



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Saskatchewan RCMP

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Saskatchewan RCMP response to the Alberta RCMP's Office of Investigative Standards and Practices review of the James Smith Cree Nation/Weldon mass casualty homicides

Content warning

This page includes details regarding the mass casualty homicides that occurred at James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon, Saskatchewan, on September 4, 2022. The content may be disturbing to some readers. Discretion is advised.

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Foreword

Tragedies, such as the events that took place on James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon in September 2022, challenge a police agency's capabilities. It is easy to assume that the rest of the world shut down during this tragic time, but the reality is that all communities across the province continued to require the policing services that help keep them safe. 911 calls did not stop, domestic violence continued and prolific offenders did not take a break from their blatant disregard for community safety. The Saskatchewan Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) continued to provide a world-class policing service while conducting one of the largest manhunts in Canadian history. This could not have been done without the dedication of our staff along with support from policing partners and other RCMP divisions across Canada. Internal reviews are essential to learning from our response to major events as well as understanding where we excelled and where there is room for improvement in our actions. This is why the Saskatchewan RCMP carefully reviewed and responded to each of the recommendations from this review in the following pages.

While I am extremely proud of our response and ability to adapt to such a tragic and complex situation, I am committed to continuous improvement. I greatly welcome the opportunity to learn from the perspectives and recommendations of the Alberta RCMP's Office of Investigative Standards and Practices and the entire Review Team.

Chief Superintendent Ted Munro
Criminal Operations Officer
Saskatchewan RCMP

Saskatchewan RCMP response to the recommendations

Initial response

Recommendation 1.1

Consider Divisional and / or National level policy direction and/or training around the issue of one or two-person patrol vehicle responses. Include a discussion of the risks relating to the separation of resources, when there are only two members to respond. Policy and/or training should not be prescriptive, but rather framed in a way that can assist members to best consider the risks and make the most effective decisions accordingly.

Since the mass casualty homicides on James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon, the Saskatchewan RCMP has created a divisional policy that requires each Commander or Supervisor within their respective detachment to conduct a risk assessment on whether two-person or one-person patrol vehicles are viable for each shift. The risk assessment is based on a variety of factors, including: the number of members working, geographical size of the detachment area, number of police vehicles available, number of members working in the neighbouring detachment who can assist, current calls for service and the experience of each police officer working. This policy was communicated to Saskatchewan RCMP officers by Criminal Operations in January 2024.

Recommendation 1.2

The Detachment Commander should encourage other members to attend the James Smith Cree Nation (JSCN), whether on patrol or for

events in order to create relationships with the community.

Community engagement and collaboration are amongst the highest priorities of the Saskatchewan RCMP. All detachments in the province are required to meet with elected community leaders within their respective detachment boundaries on an annual basis to determine the policing priorities and report on results that are responsive to the community's concerns. The Detachment Action Plan (DAP) is a divisional tool utilized by the Saskatchewan RCMP to capture detachment priorities and report on efforts to accomplish them.

The Melfort Detachment polices an area that covers approximately 6,216 square kilometres with a population of about 18,000.

The following is located within the area:

- 8 towns and villages
- 1 city
- 11 rural municipalities
- 1 First nation community

As a result of consultation with all communities within the Melfort Detachment policing area, the priorities for the 2023/2024 year were as follows:

1. Community concerns and priorities

(a) Traffic

Each individual community has expressed concerns about the use of motor vehicles and ATVs within the communities, including alcohol and drug impairment of drivers.

(b) Profilic offenders

Community leaders and members are concerned about offenders who have been released and are on court-imposed conditions, living within their communities.

(c) Property Crime and Drug Trade

All communities expressed concern about the drug trade in their communities, as well as the link between drug use and property crime that is being committed to fuel drug purchases.

(d) Police/Community Relations

All communities want pro-active patrols and police involvement in their communities as this fosters good police and community relations.

2. Detachment Initiatives

Initiatives the Melfort Detachment has undertaken to directly address the concerns of the community/community leadership include:

(a) Traffic

The Detachment Commander ensures that detachment members devote time to traffic enforcement with a focus on impaired driving investigations. A traffic unit is attached to the detachment, which results in a supplemental traffic enforcement within the detachment area. On April 1, 2024, the Saskatchewan RCMP Traffic Unit implemented mandatory alcohol screenings on all routine traffic stops across the province.

(b) Profilic offenders

The detachment has a member dedicated to monitoring offenders who are on release conditions or on warrant status. All members conduct conditions checks and make attempts to execute arrest warrants.

(c) Property Crime and Drug Trade

Detachment members continue to investigate all property crime to the fullest extent, based on evidence availability. Members increased proactive patrols with a focus on remote, rural areas. The Detachment

Commander engaged with the elected leadership to explain the process of how the police conduct drug investigations and expressed the importance of public and community cooperation to assist the police in accessing information and gathering evidence to support investigations.

