



**IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF A MALE ON JUNE 9, 2021,  
IN GRAND FORKS, BRITISH COLUMBIA,  
AFTER A WELLNESS CHECK THE PREVIOUS DAY  
BY MEMBERS OF THE RCMP**

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

Chief Civilian Director:

Ronald J. MacDonald, Q.C.

IIO File Number:

2021-148

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## **INTRODUCTION**

On June 8, 2021, two police officers responded to a request from Civilian Witness 1 ('CW1') for a wellness check on the Affected Person ('AP') at his residence. One of the officers subsequently called CW1 and told her that they had observed AP on his bed, breathing normally and apparently asleep. The following day, CW2 went to AP's residence and found AP in medical distress. AP was transported to hospital where he died later that day.

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 two civilian witnesses and one paramedic;
- police Computer-Aided Dispatch ('CAD') and Police Records Information Management Environment ('PRIME') records;
- recordings of police radio transmissions;
- B.C. Emergency Health Services records;
- medical records of AP; and
- pathologist's report.

The IIO does not compel officers who are the subject of an investigation to submit their notes, reports and data. In this case, no involved police officer has given an account to the IIO.

## **NARRATIVE**

At 9:47 p.m. on June 8, 2021, Grand Forks RCMP received a call from CW1, who lived in the Greater Vancouver area, asking them to conduct a wellness check on her brother (AP) at his residence. CW1 said she had not been able to contact AP for some time, and was concerned because she knew he struggled with physical and mental health issues.

Two police officers were dispatched to the call, and one of the officers later telephoned CW1 to say they had visited AP, and had found him asleep in his bedroom, breathing normally, with the television on. CW1 was told police would check on AP again the following day.

At about 2:00 p.m. on June 9, 2021, CW2 went to AP's home and entered when she did not get a response from him. She found him in his basement bedroom in medical distress. Paramedics were called, and an ambulance transported AP to hospital. An attending paramedic told the IIO that she had been to AP's residence many times in relation to his various health issues.

Hospital records indicate that AP was admitted in “grave” condition, and he was declared deceased a few hours later. The pathologist’s report indicated that he had died of natural causes, due to numerous health conditions.

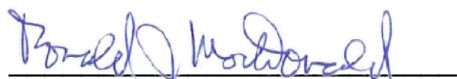
## **LEGAL ISSUES AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of any IIO investigation is to determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that an officer, through an action or inaction, may have committed any offence in relation to an incident resulting in serious harm or death. More specifically, the issue to be considered here is whether any officer may have committed a negligence-based offence in relation to AP’s death.

In this case, there is no evidence that officers were negligent in conducting the requested wellness check on AP. According to their report to CW1, they found AP apparently sleeping normally, and they were under no duty to go further—to wake him and attempt to assess him medically, a task for which they were neither trained nor qualified.

On the available evidence, it appears that AP’s medical condition worsened significantly at some point after the officers left and before CW2 came to check on him the following afternoon. There is no reason to conclude that the officers could reasonably have foreseen that deterioration in AP’s health, or that they conducted themselves in any way improperly.

Accordingly, as the 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 therefore the matter will not be referred to Crown counsel for consideration of charges.

  
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Ronald J. MacDonald, Q.C.  
Chief Civilian Director

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