



**IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF A MAN
IN AN INCIDENT INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE RCMP
IN SURREY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
ON JULY 7, 2025**

**DECISION OF THE CHIEF CIVILIAN DIRECTOR
OF THE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS OFFICE**

Chief Civilian Director: Jessica Berglund

IIO File Number: 2025-167

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INTRODUCTION

On the evening of July 7, 2025, police received a 911 call reporting an apparent domestic assault at a residence in Surrey. Shortly after officers arrived at the scene to investigate, the Affected Person (“AP”) appeared at the open back door, covered in blood and holding a machete. Two of the officers attempted to subdue the AP using Conducted Energy Weapons (“CEWs” or “Tasers”). When the AP threw the machete in the direction of the police, the Subject Officer (“SO”) discharged his service pistol at the AP, who fell back inside the house. The AP was found deceased inside the door, close to the body of his spouse, who had apparently been struck and killed by the AP’s machete before police arrival.

The Independent Investigations Office (“IIO”) was notified and commenced an investigation. The narrative that follows is based on evidence collected and analyzed during the investigation, including the following:

- statements of four civilian witnesses, four paramedics and four witness police officers;
- police Computer-Aided Dispatch (“CAD”) and Police Records Information Management Environment (“PRIME”) records;
- 911 call and police radio audio recordings;
- Closed-Circuit Television (“CCTV”) recordings from neighbouring residences;
- scene, firearms and CEW examinations;
- RCMP policy and training records;
- BC Emergency Health Services records; and
- autopsy and toxicology reports.

The IIO does not require officers whose actions are the subject of an investigation to provide evidence. In this case, the SO has not given any account.

NARRATIVE

At 8:31 p.m. on July 7, 2025, Civilian Witness 1 (“CW1”) called 911 asking for police and an ambulance to “come urgently.” CW1 said he was a tenant in a basement suite and

had heard sounds of an apparent domestic disturbance upstairs in the house. CW1 said that he and family members had left the home, and through a window he had seen his upstairs neighbour (the AP) hitting his wife. CW1 said he had seen blood on the woman's clothes and thought the AP had "hurt her badly."

Five officers, including the SO, responded. Shortly after they arrived at the residence, an officer radioed, "Making entry to clear [the residence]," followed by "Code 4, man with a knife, covered in blood ... He's got a knife, we're giving commands." About 15 seconds after this, a second officer radioed, "Shots fired, shots fired."

Interviewed later by the IIO, CW1 said that he came home from work at about 8:25 p.m. on the evening of the incident. He said he heard disturbing sounds from upstairs and went out to the rear yard to investigate. CW1 said that he saw, through a ground floor window, the AP standing over a woman and striking her with a foot-long bloody knife. CW1 left the home with his family members and called 911.

CW1 told investigators that when police arrived, he went to meet them. He described seeing the AP come out of the house "attempting to attack the police" as they told him multiple times to "stop and surrender." CW1 said he saw the AP throw a knife towards the officers but did not see what they did in response as he was taking cover. He said he heard what he believed to be a gunshot.

Witness Officer 1 ("WO1") was the first officer at the scene, quickly followed by Witness Officer 2 ("WO2"), Witness Officer 3 ("WO3"), Witness Officer 4 ("WO4") and the SO. WO4 stayed in the back yard while the other officers went into the basement to ensure it was clear.

WO1 later told the IIO that while he was in the basement, he heard WO4 say, "He has a knife," and tell someone to "put the knife down." WO1 said that the officers exited into the back yard and found that WO4 had his pistol out. The SO also drew his pistol. WO1 was carrying a Conducted Energy Weapon ("CEW" or "Taser") and took it from its holster. He said he saw the AP standing at the back door holding a machete covered in blood, saying, "I want you to shoot me." WO1 said he then saw WO2 deploy his CEW against the AP, but heard WO4 call, "Ineffective."

WO1 also attempted to subdue the AP with his CEW but saw that the probes missed their target. He said that as he attempted again to deploy the CEW, he saw the AP throw the machete towards him with an over-arm throw. At the same time, he said, he heard "gunfire." The distance between the AP and the officers, he estimated, was about 10 to 15 feet at that time (subsequent scene examination determined that the distance was more likely in the range of 15 to 18 feet).

In his interview with the IIO, WO2 confirmed that he deployed his CEW at the AP, who he saw standing at the open back door of the residence with a bloody machete in his hand. WO2 said he saw the CEW probes strike the AP. The AP “hunched over slightly” and took a step back, but was not disabled. WO2 said he then saw the AP step forward again and raise the machete, and there was the sound of gunshots. WO2 said he did not see the machete thrown, but subsequently observed it on the ground, near where the officers had been standing.

