unit, yeah. And so, and just for you know, providing it to any other division or police agency that wants to know, because a lot of people want to know, like, how did you do that that day? Because of the inquiry, it's been different this time compared to Codiak. So, because of the inquiry, it's kind of like no one's asking us for ... they know that we're not going to be doing presentations or going to conferences. And COVID was happening, so it's been very different in that sense. But I fully anticipate that-

Paul THOMPSON [01:21:01] That this will be adopted?

Lia SCANLAN [01:21:02] Yeah, a hundred percent, or other police agencies ... like we're really ... it's a small community, like policing comms, and I've been doing it for a long time. And so, you know, after the Boston Marathon bombing, like they, for example, their comms people would just do like a free "Tune into this and see how it's done." So, I ... I did, and I would ... I would likely ... I probably ... I don't know if I will on this, like, I don't know. I can't picture being there yet, but I don't feel like crying in front of a bunch of people I don't know, but yeah. Yeah, so, no, there's nothing I would do differently, there really isn't; there's nothing I would do differently, no.

Paul THOMPSON [01:21:45] How did you deal with your team and all ... consuming this dramatic information, was there anything that you did or somebody did amongst the team to deal with taking in this information about the deaths and the fires?

Lia SCANLAN [01:21:58] Yeah, I mean, I ... I definitely ... I protect people from what they need to know to do their job to the degree that I could. So, after the 21st, I made our office like a no news zone. I know that sounds crazy, but I had to do that when it changed. We got a TV on our wall in there and I wouldn't allow the TV on unless it was ... well, unless it was on something that was like either music or ... no news was allowed to enter our area because it was too negative. And well, I just changed how I did business. Like, this became everything, there was no day-to-day policing anymore, so it was just coming in early every morning and I'd gather the whole team together, and ... one thing I ... I would typically start by telling a story and just, yeah, I just changed the whole vibe, like I put plants in the office, like in the very early days to try to make it ... because I knew we were going to be here for a long time. And so, and I made it ... I called it a safe zone, like where you could lose your shit at any point or on your desk. My ... my team already knows how I operate, open door. So, it was just giving everyone the space to just be. And I'm not someone who ... they give it their all, so, if

you need to leave, you leave; if you ... But it's pretty hard to do much more than that because the information is what it is. But I didn't invite ... I don't vent down; I only vent up. So, I have my people, and I didn't involve them in, you know, some of the bullshit that I was dealing with, with the Province of Nova Scotia or Ottawa. So, I ... they don't need to know, I need them to stay focused on the things that they do, yeah.

Paul THOMPSON [01:23:58] What other support then, would they have ... your members have in addition to the way you ... in post care?

Lia SCANLAN [01:24:03] Oh, yeah, there's tons ... like this division is ... I don't know if it's like this in every division, but we're ... I feel like phenomenal support here. And I would tell you if I didn't think it. Like, it is just ... they had from the very early days ... like I was the one writing the messages. So, although I have a team, not everyone's ... So, I would write the CO's messages, and very early on it was incorporated as kind of like a boilerplate, like the health services. And as it evolved, like all of the numbers, like Peer to Peer and all of the places you could reach into, it was abundant. And then when the magnitude of this was more understood and health services would likely speak to that and they were doing their thing, things were created and then that would add into any messaging. So, all of that was available to my team. And we talked about it every day. Like, we talked about, you know, mental health every day. And for me, it's just ... it's kind of more of how I do business all of the time because, yes, this was a lot and we were exhausted, but so is every day, like every day is a lot. Like so, those fires yesterday, that's awful, that's horrible. Like that could be worse than, for some of them, than this mass shooting. And I didn't keep them here, I stayed, like it was me and Darren Campbell. Like, I very much tried to maintain people, like out the door at 5, 5:30. When a press conference is over at 5:30, everyone was leaving. Like I would stay 'til like 10, 11 and come back extremely early. But they ... they all showed up every day and did what they had to do and very much did it ... like they did it for Heidi, they did it for like Chad. Chad was on call that weekend for our unit, like he ... he was a ... he always acted for our unit. So, when I said there was an acting public information officer, Chad was on call like, the coming weekend and Heidi often was on call; like, Heidi was a friend of mine. She was often on call, so she was in this building a lot. So, the supports were ... You know, and then we did the critical incident debrief with the team, that was really helpful. And we're ... at the time, we were all females, which is a bit unique. And what I mean by that is I just feel that there was a little bit more comfort amongst ... everyone was speaking, like being as emotional. I managed when there's both or ... it ... it just worked, like I can't tell you. And then I hung up prints, like that was a big thing for me. On day one, I started a list of thank you's and I remember I'm like, fucking people, why do you give two shits about that? But I ... I said, "I want you to start keeping a list of everyone that we have to thank," because people step up and do wonderful things, whether it's ... I know that I wanted to honour the victims. So, MacFarland's came here and gave us, you know ... so, we had all the victims' photos

