



**IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF A MALE  
AND AN ASSOCIATED INVESTIGATION BY MEMBERS OF THE RCMP  
IN LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA  
BETWEEN JANUARY 10 AND JANUARY 14, 2024**

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

Interim Chief Civilian Director:

Sandra J. Hentzen

IIO File Number:

2024-011

Date of Release:

May 27, 2024

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## **INTRODUCTION**

On January 10, 2024, Langley RCMP members visited the Affected Person ('AP') on two separate occasions after receiving information from callers concerned for AP's welfare. On January 14, police were again asked to check on AP. When they went to his residence, they found him deceased. Because of the recent police contact before AP's death, 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 three civilian witnesses;
- police Computer-Aided Dispatch ('CAD') and Police Records Information Management Environment ('PRIME') records;
- audio recordings of 911 calls;
- review of material found on AP's cell phone and laptop computer; and
- RCMP policies.

The IIO does not compel officers who are the subject of an investigation to submit their notes, reports and data. In this case, no formal statement was obtained from any of the involved officers, but investigators were able to review written notes and PRIME entries.

## **NARRATIVE**

At 6:45 a.m. on January 10, 2024, AP's mother, Civilian Witness 1 ('CW1'), called Langley RCMP to say she had received a text from AP in which he had stated, "I am done and I can't do this anymore". CW1 was worried because AP had previously attempted suicide.

Officer 1 went to AP's residence at about 7:00 a.m. on January 10, and was with AP for well over an hour. Officer 1's report states that AP acknowledged texting CW1, but denied any reference to self-harm, explaining that he was merely expressing frustration at academic studies in which he was engaged, as well as other difficulties in his life. AP said he was taking his medications properly and showed Officer 1 the medications laid out in an orderly manner. He agreed to call for help if he required it. In his report, Officer 1 states that a call to CW1 was not answered. Officer 1 cleared from the call at 8:24 a.m.

At 9:05 the same morning, CW2, a social worker who had worked with AP previously, called police to say that she had received emails from AP during the night saying he was

going to kill himself. CW2 told the call taker that AP had a problem with alcohol in the past, but had undergone treatment for it. Officer 2 was dispatched, arriving at AP's residence at 9:19 a.m. Officer 3 joined him there at 9:37 a.m.

Officer 3's PRIME statement references the earlier visit by Officer 1, noting that CW1's concerns "were deemed exaggerated upon review". Officer 3 had received copies of AP's emails to CW2, which mentioned AP's "suicide note, which I have cued in my email drafts for my brother to send to you upon my death". Officer 3 stated that AP insisted the email was referring to actions to be taken in the future, in the event of his death, "not a plan to die shortly". Officer 3 wrote that AP told him he had no present suicidal intent. AP agreed to call "if he felt a desire to die imminently", and informed Officer 3 that he had recently put multiple mental health supports in place. Officer 3's report notes that AP had been drinking, and continues:

*Convinced [AP] to pour out the remaining alcohol to avoid further escalation due to intoxication. [AP] did not present as intoxicated, showing good balance, no slurred words and solid logical pathways. [AP] had not taken his medication that morning but took those he felt safe to do so (some were not to be mixed with alcohol) and would take the remaining medication when fully sober. [AP] was not actively suicidal and while he had thought about it, he had done so a long time but did not feel it warranted.*

Officer 2 told IIO investigators that he chose not to make a statement, but offered remarks that essentially corroborated the written account Officer 3 had entered in PRIME. His notes indicate that he checked AP's suite and found nothing consistent with an intention to commit suicide.

The following day, January 11, 2024, AP called CW1 and talked with her for about an hour and a half. CW1 later told the IIO that she did not have any concern that AP was in immediate danger of self-harm at that time. AP also communicated with another family member that day, with no suggestion that he was in imminent danger.

On January 14, though, CW1 again called police to say that she had had no contact with AP since January 11. Officers went to AP's home and found him deceased from apparent suicide. Evidence indicated that he had died at least one day earlier.

## **LEGAL ISSUES AND CONCLUSION**

The Independent Investigations Office of British Columbia has been given the task of investigating 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 the majority of 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 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 Crown counsel for consideration of charges.

In a case such as this one, involving a potential negligence offence, one of the threads of the IIO investigation will be the gathering of evidence about whether officers met the relevant standard of care.

In order to constitute the possible offence of criminal negligence, the actions of an officer would have to fail to meet the required standard of care in a marked and substantial way, such that it showed a wanton and reckless disregard for human life. This is a significant test, as Canadian criminal law does not sanction "ordinary" negligent errors, just those sufficiently serious to justify a criminal sanction.

As noted earlier, the three responding officers spent a considerable amount of time with AP, over two separate visits. It is clear that AP, evidently intelligent and insightful, was able to respond to all their concerns and all their questions in a plausible and reassuring manner. He showed them his medications, set out in a way that appeared consistent with his proper use. He was able to explain his 'cued' suicide note in an ostensibly logical way and went along with the officers' request to pour out his alcohol. They did everything they reasonably could to test him for present suicidal intention and he passed the tests. It appears that not only was AP able to conceal his true intent from the police, but he was also able to deceive close family members in the time between the officers' visits and his eventual death.

The officers' only legal authority to apprehend AP, since there was no evidence that he had committed any offence or that he was arrestable on any other basis, would be section 28 of the *Mental Health Act*. That provision empowers a constable to take a person for medical evaluation (by force if necessary) if the person appears to have a mental disorder

and is acting “in a manner likely to endanger that person’s own safety or the safety of others”. The officer must be satisfied that this is the case either from personal observations or from information received. While the police may initially have had cause for concerns based on information they had received from CW1 and CW2, the manner in which AP presented himself would have dissipated those concerns and left the officers with insufficient grounds to apprehend him based on their personal observations. It would in fact have been unlawful for them to proceed with an apprehension and it was appropriate for them not to do so.

Accordingly, as Interim 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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Sandra J. Hentzen  
Interim Chief Civilian Director

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