(d) Police/Community Relations

- Community relationships are an essential component of Melfort's Detachment Action Plan (DAP), specifically for JSCN reconciliation efforts.
- Detachment members have a good working relationship with the security personnel on JSCN. The Detachment Commander has a strong relationship with the Chiefs and JSCN Justice portfolio holder, which fosters ongoing and open communication and partnerships.
- Members of the detachment have attended multiple cultural events held on JSCN.
- Members of the detachment make periodic drop-in visits at the local schools to check with the staff as to any immediate needs and to engage with youth.
- Detachment members are assigned to schools and are expected to visit the schools at least once per month to: engage with the principal and staff; provide presentations upon request; assist with lock down practices; and respond to the needs of the school
- Members of the detachment attend events relating to sports, special days such as Remembrance Day services, among others, held in all of the communities within their detachment area.

3. Challenges

While the Detachment makes its best efforts to engage with the communities they serve, there are challenges that may, at times, impede those efforts.

- The detachment complement is comprised of one Detachment Commander, two Supervisors and 13 Constables, for a total of 16 members.

- Court is held four days per week and one Constable is assigned full-time to this task.
- The detachment has not always been able to commit to having a member attend an event due to operational needs and member availability.
- The detachment processes approximately 500 prisoners per year. There is a significant amount of work associated with ensuring the safety and constitutional rights of prisoners, including associated court responsibilities and requirements.

Melfort Detachment members do their best to overcome these challenges by remaining flexible and making every effort to meet the needs of all the communities they serve, such as conducting regular patrols and visits to JSCN

The Melfort Detachment priorities for the 2024/25 year are currently in development and will be determined based on continued community consultation.

Command Structure

Recommendation 2.1

Consider splitting mobile command post (CP) resources to have equipment available for deployment in a more northern location.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has three mobile command posts along with one trailer-style command post. In December 2023, the division relocated one of the mobile command posts to be stored, maintained and managed from a facility in Prince Albert. This provides a more rapid and

efficient deployment in the northern part of the province. The other two mobile command posts will remain in Regina and will continue to be deployed as required.

Recommendation 2.2

On large scale incidents it is critical that the Critical Incident Commander (CIC) is directly embedded in the Incident Command Post (ICP) or linked in via technology to be sure there is full situational awareness with all commanders.

National Critical Incident Command policy, contained in the RCMP Tactical Operation Manual, indicates that a Critical Incident Commander (CIC) will be responsible for: assessing the situation; requesting required resources; assuming overall command; and, unless exigent circumstances exist, attending the scene.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation and supports the critical nature of having the CIC linked directly to the Incident Command Post (ICP). Full situational awareness of the incident is critical to quickly making informed decisions. Although there will always be a requirement to have a CIC at or near the scene of a critical incident, increased situational awareness of all aspects of an incident can be achieved via technological enhancements within the Divisional Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) or the ICP.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has installed and implemented technology solutions which provide the ability to livestream video and audio to the CIC from the DEOC or the ICP. The Saskatchewan RCMP is working on implementing situational awareness software, which can stream live data updates to multiple locations. This technology is anticipated to be

installed and operational by fall 2024. If the CIC cannot be fully embedded within the ICP, this technology will be utilized to enhance the full situational awareness of the CIC.

Recommendation 2.3

Physical relocation of the ICP to a location closer to future events of this scale should be considered as a measure to alleviate some of the communication gaps experienced. Alternatively, should it be decided by command that the ICP should be located in the DEOC, provide a clear announcement advising of that designation.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation and has utilized it to contribute to the development of a national RCMP *"Playbook on Managing a Critical or Mass Casualty Incident"* on managing a critical incident or mass casualty event.

This playbook identifies best practices as they relate to Incident Command Post (ICP) location and considerations pertaining to real time effective communications. The Saskatchewan RCMP will be utilizing this playbook to guide future placement of the ICP.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has also increased technological capacity to increase real time communication between the Divisional Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) and the ICP when it is not feasible to locate the ICP within the DEOC. In either situation, a clear announcement informing all responding members and employees will be made to advise of the designated location of the ICP.

Recommendation 2.4

Consider designing a 'crimes in action' protocol for the Division that includes organizational chart templates for roles necessary to fill, should an event of this magnitude transpire again. This would promote an organizational structure to be present at the onset of the event. Within this structure, roles and appropriate reporting lines between the DEOC, CIC, Major Crimes Unit (MCU), etc. can be outlined.

In response to the mass casualty homicides, the Saskatchewan RCMP, utilizing the new Saskatchewan Enforcement Response Team (SERT) and the Canadian Intelligence Service of Saskatchewan (CISS), has developed new processes to enhance our Crimes in Action Response framework. This new framework is interoperable with the Gold, Silver, Bronze Command Structure methodology. Specifically, SERT will resource two new operations groups that will participate in the response framework during a critical or mass casualty event. These new operations groups are named "SERT Apprehension" and "RTIIC" (Real Time Intelligence and Information Centre). These new groups will address many of the issues identified post-review of this mass casualty event, as well as best practices in use in other RCMP Divisions, by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and by the London Metropolitan Police. Both SERT Apprehension and RTIIC will fall into the Bronze command level of a major incident, similar to the Major Crimes Unit (MCU), the Divisional Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) and other investigative and tactical units.