downstairs with candles, and so, you know, they didn't charge me for that. I took the invoice in ... So, thanking people. So, I ordered prints from someone out West and I ordered like 70 of them just with my own money and gave them out as thank you's to people. But there was ... it was the thank you from the RCMP, it was and part of it was, you know, trying to make people still like us, yeah. I felt ... I felt like I had the Force's reputation on my shoulders, that's what I felt like. And when you truly know that you didn't, you as the collective, didn't do anything wrong, and one of your friends died, it's a tough pill to swallow. Like, I always said ... I said to the psychologist many times, like it would have been ... I actually think it'd be easier if it was a fuck up because then you would go with something ... Like, I know there's always learnings, but it would just make it an easier pill to swallow. But it feels very ... it's a very helpless feeling, yeah. So, supports, you know ... I had a psychologist call me randomly one day. I thought, "Why are you calling me?" I didn't reach in, like I didn't ... you know, and she was calling from the West, the four psychologists, so someone ... that's how many people they're looking after. People ... someone must have said, "Lia needs to talk to someone." I wasn't ready to receive it. So, I just ... because she said, "What do you define as success, like what ... like when is the battle over?" I couldn't answer it. And then I ... I ... yeah, I just ... and I stopped caring about anything other than work, yeah. And I have a ... at the time, I had a one-and-a-half-year-old and I guess ... and a five-year-old at the time; it was tough.

Paul THOMPSON [01:29:24] There's no question there, you're carrying a lot of information, yeah. You did a good job.

Lia SCANLAN [01:29:28] Yeah, thank you, but the support is phenomenal. I see a psychologist once a week and I have been since January, all taken care of by the RCMP. And it's not ... it's like the easiest, it's really great. And people, Peer to Peer, like I had people reaching me constantly and, you know, just on the management team alone, I had five separate management people come to me and say, you know ... they're ... I'm often the only civilian in a management structure and I have been for a number of years, and there are police officers who have had different experiences, so they would identify to me like, like, "Do you know what, you know, impact is and what that looks like because you're starting to display...". So, eventually when I chose to continue to ignore it, they go to the CO and she orders me off, thankfully. Like, that's exactly ... there's tons of support.

Paul THOMPSON [01:30:26] That's good to hear.

Lia SCANLAN [01:30:27] Yeah, yeah.

Paul THOMPSON [01:30:32] Do you want to ask some specific questions about some material you have there, Chris? Do you need a break right now?

Lia SCANLAN [01:30:43] Mm-mm, unless anyone else does.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:30:45] Unless you have some questions in regard to that, I just I have a couple technicality, well, sort of ... sort of structurally as well. So, Strat Comm, your Strategic Communications, how does that get, I'll use the term stood up in regards to like the ... the CIC package? Like we know like the Risk Manager so, phones say Superintendent Campbell and says, "We need the packages," that's being called, is Strat Comms part of that package or-

Lia SCANLAN [01:31:17] Yeah. So, Lisa, the call to Lisa, that's how that got stood up. So, how it currently looks today, that's it ... that's how it goes. Not ... So, in every critical incident, it doesn't ... the whole package doesn't roll out. So, I'm typically getting a phone call from the ground. So, there was ... post Portapique, there was a number of different incidents, and I get a phone call right from the ground. So, when there's a critical incident or that's the whole package rolled out, I couldn't tell you exactly, but it's a phone call to ... I don't know if it went to the Risk Manager, but it's a phone call to Comms. In the critical incident checklist, I have at the very first thing, make Director of Communications or delegate aware, so, whoever was to receive that call. But the Director should yeah, be called.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:32:22] I was just wondering like, if it is part of the package, so, if somebody says, "We need the package," so you're going to send ERT or Marine or whoever, that ... that part of their protocol that we have to call Strategic Communications?

