



**IN THE MATTER OF THE DEATH OF A YOUTH  
IN AN INCIDENT INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE  
RCMP AND THE SURREY POLICE SERVICE IN  
SURREY, BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ON FEBRUARY 9, 2025**

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

Chief Civilian Director:

Jessica Berglund

IIO File Number:

2025-038

Date of Release:

December 4, 2025

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This report details situations that may be distressing to some readers. If you are in crisis, help is available:

- Call 310-6789 to be connected to the crisis centre nearest you (no area code required)
- Crisis Services Canada: [crisisservicescanada.ca](https://crisisservicescanada.ca)
- British Columbia: [crisislines.bc.ca](https://crisislines.bc.ca)
- Vancouver and surrounding areas: [crisiscentre.bc.ca](https://crisiscentre.bc.ca)
- Vancouver Island: [vicrisis.ca](https://vicrisis.ca)
- VictimLinkBC: 1-800-563-0808

## INTRODUCTION

On the afternoon of February 9, 2025, the Affected Person (“AP”) called 911 saying he had a firearm and threatening to harm himself. Members from the RCMP Surrey Provincial Operations Support Unit and the Surrey Police Service responded and tried over a period of approximately 22 minutes to apprehend the AP. The AP pointed a gun, which was later determined to be a realistic-looking replica firearm, at police several times before two officers discharged their firearms at him. The AP was fatally wounded.

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 18 civilian witnesses and 10 witness police officers;
- police Computer-Aided Dispatch (“CAD”) and Police Records Information Management Environment (“PRIME”) records;
- police notes;
- audio recording of a 911 call and police radio transmissions;
- security camera video recordings from two locations;
- forensic examination and photographs of scene;
- examination of the AP’s cell phone;

- firearms examination and analysis;
- BC Emergency Health Services records; and
- autopsy report.

The IIO does not require an officer whose actions are the subject of an investigation to provide evidence. In this case, the Subject Officer (“SO”) has not given any account.

## NARRATIVE

At 2:38 p.m. on February 9, Surrey police received a 911 call from the Affected Person (“AP”). The AP said he had a revolver and was going to kill himself.

During the call, which lasted a total of 19 minutes, the call-taker asked the AP if he trusted the police, and he said he did not. The call-taker next asked if it was just a lack of trust or if he felt he wanted to harm the police as well, and the AP responded, “Both.” Shortly after this, at approximately 2:58 p.m., the AP suddenly shouted a profanity and said nothing further before the call was disconnected.

As officers responded, they were informed that the AP was 15 years old, was autistic and had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (“ADHD”). The AP had stated during his 911 call that he was autistic but had not mentioned ADHD. That further information was relayed over the radio by Witness Officer 1 (“WO1”), who was driving “Car 67,” the police mental health outreach unit with a mental health nurse riding as passenger. The nurse carried a laptop computer connected to medical records, so had been able to access the AP’s personal information. By 2:55 p.m., several officers had arrived on scene and attempted to locate the AP. Shortly after arrival, the officers were able to confirm visually that the AP was in possession of a realistic-looking handgun. Witness Officer 2 (“WO2”), the senior police officer on scene, told the IIO that his risk assessment at the time “was obviously very high” and that his plan was “to establish dialogue with [the AP] and do our very best to de-escalate the situation.” He said:

*We have a very public area. We have a SOC [subject of complaint] whose behaviour is currently unpredictable, and with a potentially loaded handgun. So, my concern for public safety was quite high.*

Referring to the information that the AP was autistic, Witness Officer 7 (“WO7”) said:

*...to be honest, it doesn’t change my risk assessment. It might even make it a little bit higher because I don’t know if that, does that add something to it? Like if you’re autistic does that mean, I don’t know, does*

*that make my ability to communicate with you different? I don't know.*

...

*The suicide aspect, the component that he'd originally laid out a plan, and he told it to dispatch, he told dispatch what he was going to do, was clearly like, a mental health crisis. Nothing to me to do with, like, autism, it's to do with, suicide, being suicidal. But yeah, we knew about that, but I don't know what it would have changed.*

When WO1 arrived at the scene, he exited his police vehicle to investigate but the accompanying mental health nurse remained in the car for safety reasons. WO1 explained that his job was "safety of the nurse so I would never introduce them in that scene [involving a gun call] at all." WO1 was the first officer to see the AP, who was sitting in the snow against a fence on the south side of a school soccer field. WO1 said he was not initially able to confirm visually that the AP had a firearm. WO1 told the IIO that he gave a "big friendly wave" to the AP, telling him, "I'm with the police and we're here to help you, please keep the gun on the ground." WO1 said the AP stood up and yelled "something to the effect of 'f\*\*\* off'." This exchange was overheard by two civilian witnesses interviewed later by the IIO. At 2:58 p.m., WO1 radioed that the AP was walking away.