The RTIIC is a concept in use by police in the United Kingdom, FBI and the RCMP in British Columbia. RTIIC will use intelligence-trained members and analysts to provide a structured intelligence response to Gold, Silver and Bronze Commanders during an incident. The RTIIC will integrate our policing partners and their intelligence employees, in an

attempt to get the most recent assessed and accurate information to Commanders. The RTIIC will also have a component that works closely with the Division Operational Communication Centre (OCC) to triage and evaluate information incoming from the public, in order to assess that information and provide that information to the command structure. SERT and CISS have approximately 14 intelligence analysts and numerous other intelligence-trained members and employees who can pivot to RTIIC full-time when needed.

SERT Apprehension will be comprised of several teams of investigators whose focus will be to locate and contain the subject of an investigation. Approximately 50 members can immediately be deployed from SERT to accomplish this task under direction from Silver Command. In addition, SERT teams have RCMP Police Dog Services (PDS) and Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) embedded in their teams and are well-versed in the use of electronic tracking devices and associated judicial authorizations. This approach will allow detachments to continue with local policing priorities, allow the MCU to focus on the homicide investigation and allow Critical Incident Command (CIC) to focus on tactics for arrest. SERT Apprehension and the CIC will have close communications to determine the exact nature of the arrest once the subject is located and contained.

The Officer-In-Charge (OIC) of SERT is currently working with Saskatchewan RCMP Criminal Operations (CROPS) to have this initiative reviewed and introduced into policy by fall, 2024. Once approved, it will be incorporated into the *"Playbook on Managing a Critical or Mass Casualty Incident"* for the Saskatchewan RCMP.

Recommendation 2.5

Commit to and implement a major event command system for the division. Liaise with counterparts in other divisions to explore their standardized systems. Explore and support appropriate training at all levels of membership. Include National Operational Readiness and Response unit to ensure the greatest consistency around implementation.

Since the mass casualty homicides occurred, the Saskatchewan RCMP has implemented the Gold, Silver, Bronze Command Structure, which is internationally recognized for managing major large-scale critical incidents.

The Saskatchewan RCMP hosted Gold, Silver, Bronze Command Structure training with a focus on critical event strategic planning in February and March 2024. This training was mandatory for all Saskatchewan RCMP commissioned senior officers and, going forward, all new Saskatchewan RCMP commissioned officers and senior non-commissioned officers will receive the training.

Officers from Alberta and Manitoba RCMP, along with officers from multiple municipal policing partner agencies, were trained alongside Saskatchewan RCMP officers to enhance their ability to operate together during large scale incidents. National RCMP Headquarters representatives and Depot Division representatives from Learning and Development were in attendance as observers.

Recommendation 2.6

Consider options to modernizing the DEOC. Examine feasibility of re-organizing or re-locating the DEOC, including investment in technology and infrastructure.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has initiated a modernization project for the Divisional Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) located within the Saskatchewan RCMP Headquarters building. DEOC capacity will be increased with efficiencies put in place to maximize DEOC oversight.

Additionally, investments in technology, including upgraded Wi-Fi, cellular phone and police radio capacity, have now been installed in the DEOC. Further technology will be implemented and installed into the DEOC, which will increase the ability to livestream video from multiple sources, such as Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), command post, etc. This will aid in providing DEOC command better situational awareness of the real time operations and actions on the ground.

A large multi-channel video wall has been planned and will be installed in the DEOC. This will provide livestream links to several situational awareness software applications. These livestreams can also be linked to the National RCMP Operational Coordination Centre (ROCC) and other emergency operations centres.

The DEOC modernization project was identified as a priority in October 2022 and will progress through several stages to ensure the effective implementation of the new technology. The Saskatchewan RCMP Asset Management Committee reviewed the floor plan options in March 2024, with approval anticipated in the near future. Once approved, a Project Manager will be assigned to the DEOC modernization project and the project will progress as per the defined project plan and timelines.

Recommendation 2.7

Identify division scribe resources and managers and explore the possibility of a scribe program that will automatically dedicate a scribe to CIC call outs.

The Saskatchewan RCMP Critical Incident Program manages a Critical Incident Scribe Program which predates the mass casualty homicides. Within this program are 10 fully-trained and accredited scribes who are placed on an on-call rotation and are available for immediate deployment with a Critical Incident Commander, as required.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation and understands the preliminary responding Critical Incident Commander opted to take a District Advisory Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) instead of an accredited scribe while responding to the initial events that took place on James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon. This decision was based on the urgency to respond to the scene and the geographical location of the on-call accredited scribe. The District Advisory NCO acted as the Critical Incident Scribe in this initial response.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has arranged for two scribe courses for employees who will assume scribe roles and duties for command positions during mass casualty or critical incidents. The scribe courses have been arranged for the beginning of May 2024 and, once completed, it's anticipated there will be 32 trained scribes available for deployment during critical or mass casualty events. The Saskatchewan RCMP will continue to assess requirements for training additional personnel on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 2.8

Consider requesting a resource from National Headquarters (NHQ) to travel immediately to the location of a potentially prolonged major incident to take on the role of National/Division liaison.

