



**IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF TWO PEOPLE  
DURING AN ATTEMPTED TRAFFIC STOP BY MEMBERS OF THE  
ABBOTSFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT  
ON AUGUST 7, 2022**

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

Chief Civilian Director:

Jessica Berglund

IIO File Number:

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## INTRODUCTION

On the afternoon of August 7, 2022, officers from the Abbotsford Police Department became involved in a pursuit of a stolen vehicle that was associated with a double homicide. Multiple officers became engaged, which culminated in the use of a Precision Immobilization Technique (“PIT”) to disable the vehicle that was being pursued. The vehicle hit a tree on the median and split in half. The driver and passenger of the vehicle died.

The Independent Investigations Office (“IIO”) was notified of this incident by the Abbotsford Police Department and commenced an investigation. On April 16, 2024, the IIO announced that the file had been referred to Crown Counsel for the consideration of charges. After further investigation, consultation and careful review of the evidence, the Chief Civilian Director (“CCD”) decided to withdraw the referral of this matter to Crown Counsel and instead issue this Public Report.

The narrative that follows is based on evidence collected and analyzed during the investigation, including the following:

- statements of six civilian witnesses;
- statements of three first responders;
- statements of 11 witness police officers;
- Police Computer-Aided Dispatch (“CAD”);
- Police Records Information Management Environment (“PRIME”) records;
- BC Emergency Health Services records;
- police radio to radio transmissions;
- data information from mobile police computers;
- medical records;
- policies and training records;
- Scene examination & photographs;
- CCTV video recording from eight businesses and residences;
- In-car dash camera recording from a witness;
- collision reconstruction investigation report;
- autopsy and toxicology reports; and
- forensic analysis of vehicle parts and paint samples.

The IIO does not compel officers who are the subject of an investigation to submit their notes and reports. In this case, there were three subject officers and all of them declined to provide any account to the IIO.

## NARRATIVE

On August 7, 2022, at 3:02 p.m., Witness Officer 1 (“WO1”) observed an Acura Integra that was parked in a commercial parking lot in Abbotsford. WO1 noticed the vehicle because it did not have a front licence plate and was full of belongings. It appeared to WO1 that the car was out of place.

WO1 saw the driver, Affected Person 1 (“AP1”) inside the car, and watched Affected Person 2 (“AP2”) get into the passenger seat. As AP1 drove away, WO1 was able to see the rear licence plate of the Acura Integra and queried the licence plate through the Canadian Police Information Centre (“CPIC”) computer database. WO1 learned that the vehicle was stolen and was associated with a double homicide that had occurred in a different area of British Columbia the day before.

There was a warning included in the CPIC database that the occupants of the vehicle were “armed and dangerous” and an instruction was provided to any officers who saw the Acura Integra to seize it as a “crime vehicle.” There was an additional instruction to detain and identify all occupants of the vehicle.

WO1 broadcasted over the radio information regarding the stolen vehicle, its occupants, and that it had been used in a double homicide. Subject Officer 1 (“SO1”), who was a senior supervising officer, asked that multiple police officers attend the area and requested a “Be On the Lookout For (“BOLF”) communication be sent out, including to neighbouring police agencies. WO1 asked whether there was a police helicopter available to assist in the search but was advised by the dispatcher that none were available.

SO1 asked Witness Officer 2 (“WO2”) to contact the police agency that was investigating the double homicide to get more details. Following WO2’s call with the investigating police agency, WO2 transmitted over the radio that “they are expected to be in possession of a firearm still.”

At 4:09 p.m., the Acura Integra was observed again, this time by Subject Officer 2 (“SO2”) and Subject Officer 3 (“SO3”) at a different commercial parking lot in Abbotsford approximately four kilometres away. A CCTV recording captured the officers approaching the Acura Integra in their vehicles, but not their interaction with AP1 and AP2. As SO2 and SO3 did not consent to providing information to the IIO investigation, it is not entirely clear what happened between the officers and the APs when they approached.

At 4:09 p.m., the following radio transmissions were made:

SO2: *Delta 9, what's the plate for that Integra?*

Dispatch – [gives licence plate information]

...

SO2 - *break break*

SO2: *we got an MVI [motor vehicle incident] here, he just took off on us*

CCTV footage captured damage to the Acura Integra as it left the parking lot, suggesting there had been a collision.

The Acura Integra left the parking lot with SO2 and SO3 in pursuit. SO1, as the senior supervising officer monitoring the radio at the time, granted permission for the officers to pursue the vehicle. SO2 asked whether there was a police helicopter available to assist but was advised none were available.