Witness Officer 3 ("WO3") told investigators that as he was approaching from the north, he saw the AP about 50 metres away with what WO3 recognized as a gun in his hand. WO3 said he raised his police carbine (a type of rifle) and yelled, "Drop the weapon." He said the AP's response was to point the revolver "right at" the officer. Seeing that two civilians were present, directly behind the AP, WO3 said, he felt he did not have "a clear enough shot" so did not fire his carbine. Instead, he said, he found cover behind a protruding wall. WO3 said that when he peered out, he saw the AP running away and shouted for him to stop. The AP, he said, turned and pointed the revolver again, so WO3 again took cover. At approximately 3:01 p.m., the AP entered a nearby townhouse development. Officers followed on foot, calling out to the AP. Witness Officer 4 ("WO4") noticed that the AP had discarded a backpack, which WO4 found to be empty. The officers lost sight of the AP several times before re-establishing visual contact at about 3:05 p.m. as he exited the complex to detour back through the park. WO2 described the difficulties this created for police:

*The added challenge of numerous blind corners, and significant places for the subject to hide himself or conceal himself and potentially ambush us. It was not ideal. And in fact, we did lose visual contact at one point within that town housing complex with the SOC. And, a couple times, it obviously appeared that the containment we attempted.... to the west had failed as the subject had broken containment. So, this was a very*

*dangerous and fluid and dynamic situation that posed a tremendous risk to public safety. We were not able to establish dialogue. We're not even able to get him to acknowledge us. Hence, we can't even try to de-escalate.*

The AP encountered several civilian witnesses, one of whom later told IIO investigators that the AP had a “blank” facial expression, while others described him as looking “confused.” Residents described running away to hide. None of the civilian witnesses alleged that the AP threatened them directly, though one said he saw the AP walking away with the gun pointed back over his shoulder:

*Basically, this guy who looked around 17-ish and he was pointing a gun over his left shoulder straight back at me... He basically was just pointing it straight at me the whole time, like, he kept walking away from where I was going.*

A civilian witness who observed the AP briefly, a short time before the shooting, described the AP at that point as behaving “like he didn’t want to be walking...like someone has been following you, and you don’t want to be followed any more.” He said he saw the AP turning back towards the officers, then tripping and falling before continuing to walk away out of sight, several seconds before the sound of two gunshots.

Several of the civilian witnesses interviewed by the IIO had not personally observed any part of the incident, but had formed impressions from second-hand accounts, including media reports. Others had seen only a few seconds of the interactions between the AP and the officers but expressed strong opinions about the police response. One such eyewitness told the IIO, “There were so many cops...everyone came charging. It could have been handled so much better.”

Throughout the incident, the AP did not comply with police commands to drop his firearm and witness officers described him pointing the weapon several times at his own head and at officers, causing them to take cover. WO2 told the IIO that officers were unable to get close enough to establish a dialogue with the AP or to use “less lethal” force options (such as pepper spray, 40 mm projectiles or a Conducted Energy Weapon (“CEW” or “Taser”)).

Regarding the CEW, WO7 later told IIO investigators:

*It's an inappropriate intervention option when someone has a gun. It's just not appropriate. You've got to be within seven to 15 feet of the guy, which is crazy. It's not even effective a hundred per cent of the time, in fact it's probably 50-50. I teach it and people miss almost all the time, almost every time. And that's in training. I was – this was real. It just*

*wasn't an option. A shield's not an option, nothing, I don't know what. I don't know what we have that I could have used to stop it.*

WO2 described the AP's behaviour in this way:

*During this time, he was waving this – what appeared to be – a large calibre revolver around. Pointing it at times to his head, pointing at times at us, waving in the general direction of anyone in the vicinity.*

WO1 told investigators that he heard Witness Officer 5 (“WO5”) calling to the AP, “...pleading for him, ‘please don’t make me shoot you man, please don’t make me shoot you.’” WO7 told investigators:

*And he's putting the gun to his head, and he's not listening to anything. He's not talking, he's pointing the gun to us, he's not listening. He's clearly an active threat, he's clearly a threat to the public. He's moving towards the townhouses where there's people, there's people everywhere, and there's nothing you can do.*

At 3:11 p.m., Witness Officer 6 (“WO6”), attended with a Police Service Dog (“PSD”). He told the IIO that he encountered the AP at a distance of about 20 metres. WO6 said the AP was standing with a gun pointed at WO6, his finger on the trigger. WO6 said he expected that officers behind him, whom he considered to be his “lethal overwatch,” would intervene with force, but they did not. Instead, he said, they shouted at the AP, which drew the AP’s attention to them. WO6 said he was not close enough to deploy the PSD against the AP while also keeping it under control. He put the dog back in his police vehicle and started to drive, intending to attempt to strike the AP with the vehicle if there was an opportunity. Asked at interview about that option, WO7 responded:

*We're not going to knock him over [with a vehicle] because, that's going to put my police officer right up to a guy with a gun and he's going to get shot. And also, if you're going to run someone over, that's lethal force. So, less safe than just pulling the trigger, which is also something that I don't want to do, so what's another option?*

In an open parking lot, at about 3:15 p.m., WO1 prepared to discharge his 40 mm “less lethal” launcher (firing plastic projectiles with a foam sponge nose), at a distance beyond its usual maximum range, but said that when he called out to notify other officers of his intention, the AP fled at “a full run,” leaving the parking lot and moving away along a street between residences.