Following the mass casualty homicides, the Saskatchewan RCMP and National Headquarters developed a standing agreement that ensures a member from the National Headquarters will be deployed to Saskatchewan to work as a liaison between the two divisions during a mass casualty event.

Recommendation 2.9

Continue investment in Common Operating Picture software. Continue efforts toward installation and training on the Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK) or some type of system that allows for tracking of resources. Ensure the DEOC is considered in any technological upgrades.

Since the summer of 2022, the Saskatchewan RCMP has worked to implement the Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK) project, which provides all operational RCMP members in Saskatchewan with an Android smartphone geospatial situational awareness software application.

This application enables all Saskatchewan RCMP members to have a common operating picture by tracking, navigating and data sharing via digital telecommunications technology. The ATAK application has been installed within the Saskatchewan RCMP Operational Communication Centre (dispatch centre) and the Divisional Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC) to allow precise coordination and guidance of RCMP members at a scene.

As of April 2024, 98% of all operational Saskatchewan RCMP members have been provided with ATAK technology and the training required to use this system. Saskatchewan RCMP Criminal Operations is creating a process through which new members coming into the province would

automatically be provided the ATAK application on their RCMP-issued phones. A training program is currently being developed, which can be provided online to new ATAK system users. This process will ensure all new members of the Saskatchewan RCMP will have access to the ATAK application and related training.

Air Services

Recommendation 3.1

For any major events requiring air assets, the Divisional Flight Coordinator or an Air Boss should be identified immediately and situated in the ICP alongside command.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation and, in response, the Federal Policing Support Services Officer has implemented changes through the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Saskatchewan RCMP Air Services.

This SOP provides clear direction for any major event requiring air assets. During an incident, the Federal Support Services Officer, or their delegate, will be assigned as an Air Services Subject Matter Expert (Air Boss). The Air Boss will be assigned to the Command Post for the duration of the event and will be identified in a manner to be easily recognized by the Critical Incident Commander (CIC) or Command Post Liaison. The Air Boss will assist the CIC regarding aircraft and air personnel. A Forward Remote Base of Operations (FRBO) will be set up by Air Services. The Air Boss will be the direct link to the FRBO for Air Services. The FRBO will be responsible for dispatching; assisting with aircraft, aircrew and maintenance; and planning flights throughout the event. All flight requests will be made through the CIC to the Air Boss

and then to the FRBO. The FRBO will not approve/dispatch flights unless directed through the CIC. Updates regarding status of personnel, aircraft, maintenance and flights will be provided from the FRBO via the Air Boss to the CIC.

Recommendation 3.2

F Division Air Services and the Critical Incident Program should practice together at least twice a year (1 day and 1 night) to maintain proficiency for Emergency Response Team (ERT) members and to better recognize the capabilities and limitations of each unit.

The Saskatchewan RCMP's Critical Incident Program has developed a training program where the RCMP Emergency Response Team regularly trains with RCMP Air Services and their tactical flight officers. This training was initiated in May 2023 and will be held on a bi-annual basis. The training consists of inter-operability between ERT and Air Services, effective radio communications and the use of ATAK along with other tracking and video technology.

Recommendation 3.3

Resolve the interoperability issues with Air Services communications and Global Positioning System (GPS) systems to work seamlessly with ERT communications and equipment (ATAK).

The Saskatchewan RCMP examined this recommendation and, as a result, has added annual training with Air Services to the ERT mandatory training. This training includes the use of the Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK) application and it has been confirmed through instruction and

training, that the Saskatchewan Emergency Response Team (ERT) and Air Services now have the ability to communicate and input proper Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates.

Major Crimes Branch Response

Recommendation 4.1

Explore the possibility of a scribe being assigned to the Command Triangle to capture decision making and content from briefings.

The Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes Branch is currently examining the potential conversion of Public Service Employee (PSE) positions in Major Case Management and the Transcription Unit to new civilian investigative assistant roles, with projected implementation in 2024. These positions will be tasked with providing greater support to the Major Crimes teams during homicide investigations, such as: scribing, exhibit processing, surveillance video footage reviews, database queries, disclosure and transcription when required and operational support tasks as assigned by Investigative Teams they support.

A scribe course, specific to civilians working with a Major Crimes Command Triangle/Investigative Team for mass casualty homicides, took place for the first time in April 2024. This course included civilians in the MCU and Provincial General Investigation Section (GIS). Civilians from Major Case Management in Saskatoon and Regina will also be taking this training as needed.

Recommendation 4.2

Assess the feasibility of having embedded analytical support for MCU teams as a standard procedure, for all major incidents.

In December 2023, as a result of the mass casualty homicides, six Criminal Intelligence Analyst positions were transferred from the Community Policing and Crime Reduction Unit to Major Crimes. The analysts are assigned to work closely with these teams on existing homicide investigations with a focus on areas where homicides frequently occur. They provide analytical assistance during new homicides and aid in developing an operating overview of both historical and new homicides. This enables Major Crimes investigators to recognize patterns and connections between homicides and homicide offenders.