CCTV footage from residences and businesses captured the path of the pursuit, along with dash cam video from Civilian Witness 1 (“CW1”) who was stopped at an intersection. WO1 and Witness Officer 3 (“WO3”) joined SO2 and SO3 at different times during the pursuit, resulting in a total of four police vehicles in pursuit.

Witness Officer 4 (“WO4”) was a high-ranking experienced officer who was in charge of policing across the entire City of Abbotsford that day. SO1 called WO4 while officers were searching for the stolen Acura Integra and they discussed what might happen if the vehicle was seen again by officers. It was confirmed that there might be a police pursuit of the vehicle. WO4 explained the rationale for allowing the pursuit:

*This wouldn't be a simple let the vehicle go like we may do in a shoplifting file... we don't pursue vehicles in a city of 170,000 people for somebody that's just stolen a bike tire... we wouldn't subject the public to that kind of risk for that trivial of offence. .... this is a homicide.*

Approximately two minutes into the pursuit, the Acura Integra was captured on CW1’s dash cam video proceeding through a controlled intersection (Clearbrook Road and South Fraser Way) against a red light and dash cam captured it swerving around vehicles that were making a turn. The Acura Integra was followed by SO2, SO3, WO1 and WO3, all of whom had their emergency lights and sirens activated. The pursuit consisted of both marked and unmarked police vehicles.

As police vehicles passed through the intersection, GPS records obtained from their vehicle mobile data terminals (MDT) showed the following reduction in speeds:

- SO3 reduced his speed from 77 km/h to 46 km/h as he went through a red light;

- WO3 reduced his speed from 60 km/h to 25 km/h as he went through a red light, and
- WO1 reduced her speed from 88 km/h to 79 km/h and was able to proceed on a green light.

There was no GPS data available for SO2's vehicle. SO2 had his lights and sirens engaged. The road was dry, the weather conditions were clear and there was a moderate amount of traffic. During the pursuit, SO2 and SO3 provided updates regarding their location and direction of travel and provided speed updates on three occasions which were confirmed to be accurate within 7 km/hr or less when compared to GPS records of the police vehicles.

When interviewed by IIO investigators, WO3 considered the APs to be high risk as they were suspects in a double homicide and there was information that they were in possession of a firearm and not stopping for police. WO3 thought that the officers may be harmed, as the suspects were unpredictable. WO1 shared WO3's view and explained:

*...even though I didn't know the identity of the occupants of the vehicle, I was treating them as though they had been involved in that homicide regardless of who they were because of the recency of it. The same vehicle, the information I received.... They [police agency investigating the homicide] believed the occupants of that car to be .... in possession of a firearm. I considered it probably one of the highest risk -- highest risk contacts you can have with people.*

At 4:13 p.m., still in pursuit, SO2 requested permission over the radio to "attempt a PIT maneuver if it's possible" on the fleeing Acura Integra. The "PIT" maneuver is a law enforcement pursuit tactic in which a police vehicle, pursuing a fleeing vehicle, forces the target vehicle to rotate sideways abruptly, thereby causing the driver to lose control and stop temporarily. This was authorized by SO1, as long as there was "no pedestrian traffic." SO1 also requested additional units be present prior to the "PIT" maneuver as "there's a firearm involved in the homicide." The "PIT" maneuver is not a technique that is trained during police recruit training in British Columbia, nor was it trained during the most recent pursuit vehicle training that SO1, SO2, and SO3 participated in. WO4 explained "PIT" is an "American term" that he had never been trained in.

The Abbotsford Police Department ("APD") has a pursuit policy that does not mention "PIT" but does define "ramming" as "the use of an Emergency Vehicle to physically contact the suspect's vehicle and disable it. Ramming a suspect vehicle is considered a use of force and subject to use of force reporting requirements. APD policy further outlines that "ramming will not be used, unless circumstances are exigent, and approval has been

granted by the supervisor." WO4 explained, "Do we train to ram? No. But in certain circumstances we have to take drastic measures to stop people from hurting others."

The pursuit culminated on Maclure Road close to where it intersects with Clearbrook Road. All four police vehicles were still in pursuit. WO3 was behind SO2 and SO3. WO3 said that he saw the light at the intersection had just turned yellow and the Acura Integra was not slowing down. WO1 said there were a lot of vehicles stopped at the red light at Clearbrook. WO1 advised that she did not notice any change in the speed of the Acura Integra as it approached the intersection and that "it was an impending collision." WO3 explained as they approached Clearbrook Road he saw the traffic light turn yellow and then red and could then see vehicles travelling north and south across Maclure Road on Clearbrook Road. WO3 believed that the Acura Integra was going to keep driving through the intersection with many vehicles potentially at risk of getting hit: "I kept looking at the light and at the car, because I'm thinking we were only a couple hundred metres away and they're not slowing down, what's going to happen?"