At 3:17 p.m., approximately 22 minutes after police had first showed up, the AP turned and pointed the revolver directly at nearby police. Two officers almost simultaneously discharged their firearms, and the AP was struck by one bullet. A civilian witness said he

heard officers telling the AP, "If you need help, please stop," but said the AP was pointing a gun at police as he was walking, with his finger on the trigger. The witness said he then heard two gunshots and thought the AP had fired his weapon.

WO2 described the moment in this way:

*Again, [the AP] was waving the pistol around. [The AP], from [sic] times held it to his temple, at times waved it at police officers, and subsequent to that, shots were fired at [the AP].*

WO4 told investigators that several officers were calling out to the AP, telling him they just wanted to talk, and to drop the gun, but the AP continued to wave and point the revolver:

*[The AP] then pulls out the gun and flashes it at us and my hand goes onto the trigger [of my firearm], and by then another member had shot... I heard one shot and saw [the AP] go down. And then I saw multiple members run to him and start providing CPR.*

The Subject Officer ("SO") and WO7 had fired at the AP within a second of each other. WO7 said he was taking cover, crouched behind a car, yelling at the AP to drop the revolver, when the AP suddenly pointed the gun directly at him:

*I thought he was about to shoot me, because he... it was the first time that he'd actually deliberately outstretched his hand, fully outstretched right at me ... I thought I was going to get killed. I thought, if he pulls the trigger right now, I'm dead ... I don't want to do this. It's not what I want to be doing, it's not what I signed up for. But I feared death or grievous bodily harm. There's nothing else to do, there's no other way to feel in an instance like that other than I'm about to die.*

...

*It's an outstretched arm, and there's a gun in his hand, and it's pointed directly at me. And I pulled the trigger. And as soon as I pulled the trigger, he fell on the ground.*

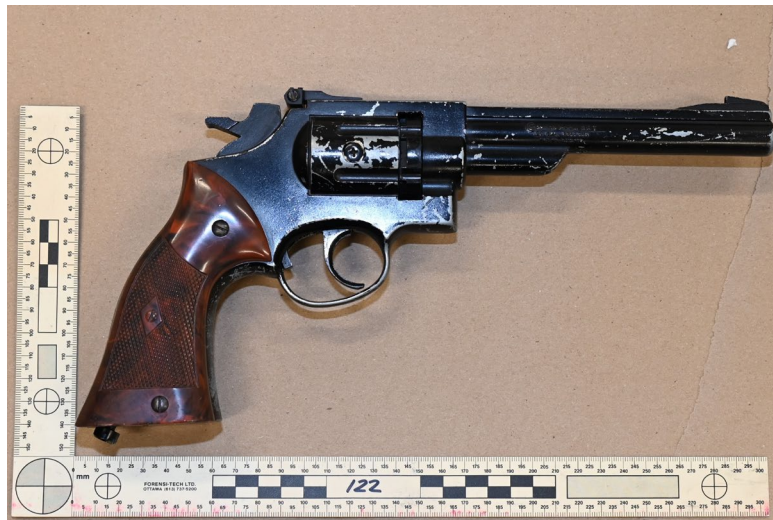
Officers immediately began lifesaving attempts and paramedics were called to attend. At 3:45 p.m., resuscitation attempts were discontinued, and the AP was declared deceased at the scene. He was found at autopsy to have suffered a fatal gunshot wound to the chest, subsequently identified as a shot fired by the SO.

Security camera video of the moments just before the shooting shows the AP walking, holding what appears to be a firearm against his own temple. His finger appears to be on or near the trigger. Voices can be heard shouting, "You don't want to do this," and "Put it



down man, put the gun down.” The AP then turns to face approaching officers. Walking backwards, he points the gun at the officers, his arm fully outstretched. The SO can be seen taking a position across the hood of a parked police vehicle, aiming a carbine, and WO7 approaches and crouches beside the vehicle. The AP walks backwards behind a large shrub, still pointing the gun, and two gunshots are then heard, very close together in time. Officers rush forward to where the AP is now lying.