Analysts examine factors of homicides that may be interconnected, including: geography; interpersonal relationships between victims, suspects and witnesses; victimology; similarities in violent offender behaviours (targeting, attacking and post-attack behaviour) and specific evidence collected in individual homicide investigations that may be related to other homicide investigations and/or other violent crimes. This allows for a more strategic approach to solving homicides by recognizing avenues and opportunities for further investigative actions to be completed, that will assist the progress of a homicide investigation. This will also allow for increased evidence-based collaboration with the Saskatchewan Enforcement Response Teams (SERT) for suppression activities involving communities, regions and specific offenders in Saskatchewan.

For mass casualty events, analysts will be embedded directly within the Command Triangle and/or Investigative Team during the investigation. Criminal Intelligence Analysts will work alongside homicide investigators as the homicide investigation and response unfolds.

Recommendation 4.3

Consider the creation of a MCU logistics package for expediting set up on initial call outs.

In response to the mass casualty event, the Saskatchewan RCMP Informatics Unit now has two Public Service Employees (PSE) on-call after hours and on weekends to respond to logistical needs of Major Crimes and the General Investigation Section (GIS). Specifically, to provide extra Information Technology (IT) equipment, increased data speed and any technical assistance required anywhere in the division.

Informatics and Major Crimes continue to identify additional technology and IT equipment that can be integrated into the three Major Crimes teams to better connect RCMP IT equipment from crime scenes and command posts, including: Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) downlink via MSTEAMS; portable Smart Boards and tablets for displaying the Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK); and Star Link. This would allow that technology to be used consistently and frequently, ensuring investigators will be experienced with the required technology before a mass casualty event occurs.

The Critical Incident Program has mobile command posts, which would also be utilized to house Major Crimes investigators at crime scenes or mass casualty event locations when required.

In 2024, Major Crimes will be pursuing the procurement of Crime Scene Management Vehicles for each of the three Major Crimes teams. These will be similar to cargo vans currently being used by the Forensic Identification Section (FIS) in the division. This will allow Major Crimes the ability to use smaller vehicles as temporary command posts at crime

scenes during homicide investigations. These vehicles would also be used to augment situated CIP command posts during a mass casualty event.

Recommendation 4.4

Explore the possibility of leveraging civilian resources to support the processing of high volume exhibits. Have someone permanently at the exhibit room receiving exhibits.

As a result of the mass casualty event, Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes is currently examining the potential conversion of Public Service Employee (PSE) positions to new civilian investigative assistant roles for implementation. These positions will be tasked with providing greater support to the Major Crimes teams during homicide investigations through: processing exhibits, reviewing surveillance footage, querying databases, preparing disclosure, providing transcription and scribing when required, as well as performing other operational support tasks as assigned by the investigative teams they support. Current PSE in Major Crimes and the General Investigation Section (GIS) will assist Major Crimes investigators in the interim.

Recommendation 4.5

Explore opportunities for Forensic Laboratory Services (FLS) to lead presentations to MCU to relay the capabilities of their services, particularly in regards to mass casualty events, and to form a basis for discussion between the units.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined the recommendation and determined the Forensic Lab Services (FLS) presentations to the Major Crimes Unit (MCU) would be of limited benefit. Major Crimes investigators in the Saskatchewan RCMP have extensive knowledge and past experience working with FLS to determine which laboratory services are required for each homicide investigation. Major Crimes investigators regularly communicate and work with the FLS Intake Coordinators to review evidence collected during homicide investigations, establish which items will be sent for forensic analysis based on investigative priority and how to complete requests for forensic analysis.

In February 2024, a copy of this review by the Office of Investigative Standards and Practices (OISP) was shared with the Director of Operations/Acting Director General for the FLS by National Criminal Operations with the consent of the Saskatchewan RCMP Criminal Operations Officer. This was the result of communication between National Criminal Operations and the FLS regarding the OISP review and Coroner's Inquest processes.

The Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes Unit has followed up with the FLS to arrange further meetings between Major Crimes investigators regarding this mass casualty investigation, the FLS role and potential best practices moving forward. These meetings are scheduled to be held in spring 2024. As best practices are identified, they will be communicated with the investigators and employees that will benefit from them.

Recommendation 4.6

Consider purchasing inflatable tents or fabric walls for FIS to protect hold back evidence and provide more dignity to the deceased while processing scenes.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation and, as a result, Forensic Identification Services (FIS) has purchased two inflatable tents which can be deployed across the division and used to protect hold back evidence and provide more dignity to the deceased while processing scenes.

Recommendation 4.7

Consider making the Basic Bloodstain Pattern Recognition Course mandatory for all FIS members.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined this recommendation. At the time of the mass casualty homicides in September 2022, the Saskatchewan RCMP Forensic Identification Section (FIS) deployed a total of 17 FIS members. Fourteen of the 17 members were designated as FIS specialists and the remaining three members were in the apprenticeship process. Since this mass casualty event, all of these FIS Specialists have taken the Basic Bloodstain Pattern Recognition Course.

FIS has developed unit supplemental policy, which dictates the requirement for every FIS member designated as a specialist to attend the Basic Bloodstain Pattern Recognition course at the Canadian Police College. The Saskatchewan RCMP has also made the Physical Evidence Comparison Course and the Basic Bloodstain Pattern Recognition course mandatory to become an FIS Specialist

Recommendation 4.8

Nationally, FIS should explore the feasibility of 'civilianizing' some Blood Pattern Analysis (BPA) positions in order to alleviate some of the

resource strains.