WO3 said that he was the last of the officers to leave the basement suite and found the other officers “stacked up” with their weapons pointed in the direction of the main floor back door. He said he did not have a direct line of sight to the back door. He saw CW1 in the yard and told him to shelter in the basement. He said he heard other officers telling the AP to “drop the knife” and then heard gunshots.

WO4 told IIO investigators that while the other officers were clearing CW1’s basement suite, he saw the AP come to the back door on the main level. The AP, he said, was “yelling and screaming” but WO4 could not tell what he was saying. He said he warned the other officers about the knife, and shouted at the AP to drop it, but the AP did not comply. WO4 said he saw an officer fire his CEW, and saw the probes strike the AP, but they did not seem to have any effect. He said a second officer then also deployed a CEW, which was again ineffective. WO4 said the AP “then wound up and threw the machete at us,” and WO4 heard gunshots. The AP, he said, retreated inside the house and fell to the floor.

The officers called for paramedics to attend and attempted first aid, but the AP was subsequently declared deceased at the scene by medical personnel. Police also found the AP’s spouse, who had suffered fatal wounds consistent with having been caused by strikes from a sharp object.

A CCTV video recording from a security camera on a neighbouring residence with a partial view of the incident scene, and audio recordings from other CCTV in the neighbourhood, were consistent with the sequence of events described by civilian and police witnesses.

Forensic examinations of the scene, firearms and other exhibits indicated that the SO had fired six rounds from his service pistol. Only one round struck the AP, and the other five rounds struck the side of the doorway and the wall of the house.

At autopsy, the AP was found to have suffered a single fatal bullet wound to the chest. The bullet had exited through the AP’s back, with the direction of the track being front to back, left to right and slightly upwards.

ANALYSIS

The Independent Investigations Office of British Columbia (“IIO”) is mandated to investigate any incident that occurs in the province in which an Affected Person has died or suffered serious physical harm and there appears to be a connection to the actions (or sometimes inaction) of an officer or detention guard. The goal is to provide assurance to the public that when the investigation is complete, they can trust the IIO’s conclusions, because the investigation was conducted by an independent, unbiased, civilian-led agency.

In most cases, those conclusions are presented in a public report such as this one, which completes the IIO’s mandate by explaining to the public what happened in the incident and how the Affected Person came to suffer harm. Such reports are generally intended to enhance public confidence in the police and in the justice system as a whole through a transparent and impartial evaluation of the incident and the police role in it.

In a smaller number of cases, the evidence gathered may give the Chief Civilian Director (“CCD”) reasonable grounds to believe that an officer or detention guard has committed an offence in connection with the incident. In such a case, the *Police Act* gives the CCD authority to refer the file to the BC Prosecution Service for consideration of charges.

In a case such as this one, involving the use of lethal force by officers, evidence is gathered about potential justifications for that use of force. The CCD then applies legal tests such as necessity, proportionality and reasonableness to reach conclusions as to whether officers’ actions were lawful. The specific focus will be on the degree of threat posed by each Affected Person and whether, in the words of the *Criminal Code*, it gave reasonable grounds for the officers to believe lethal force was “necessary for the self-preservation of [the officers] or the preservation of any one under [the officers’] protection from death or grievous bodily harm.”

The involved officers were acting in the lawful execution of their duty when they responded to CW1’s 911 call. Based on the information they had, they had reason to believe that an intimate-partner assault had occurred at the residence and that there was a risk of violence directed towards them and others from someone in the home.

The appearance of the AP at the door, bloodstained and armed with a potentially deadly weapon, raised that potential risk to the level of an imminent threat. It was appropriate, in those circumstances, when the AP failed to comply with directions to drop the machete, to deploy non-lethal force against him in the form of CEW discharges. The evidence establishes that the AP then escalated the situation by throwing the machete in the

officers' direction in what could reasonably be interpreted as an actual attempt to cause them grievous bodily harm. At that point, it was reasonable for the SO to conclude that the use of lethal force was necessary in the officers' defence, and the shots he discharged at the AP were justified in law.

Accordingly, as Chief Civilian Director of the IIO, I do not consider that there are reasonable grounds to believe that an officer may have committed an offence under any enactment and the matter will not be referred to the BC Prosecution Service for consideration of charges.



Jessica Berglund
Chief Civilian Director

March 5, 2026

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