The Acura Integra was driving eastbound on Maclure Road approaching Clearbrook Road at a speed of 136 km/h, which was over double the speed limit. SO2 was approximately 135 metres away from Clearbrook Road when SO2 used the front right corner of his police vehicle, a Ford F150, to contact the Acura Integra's left rear corner causing it to lose control (the PIT maneuver).

Civilian Witness 2 ("CW2") was travelling in the opposite direction and was stopped at the red light at Clearbrook Road with a direct view of the approaching Acura Integra and police vehicles. CW2 described the moment:

*...one of the cops...came up right beside on the passenger side of the car and clipped it, just the very back of it, and the car had spun out and flipped sideways and smashed into the tree.*

CW2 described the danger that she was in immediately before SO2 used the PIT maneuver:

*...when it was coming at me I froze, there's no way I would have gotten out of the way if that car was coming straight at me, if they didn't clip it in time and it had came through the intersection and hit someone else, I wouldn't even have been able to react, it was really fast.*

The Acura Integra ultimately collided with a tree and was torn in half. The scene of the collision was forensically examined, and it was confirmed that it was SO2's vehicle that had contacted the Acura Integra through the use of the PIT maneuver at speeds of 136 km/h. No weapon was found in the Acura Integra.

Witness Officer 5 ("WO5") was a senior officer monitoring the pursuit over the radio. WO5 advised,

*...given everything that I knew at that point in time ....it was more important over public safety...and safety to the police that vehicle be stopped and that those occupants be apprehended."*

WO5 also said "had that incident [PIT – ramming] not occurred where it had occurred, we probably would have been faced with several civilian casualties, either serious grievous bodily injury or death."

Following the PIT maneuver, several responding officers approached the wreckage with firearms drawn including WO3 who was armed with a Conducted Energy Weapon ("CEW" or Taser). AP1 was observed leaning against the vehicle and WO3 and other officers yelled at AP1 to show his hands but there was no response. WO3 did not see any injuries on AP1 and he appeared unconscious. WO3 deployed his CEW on AP1, believing that AP1 still might be a risk to the officers' safety. WO3 explained: "I was scared there that maybe there was a possibility he could have acted as if unconscious to get closer and harm us."

The passenger, AP2, was pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver, AP1, was given first aid and then transported to hospital. AP1 was pronounced deceased shortly after he arrived at hospital.

In total, the Acura Integra was pursued by police for approximately six kilometres through commercial and residential areas of Abbotsford for a period of four minutes and nine seconds, with top speeds of 138 km/h.

## ANALYSIS

The Independent Investigations Office of British Columbia 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 police. The aim 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 Persons 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 has committed an offence in connection with the incident. In such cases, the *Police Act* gives the CCD authority to refer the file to Crown Counsel for consideration of charges. In this case, the CCD initially referred the file to Crown Counsel for consideration of charges but withdrew it after taking further investigative steps, consultation and analysis. This included considering additional evidence related to officer training.

The officers were acting lawfully, in the execution of their duties, when they activated their emergency lights and initially attempted to stop the Acura Integra. The vehicle was stolen, and the occupants were suspected to have been involved in a double homicide. The officers needed to act, and a pursuit was justified in this case.

The focus of the IIO investigation was whether the officers were driving dangerously while engaged in the pursuit, and whether the decision to use the PIT maneuver was appropriate in these circumstances.

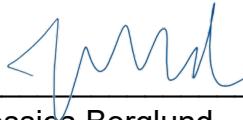
Pursuits are inherently dangerous. Legislation and police policy permit an officer to engage in a pursuit after weighing several important public safety considerations, including the risk to the public from the pursuit.

In this case, the road was dry, the weather conditions were clear and there was a moderate amount of traffic. The officers believed that the individuals involved were suspects in a double homicide, which is a very serious offence. The officers drove at high speeds, but the video footage that captured their driving suggested they were driving in control.

It was reasonable to believe that the Acura Integra was going to run a red light and that this would put many civilians who were waiting at or travelling through the intersection at risk.

The officers were faced with a difficult choice of attempting an untrained maneuver or risking harm to members of the public. Section 25 of the *Criminal Code* allows officers to use force provided that it is reasonable, necessary and proportionate. When using force that could cause grievous bodily harm or death, the officers must reasonably believe that they are protecting themselves or a member of the public from imminent grievous bodily harm or death. When weighing all the circumstances, I find it reasonable to believe that the “PIT” maneuver was reasonable and proportionate to the threat of grievous bodily harm or death faced by members of the public as the Acura Integra approached the intersection at a high rate of speed.

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.



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Jessica Berglund  
Chief Civilian Director

February 5, 2026  
Date of Release