The Integrated Forensic Identification Services (IFIS) has stated that there is currently only one vacancy in Blood Pattern Analysis (BPA) within the RCMP. The civilianization of BPA positions has previously been explored by IFIS and deemed not feasible due to a number of factors, including issues around the safety of civilian investigators at crime scenes.

Strategic Communications

Recommendation 5.1

F Division should support any potential system updates that may promote efficiency and continue to identify any methods to streamline the process of data input into the NAAD System.

The National Alert Aggregation Dissemination (NAAD) System, which is not owned nor managed by the RCMP, has been updated since the mass casualty homicides on James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon. The Saskatchewan RCMP supports these updates, which have increased efficiency and streamlined the process of data input, although further recommendations to improve the NAAD system continue to be identified and proposed by alert issuers. The Saskatchewan RCMP Strategic Communications Unit conducts mandatory quarterly training with all divisional Duty Officers and Critical Incident Commanders (CIC) to maintain or increase familiarity for those who use the system or be involved in decisions regarding issuing emergency alerts and to identify best practices and policy modifications.

Operational Communications

Recommendation 6.1

If not included in formal training, any 'in-house' training sessions or briefings should highlight the potential issue of staying on the phone longer than necessary in an emergent situation where OCC is experiencing a high volume of calls.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has examined the recommendation and has now implemented it into training and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all Divisional Operational Communication Centre (OCC) call-takers and dispatchers.

OCC onboarding training has been updated to provide triage techniques designed to manage call volumes during major incidents without relinquishing essential safety aspects. Training will be continued through mandatory professional development and simulation exercises, which occur two times per year. In addition to this, the call-takers and dispatchers receive high-intensity, low-frequency active shooter training every two years.

Interoperability processes with the Alberta RCMP are also being streamlined. By having both divisions utilizing the same types of resources and protocols, it allows for support and increases capacity for both divisions in the event of major events.

Recommendation 6.2

At minimum, in the case of a major incident where higher call volumes will be received in the OCC, assign a MCU Investigator, an Analyst, and an OCC Supervisor to monitor and analyze the incoming calls in real time, to

best identify and determine trends, patterns, or clusters of calls that might otherwise not be identified in isolation.

The Saskatchewan RCMP recognizes the benefits and importance of having a Major Crimes Investigator and a Criminal Analyst embedded with the Division Operational Communication Centre (OCC) as soon as practicable following initial reports, or a recognition of, a major incident that involves crimes that are serious, complex and dynamic in nature, such as mass casualty homicides.

In December 2023, six Crime Analysts were transferred from Crime Prevention/Crime Reduction Services to Major Crimes to better resource homicide investigations. Moving forward, the embedding of a Major Crimes Investigator and a Criminal Analyst within the OCC will be a standardized practice when responding to mass casualty homicides or major events that involve crimes that are serious, complex and dynamic in nature

Recommendation 6.3

Continue to work with the Province of Saskatchewan and the JSCN Band Council to address radio communication shortcomings.

The Saskatchewan RCMP utilizes the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network (PPSTN) for radio communications throughout the Province of Saskatchewan. This radio network is managed through a partnership between the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA), SaskPower and the RCMP. The RCMP and SPSA recognize that not all areas within Saskatchewan have radio reception and coverage.

JSCN is located in an area where portable radio coverage is poor. In response to this recommendation, the Saskatchewan RCMP Informatics Section has researched alternative solutions and has identified portable radios that operate both on the PPSTN network and through cellular Long-Term Evolution (LTE) networks when the PPSTN network coverage is poor. These portable radios have been tested and will address the radio communication shortcomings on the JSCN.

The Saskatchewan RCMP purchased 60 of these radios, which were delivered in spring 2024. They have since been deployed to Saskatchewan RCMP detachments where poor radio coverage areas have been identified, including the Melfort Detachment.

Recommendation 6.4

Update Computer Integrated Information Dispatch System (CIIDS) software to include a mapping system and the ability to share vital information as perimeters and location data.

Since the mass casualty homicides, the Saskatchewan RCMP has implemented a Windows-based Team Awareness Kit (WinTAK) into the Division Operational Communication Centre (OCC). This software provides all dispatchers and Member Operations Support Services (MOSS) Supervisors with enhanced mapping and tracking of all active or on-duty RCMP members throughout the province.

Additionally, a Computer Integrated Information Dispatch System (CIIDS) Bell Mobile Work Station (MWS) system upgrade will be implemented and installed in the Saskatchewan RCMP OCC in mid-2024. This upgrade

will provide enhancements with the Mobile Work Station mapping software and allow for increased situational awareness for supervisors and responding members.

Mass Casualty / Victim Response

Recommendation 7.1

Promote direct contact between the family liaison and the media liaison (or via the MCU Command Triangle) in order they consider the impact of scheduled media events on the various investigating units, including the Family Liaison Teams.

