

Title External Communications About IIO Investigations	Number 3030
Section Corporate	Original Effective Date January 26, 2015
Responsibility Chief Civilian Director	Last Revised Effective Date June 30, 2026

PURPOSE

A critical aspect of the IIO's work is to ensure the public is appropriately informed of matters under investigation. Section 38.121 of the *Police Act* sets out the authority for the Chief Civilian Director to provide information to the public. The IIO employs a practicable transparency model to determine the balance between the public and privacy interests associated with IIO investigations. The IIO commits to being as transparent as practicable, given the particulars of each investigation.

POLICY

1. The IIO reports to the public whenever the mandate to investigate is clearly met, including when deploying resources into communities, concluding investigations and disposition of matters before the courts. In cases where the mandate to investigate is not immediately evident, i.e., if a connection between any harm caused and police/detention guard action or inaction cannot immediately be determined or if the extent of injuries sustained is unknown, the public will, in most cases, be notified of the investigation once those factors have been confirmed.
2. The IIO reports to the public on a regular basis by providing information through the IIO website, including media releases and public reports. Social media is used to provide notice of new information on the website. Releases and reports are augmented by media comments made by the CCD or delegate. The website also provides information related to the administration of the IIO as well as IIO investigations.
3. The IIO manages all public reporting through the Media & Communications Liaison (MCL); the MCL ensures that information on the website is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Public Reports: Operations

4. The IIO issues a public report upon the conclusion of an investigation, if it is in the public interest to do so, when the Chief Civilian Director (CCD) concludes there are no reasonable grounds to believe that an officer or detention guard may have committed an offence. Public reports outline the evidence, narrative of the incident, legal considerations and rationale for the decision.
5. If the CCD determines it is not in the public interest to issue a public report, they may instead determine to conclude a matter by issuing a media release, or close without further public reporting, depending on the particulars of the investigation.
6. A media release is normally issued when the CCD opens an investigation, but usually only after both the connection to officer or detention guard actions and serious harm/death thresholds have been

met, with exceptions including matters of particular sensitivity and other reasons where issuing a statement could be detrimental to the investigation, affected person/family, or interest holder.

7. A media release may be issued when the circumstances identified above have not been confirmed if the matter has become public knowledge, where the police agency gives notice to the public that the IIO is involved, or in other circumstances where the CCD deems it appropriate.
8. If the IIO refers a file to the BC Prosecution Service (BCPS) for consideration of charges, the file will be considered as open and under investigation until the BCPS makes its charge assessment decision. The relevant case page on the IIO website will indicate the “Open – Investigation in Progress” status.
9. If the BCPS approves charges in the matter, the BCPS may issue a media release. The IIO will upload the media release to the file’s case page on the IIO’s website.
10. In cases where the BCPS does not approve charges, it will generally but not always publish a clear statement. Clear statements will also be uploaded to a file’s case page on the IIO website and the status changed to indicate no charges were approved.
11. In circumstances where the BCPS does not provide a clear statement, the IIO may publish a media release to inform the public that no charges were approved in the matter.

Public Reports: Annual Report

12. Pursuant to section 38.12 of the *Police Act*, the IIO will submit an annual report to the Attorney General by May 31 of each year. The annual report will include statistical information related to investigations and other administrative and operational matters, as specified within section 38.12.

PROCEDURES

13. The CCD will designate the IIO’s legal counsel, or other member of the IIO, to prepare the public reports referred to above in cases where it is determined necessary and the CCD has found there are no reasonable grounds to believe an offence may have been committed by any officer or detention guard.
14. IIO public reports outline the findings arising from the investigation, as well as the CCD’s rationale for the final decision. IIO public reports take into consideration individual privacy rights in considering what information contained in a written decision is appropriate for public release. When the CCD determines information in a public report raises specific privacy issues, they may submit the report for review to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) provided for by the *Police Act*. Upon receipt of any comments or recommendations from the OIPC, consideration is given to such recommendations, and the draft report is revised accordingly.
15. The timing for release of a public report varies depending on the circumstances. If there are concurrent court proceedings underway, this could be a factor in determining whether information is released publicly through a public report and/or the amount of information released. However, that factor must be balanced with the importance of maintaining public confidence in the oversight of

police by ensuring the public is fully informed about a matter where officer or detention guard action or inaction has led to the serious harm or death.

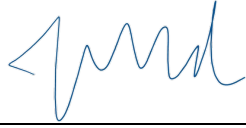
In any case where there is a possibility of concurrent or related court proceedings, the CCD will, prior to releasing information publicly, consult with the BCPS regarding whether a concurrent or anticipated prosecution may be impacted by the release of a public report.

Factors the CCD will consider when deciding to release information publicly will include:

- 15.1. The seriousness of the charges;
 - 15.2. Whether the mode of trial presents a greater potential for risk of prejudice, such as a jury trial as opposed to a trial by judge alone;
 - 15.3. The extent of public information about the matter which may make linking the anonymous report to the accused in the concurrent proceedings more likely;
 - 15.4. The amount of public information about the incident already in existence through other sources;
 - 15.5. The public interest in releasing information regarding IIO decisions at the earliest opportunity;
 - 15.6. Whether the public interest can be satisfied with an interim media release with limited information;
 - 15.7. Opinions expressed by the BCPS regarding the potential impact of the release of public information about the IIO decision upon any pending or extant prosecution; and
 - 15.8. Any other relevant information.
16. Embargoed copies of final IIO public reports are provided to those affected by the investigation, including the affected person/family, subject officer(s), liaison officer, agency command of the department(s) involved, the involved agency's communications staff, relevant government stakeholders and other oversight bodies as required (i.e., the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner or the Civilian Review of Complaints Commission for the RCMP).
 17. The CCD may refer an investigation to the BCPS when there are reasonable grounds to believe that an officer or detention guard may have committed an offence.
 18. In those circumstances where the CCD identifies issues related to training, policy or standards, information may be provided to the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC) or the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (CRCC), as well as the Director of Police Services and the involved police agency. The CCD may report on training/policy/standards issues in a public report if such reporting is necessary to ensure public confidence in police accountability.
 19. Public reports are released in accordance with established communications protocols, including the distribution of embargoed copies, posting to the IIO website and an announcement via social media.

POLICY

Approved by:



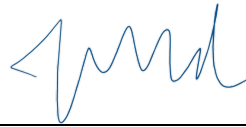
Jessica Berglund, Chief Civilian Director

Date Approved:

June 30, 2026

PROCEDURES

Approved by:



Jessica Berglund, Chief Civilian Director

June 30, 2026