Lia SCANLAN [01:32:36] It is, it is ... it is a hundred percent part of the protocol, yeah. And so, like the fishing dispute, like, yeah, one hundred percent.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:32:47] And in the use of Twitter for the Tweets, I guess that's why it has a bird on there, because a bird told me.

Lia SCANLAN [01:32:56] Yeah.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:32:59] Using that as a two-way communication, so, you get all the replies to those Tweets. So, is somebody sort of gleaning through those replies to see if there's anything, you know, tangible or of value that you can send back to the investigators?

Lia SCANLAN [01:33:13] To the ... no. You can't ... to the best of your ability, but we're talking thousands. So, to the best of your ability. But that function, actually, that would be ... somebody using an Amber Alert is an example for that. So, in an Amber Alert situation ... we have it set up, we haven't had one here, but in an Amber Alert situation,

we have it set up that when we do an Amber Alert on Twitter, we're getting some of the major crime like a police officer, so ... because a civilian can't be doing that. We can to the extent that we can't glean it, we can pass it forward. So, Regis and other people are monitoring it, but I'm not ... I wasn't doing that. But people were ... people were looking at it to the best that they could. So, if Regis saw that he ... someone would write, "Oh, he's here," by that time, he was already somewhere else. So, yes and no. Not in the ... not in the really formal way that you might be thinking. But there are circumstances where, yes, that would be the case. But in an incident like this, no. It'd be like me ... because a crucial error I could have made is sending people into work that day. So ... so, had you sent people into work, you know, you might then call an officer, "We're going to," ... I could have called Darren Campbell and say, "We need some officers to come down to our unit and monitor," you know, but this incident didn't afford that. So, no. And I don't think that there's the volume ... I don't even know that there would be a tool created even if it was humans. I just don't think that that's ... yeah. But you do get direct messages. So, both platforms will offer direct messages. So, oftentimes it's more often the case because most people don't want to be involved in like, criminal anything, so ... or like ratting people or saying ... being involved at all. So, you'll often get a direct message. Direct messages, yeah, any information we ever get in a direct message, go right to the people that need it. So, I can't speak to if Regis got direct messages that she sent to Addie. I don't believe so, it was too quick. But if it was Codiak, yes, we would have got them, if it was prolonged.

Paul THOMPSON [01:36:04] I don't ... you don't want to talk about that whiteboard still?

Christopher LUSSOW [01:36:09] No.

Paul THOMPSON [01:36:14] No, okay. Well, I think you did a hell of a job.

Lia SCANLAN [01:36:19] Oh, thanks. I haven't talked about it much.

Paul THOMPSON [01:36:22] Yeah, good for you. You gave us a lot of information. At the end of the day, as I said a few minutes ago, it's about making the situation better, God forbid it ever happened in the future.

Lia SCANLAN [01:36:38] Yeah, I know.

Paul THOMPSON [01:36:39] So, everybody that's getting this information, it's for the greater good.

Lia SCANLAN [01:36:41] Absolutely, yeah.

Paul THOMPSON [01:36:41] And I know you have some information there, we'll ... we'll get through it in due process, but, you know, you have our information. If there's anything that we may not have thought about or asked you, you know, the sensitive questions, and we're taking all this information in, in a short period of time, you know, feel free to move the information forward, if there's just something we've just plain forgotten.

Lia SCANLAN [01:37:05] Sure, and likewise, when you receive the Tweets there, the sequential, you might have questions, I'm ... although I may not seem like it, I'm totally okay with talking about this. Like, I feel a sense of duty to do this.

Paul THOMPSON [01:37:16] Well, thank you. We thank you, thank you all. You had a good team that day.

Lia SCANLAN [01:37:21] Yeah, I know, I agree, the best. So, thank you.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:37:26] I can speak to that, when you mentioned that, you know, your ... your team, they're ... they're coming in because they're set to do that, I think they're also coming in, you know, because of you, right, because they ... you said they wanted to help or whatever like that. They came in because they had you as their leader.

Lia SCANLAN [01:37:44] Yeah, thank you.

Christopher LUSSOW [01:37:44] Clearly, clearly.

Lia SCANLAN [01:37:44] That means a ton.

Paul THOMPSON [01:37:48] Yeah. From what you described, you know, we've all had leaders and your leadership is way above. Good for you.

Lia SCANLAN [01:37:57] Yeah. I learned from some really good people, yeah, I definitely have. Yeah, you learn what to do and what not to do, right?

Paul THOMPSON [01:38:04] Yeah. And I'll just turn my recorder off there unless anyone has any questions.