The gun the AP was carrying looked like a real, functional firearm, but after the incident, police at the scene determined that it was a replica. Subsequent forensic analysis by a firearms expert witness retained by the IIO determined it was a .22 pellet air pistol, with a full CO2 cartridge, and six (6) pellets loaded into the rotary magazine.



## 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 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 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 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 is on the degree of threat posed by the 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.”

This tragic incident which resulted in the death of a cherished and loved son, grandson, nephew, cousin, friend and community member must be situated in the context of the extensive and wide-ranging discussion around policing and neurodiversity. Specifically, both before and following this incident, there have been calls by many groups, and a recognition by many police agencies in Canada, that their members need to be better trained in recognizing and responding to individuals who may be neurodivergent.

While no mandatory Autism Spectrum Disorder-related (ASD) training is currently provided to police officers in B.C., inquiries by IIO investigators have determined that a variety of less formal educational resources are available.

- The RCMP in BC have previously organized “open invitation” (non-mandatory) webinars on the topic of autism training for first responders.
- Aide Canada has a training video developed with the support of the RCMP and the Vancouver Police Department. It provides information for police officers on best practices to improve community safety for autistic persons.
- The Pacific Autism Family Network has partnered with various first responders, including BC police, to provide training on understanding the challenges faced by individuals with ASD. It also teaches de-escalation techniques.
- The Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) has a course for police that outlines indicators of autism and strategies for officers to adapt their approach during emergency situations.

Interviews with the witness officers in this case highlights the considerable variance in how awareness of the AP's ASD informed individual police officers' responses to the AP and to the threat he was perceived to represent.

Some of the officers interviewed by the IIO had some familiarity with issues around interacting with individuals on the autism spectrum. Those officers said that their awareness came from personal experiences interacting with ASD individuals during their police work. Two of the officers stated that the AP did not act how they would expect a "typical" person with ASD to act, based on those personal experiences. As set out above, one officer stated that information the AP was autistic made his threat assessment higher, because of the difficulty predicting what the AP might be intending.

The attempts to establish dialogue with the AP over a significant span of time and physical distance support a conclusion that some of the members, particularly WO1, were using techniques specifically taught in provincially mandated Crisis Intervention and De-escalation ("CID") training. The SO's training records indicate that he was up to date on his CID and Incident Management Intervention Model ("IMIM") certification. However, CID/IMIM training is focussed on how to deal with people in a mental health crisis and does not go as far as recognizing signs of ASD. None of the officers interviewed had been trained specifically in ASD, and there is no evidence that the SO had received such training.

The AP's lack of engagement with, or response to, the police throughout the incident has been described by ASD experts as sensory overload, and it is likely that the attempts at establishing dialogue and response were hampered by the sight of the officers' uniforms and firearms, and by the sounds of shouted commands. However, based on the contents of the AP's 911 call and his actions in pointing the realistic-looking firearm at both police and himself, the evidence shows that the witness officers focused on the appropriate tactical response to what they saw as a risk to public and police officer safety, as well as the risk of self harm by the AP. They noted that there was an individual with a gun who was not responding to police commands. They stated that they believed it was a real firearm and said they reasonably believed there was a threat to life. They added that the movements of the AP around the school and into the townhouse complex limited their ability to establish dialogue or negotiation. Officers reported losing sight of the AP multiple times. They relied on police training for such a situation, which includes a safety priority decision-making matrix to guide law enforcement during critical incidents, in the following order: public–police–suspect (in this case, the AP).

The responding officers were acting in the lawful execution of their duty in attempting to apprehend the AP, who was reasonably understood to be in possession of a loaded firearm and intending to harm himself with it in a public place. His behaviour when

approached, walking through a heavily populated residential area waving and pointing the weapon, gave rise to significant concerns for the safety of officers and the public. It was necessary to bring the AP under control and to disarm him, including using what force was reasonably necessary for that purpose.

Sadly, the AP's inability to cooperate with the officers, and pointing the replica firearm at them in a clearly threatening manner, gave objectively reasonable grounds for the officers to fear grievous bodily harm or death. The evidence shows that the threat became acute in the final moments of the interaction, recorded on video, when the AP pointed his weapon at police in a manner that appeared deliberate and threatening. It is significant that two officers felt justified in shooting, almost simultaneously, at that moment.

Police officers are trained to shoot at "centre mass" when deploying lethal force. This is because it is not possible to target a person's extremities with confidence, especially in a dynamic and threatening situation. The fact that WO7, firing his weapon in the same moments as the SO, missed the AP completely, illustrates this difficulty.

The evidence shows that all the involved officers attempted repeatedly, over a lengthy interaction lasting for more than 20 minutes, to resolve the situation without harm to anyone, including the AP. The outcome was tragic and not desired by anyone who was interviewed in this investigation; however, the death was not the result of any unjustified use of force by any officer.

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 Crown counsel for consideration of charges.



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Jessica Berglund  
Chief Civilian Director

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