As a result of the mass casualty homicides, during future critical incidents, the Saskatchewan RCMP will consider embedding a Strategic Communications/Media Relations representative within the Investigative Team in order to work more closely with the Family Liaison Team Manager and the Command Triangle members. The Major Crimes Unit currently collaborates with the Saskatchewan RCMP Strategic Communications Unit on a very frequent basis. Embedding both the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) Supervisor and a Communications Strategist within the command post of the Command Triangle will reduce potential communications gaps.

Recommendation 7.2

Consider seeking out additional training for select members and/or supervisors in the area of mass casualty events. Training should include recommended deployment and reporting structures, documentation processes, and the function of Family Liaisons during events such as these.

In 2023, Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes partnered with an expert from the Calgary Police Service to develop and deliver a training workshop for Major Crimes, the Historical Case Unit and Provincial General Investigation Services (GIS) investigators.

The training curriculum/standard is being further developed in conjunction with similar training being done by the Alberta RCMP. The current Officer in Charge (Superintendent) and the Senior Investigative Officer (Inspector) for Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes attended Gold, Silver, Bronze training in March 2024

In 2023, Major Crimes and Provincial GIS investigators attended the Canadian Police College Team Commanders Course in Ottawa. This is required training for RCMP investigators tasked with managing complex and serious criminal investigations, including mass casualty homicides, using Major Case Management as per RCMP National Policy.

Part of the training provided during the Team Commanders Course included a presentation from the Nova Scotia RCMP about the response to, and investigation of, the mass casualty homicides that occurred in Portapique, Nova Scotia in 2020. Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes is working with the Canadian Police College to host a course in Saskatchewan to increase the capacity for RCMP and municipal police senior investigators to participate in this training.

In 2024 and 2025, senior Major Crimes supervisors/managers will attend the Mass Casualty Response and Active Shooter Investigations Course that is presented in various locations in the United States by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and the International Homicide Investigators Association.

In 2024, the Saskatchewan RCMP will host a two-day Mass Casualty and Critical Incident workshop. Presentations will include responses to, and investigations of, mass casualty events and complex investigations that have occurred in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. As of April 2024, the RCMP has nationally mandated Initial Critical Incident Response (ICIR) 200-level training for all supervisors and is exploring the option of making this mandatory for all members. A new ICIR 300-level course is currently in development for all supervisors and commanders

Recommendation 7.3

Drawing on experience from this event, consider generating some type of 'Legacy Document' to be disseminated divisionally, outlining various cultural considerations that are necessary to provide appropriate support for victim families.

The Saskatchewan RCMP is developing a legacy document/guide to establish best practices and protocols in relation to the Family Liaison Officer role. This document will be written based off the knowledge, skills and experience gained from this mass casualty investigation, as well as ongoing discussions occurring within the National Mass Casualty Family Liaison Information Sharing Group, which includes representatives from Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and National RCMP Headquarters

Each representative in this group has either been responsible for managing victim and family relationships with police during and after mass casualties, or has been part of the RCMP's pre-planning efforts in

relation to victim and family support for National Security incidents in Canada. The legacy document/guide is expected to be completed in spring 2024.

Once completed, the principles and practices outlined in the document will be included in the Saskatchewan RCMP's Divisional Operational Policy supplement. At this time, there are 48 investigators who have taken the Family Liaison Officer training workshop organized by Major Crimes. There are plans to continue to offer this training in the future, with the next course tentatively being scheduled for fall 2024. A continually updated list of trained investigators will be available for future reference, should another mass casualty event occur in Saskatchewan.

Recommendation 7.4

Based off experience from this event, National consideration should be made for the development of Mass Casualty or Mass Fatality 'Victim Support kits'. This kit could include guiding documents, pre-printed victim support pamphlets (in multiple languages), and program referral links. These kits could be stored electronically and/or pre-assembled at a District or Divisional level.

Each RCMP-based Victim Services Program in Saskatchewan has a directory of local and regional resources for their service areas for victims of crime along with a brochure of the services offered by their respective Victim Services Program. Any additional documents that may be provided are at the discretion of each program and may vary depending on the type of incident, along with the needs of the victims.

Family Liaison Officers also ensure that any other support information is provided to victims and their families. The assignment of Family Liaison Officers to specific victims and/or families following a mass casualty event ensures that timely and ongoing bilateral communication is maintained. This also includes documenting communication and supports provided to victims and/or families within the investigative file as a monitored task assigned to each investigator.

Recommendation 7.5

Employees of Victim Services should receive the same access to Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and Wellness programs in recognition of their ongoing, primary functional roles following mass casualty incidents.

The Saskatchewan RCMP will integrate Victim Services employees and volunteers with the Family Liaison Team when responding to any future mass casualty events. The Saskatchewan Victim Services Branch has established a process for police-based Victim Services employees to access Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) support following a critical event. The Saskatchewan RCMP supports the mental health and wellness of Victim Services employees by providing them with other training opportunities such as Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) training, which has been arranged for Saskatchewan RCMP-based Victim Services employees in May/June 2024.

Recommendation 7.6

Continue Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) Committee on Terrorist and Mass Casualty Incidents work on creating National Policy on proposed roles, responsibilities, and Effective Practices for Mass Casualty Response teams. Consider any plans and processes that are

developed for human caused mass casualty/fatality incidents as being applicable, at least in part, across "all-hazards" (severe weather, fire, public health incident, etc.)

In January 2023, the RCMP initiated a committee comprised of Subject Matter Experts (SME) from across Canada who have dealt with mass casualties or critical incidents (CI). The committee conducted internal and external research of RCMP best practices, policies and procedures; a review of past mass casualties and CI's; and a review of recommendations from the Mass Casualty Commission Report resulting from the public inquiry that examined the April 18-19, 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia. Further to their research, the committee met with the United States of America Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), as well as municipal police forces from the United States, Canada and United Kingdom on their standard procedures in managing mass casualties and CI's. As a result of all the information obtained, the RCMP "Playbook on Managing a Critical or Mass Casualty Incident" was developed to assist members during these types of events.

Pre-event intelligence

Recommendation 8.1

It is recommended that the findings of the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) and Parole Board of Canada (PBC) National Joint Board of Investigation (BOI) be reviewed by the RCMP once it is available. The findings in of BOI may provide valuable additional information pertinent to and 'pre-event intelligence'.

The Saskatchewan RCMP has reviewed the findings of the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) and Parole Board of Canada (PBC) National Joint Board of Investigation (BOI) report. Finding A in the report indicated that there were no indicators that Myles Sanderson had communicated, planned, prepared or carried out any actions related to the September 4, 2022 mass casualty homicides on James Smith Cree Nation and in Weldon while he was either in custody at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary or while on statutory release. However, in Finding F2, there were clear indications that Myles Sanderson was considered at moderate to high risk to re-offend in committing criminal acts in relation to interpersonal violence towards his former common-law partner. This was based on his violent criminal history (as per information available on CPIC), two different types of psychological assessments (one had him at a high risk to re-offend, the other had him at a moderate risk) and two breaches of previous no-contact conditions when he was given statutory release from the Saskatchewan Penitentiary.

Findings B1.1 and B1.2 in the report documented that police reports that contained details and the circumstances leading to each of Myles Sanderson's criminal convictions were not requested by the Institutional Parole Officer assigned to Myles Sanderson. It was noted in the findings that:

However, as a result of the failure to request the police reports for the prior offences for violence, the details of the offences were not available to be used in formulating recommendations and for decision-making purposes. This included the Correctional Service Canada's (CSC's) recommendation for Detention Pre-Screening and the CSC's decisions not to refer Sanderson for Detention. It also meant that this information was not provided to the Parole Board of Canada for consideration in their decision-making process.

Finding B1.1 in the report found:

No requests were made for any of Sanderson's prior convictions involving violence. Saskatchewan Penitentiary reported that police agencies frequently do not provide information on what may be seen as historical cases as they lack the resources to draw information on old files that are not seen to be directly related to an offender's current circumstance. However, that does not give the institution the option to not request the required police reports.

Prince Albert Provincial GIS is responsible for responding to any calls for service inside the Saskatchewan Penitentiary. As part of that responsibility, Prince Albert Provincial GIS routinely responds to requests for specific information related to violent crime convictions for serving prisoners charged by the RCMP. That information consists of copies of Prosecutor Information Sheets provided to Crown and Defense when charges are laid. The RCMP cannot provide comment in relation to information sharing practices between the Saskatchewan Penitentiary and other police services.

Recommendation 8.2

It is recommended that the findings and report of the NHQ - Behaviour Sciences Unit be reviewed once available and potentially incorporated with the OISP review with this or any other relevant objective.

The Saskatchewan RCMP received the Post-Mortem Behavioural Analysis findings and report from National Headquarters (NHQ) Behavioural Sciences in November 2023. A copy has been provided to the Alberta RCMP Office of Investigative Standards and Practices (OISP). It was also disclosed, via the Department of Justice, to the Saskatchewan Coroner's Service prior to the first inquest related to the September 2022 mass casualty homicides which took place January 15 to 31, 2024.

Recommendation 8.3

It is recommended that the RCMP continue to support and engage, wherever possible, the proposed community safety, mental health and other related initiatives undertaken in the wake of the events in the communities of JSCN and Weldon

Ongoing community support is being provided by the Saskatchewan RCMP's Indigenous Policing Services (IPS), the Family Liaison Team and Melfort Detachment members. A number of engagement initiatives have been developed and implemented, including: the delivery of community presentations by RCMP Major Crimes in April 2023, providing details regarding the timeline of events and the actions of police in response to the mass casualty homicides; as well as a RCMP Musical Ride performance in the community in July 2023.

Melfort Detachment members continue their commitment to community engagement, including the new Detachment Commander, who assumed his role in September 2023. The Detachment Commander meets annually with community leaders to help develop detachment priorities and the Detachment Action Plan (DAP) and reports on efforts to achieve these priorities. As a result of consultation with all communities within the Melfort Detachment policing area, the priorities for the 2023/2024 year have been developed and are identified in section 1.2. The Commander's in-depth discussions with the Saskatchewan RCMP's senior management team regarding helping the communities recover from the mass casualty homicides will continue, along with applying a community-centred approach to policing.

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