



IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY AND PROTECTING COMMUNITIES:

Recommendations to the
Mass Casualty Commission

**NATIONAL POLICE
FEDERATION**

MCC RECOMMENDATIONS





The Mass Casualty Commission

Following the mass casualty that took place in Nova Scotia on April 18-19, 2020, the Federal Government and the Nova Scotia Provincial Government created, by a joint mandate, an independent public inquiry - the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC). This mass casualty event, and the untimely deaths of 22 innocent people, including one Member of the RCMP, left a deep impact on Nova Scotians and all Canadians. The MCC was given the mandate to provide clarity around the causes, context, and circumstances that led to the April 2020 mass casualty and make meaningful recommendations to help keep communities safe in the future.

In order to share the perspectives of our Members, who were directly involved in the RCMP response to the mass casualty, and to address public safety concerns, the National Police Federation (NPF) was granted formal participant status by the Commission and has been deeply engaged throughout the MCC process. The following report shares our recommendations stemming from the MCC, considering Members' perspectives and how to improve community and Member safety across the province and rest of Canada.

Many of the NPF's recommendations are oriented toward ensuring its Members will be better resourced, equipped, and supported the next time they are called upon to respond to a major critical incident.

About the NPF

The National Police Federation (NPF) is the sole certified bargaining agent representing close to 20,000 Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) across Canada and internationally, including about 990 RCMP Members in Nova Scotia. The NPF provides strong, fair, and progressive representation to promote and enhance the rights of RCMP Members below the rank of inspector.



Contents

Summary of Recommendations	4
RCMP Policing in Nova Scotia	8
Policing Resourcing	9
Provincial Policing Standards	11
Enhanced Support for Members Mental Health	12
Multi-Agency Support for Victims and Families	14
An Emergency Air Support Strategy for the Atlantic Region	15
Support for Critical Incident Response	16
References	21



Summary of Recommendations

Optimization of Police Resources in Nova Scotia

- Recommendation 1:** The Province of Nova Scotia discontinue the use of the “per officer” funding formula as a basis for cost recovery from municipalities policed by the RCMP under the Provincial Policing Service Agreement (PPSA) and conduct a review of its police resourcing models and funding formula, to allow for the identification and maintenance of an effective level of police personnel and resources in Nova Scotia.
- Recommendation 2:** The Province of Nova Scotia, RCMP, and municipal police services enter into formal cost-recovery agreements with respect to the provision of specialized services outside of RCMP contract jurisdiction.
- Recommendation 3:** The Province of Nova Scotia identify and support municipalities to maintain a minimum police strength in Nova Scotia.
- Recommendation 4:** The Province of Nova Scotia must immediately provide permanent stable funding and staff for specialized services in “H” Division.

Implementation of Comprehensive, Consistent Policing Standards

- Recommendation 5:** The Province of Nova Scotia adopt comprehensive, modern, and substantive provincial standards across all areas of police service delivery, including training, equipment, technology, specialized services, records management, administration, and operations, as developed by the provincial working group.
- Recommendation 6:** The Province enforce minimum levels of service delivery by requiring all agencies to have formal agreements for the provision of all necessary specialized services that they do not offer.
- Recommendation 7:** The Province set provincial policing standards, including training standards, that are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet legal requirements and best practices based on learning in police science, and expectations for adequate, consistent police service delivery and interoperability.
- Recommendation 8:** The Province of Nova Scotia conduct audits and evaluations of all police services based on provincial standards.



Enhanced Support for Member Mental Health

- Recommendation 9:** The RCMP must take steps to address organizational stressors which contribute to the risk of Operational Stress Injuries (OSI) in its Members.
- Recommendation 10:** The RCMP must provide critical incident aftercare for Members.
- Recommendation 11:** The RCMP provide evidence-based training and peer support to spouses and families of RCMP Members, recognizing the role they play in supporting Member wellness and the vicarious trauma they experience.

Multi-Agency Supports for Victims and Families

- Recommendation 12:** The RCMP and municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia establish policies to define the role of Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) following a mass casualty or comparable critical incidents, which is to identify victims and crime scenes, perform investigative tasks in support of the reunification of victims with family members, and facilitate the sharing of timely and accurate information about the mass casualty event and subsequent investigation with victims and families.
- Recommendation 13:** The RCMP and municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia establish protocols to guide the training and work of Family Liaison Officers.
- Recommendation 14:** The RCMP and municipal police agencies review existing policies and protocols applicable to critical incidents to provide for the activation of Family Liaison Officers as part of the critical incident package in mass casualty events, and to ensure that an adequate team of dedicated FLOs are trained and available in the event of a mass casualty or comparable critical incident.
- Recommendation 15:** The Province of Nova Scotia, in coordination with the RCMP and municipal police agencies, establish a dedicated 1-800 number for families to share and seek information about missing relatives during a mass casualty event, and provide appropriate public education about the 1-800 number.
- Recommendation 16:** The Province of Nova Scotia formalize its integrated support model to ensure appropriately resourced, seamless delivery of wraparound services to victims and families following a mass casualty event.



An Emergency Air Support Strategy for the Atlantic

Recommendation 17: The four Atlantic provinces and the Government of Canada develop and implement an Emergency Air Services Strategy, to ensure that air support is available to all police services in Atlantic Canada during critical incidents, including active shooter situations.

Improved Technology for Situational Awareness and Interoperability

Recommendation 18: The RCMP must acquire and implement technology necessary to immediately equip all specialized and unmarked vehicles with mobile workstations, equip the Operational Communications Centre/ Critical Incident Command and all Members with GPS and mapping, and integrate the computer aided dispatching systems used in its operational communications centres, to enable the tracking and monitoring of Members across provincial borders.

Recommendation 19: The Province of Nova Scotia must consult with the RCMP and municipal police agencies to develop a procurement strategy for the adoption of technology that allows for a common operating picture and situational awareness during a multi-agency response and adopt a provincial standard.

Recommendation 20: The RCMP and all municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia adopt and maintain up-to-date satellite mapping technology, and provide training to Critical Incident Commanders, Risk Managers, dispatchers, and frontline supervisors on the use and functionality of the mapping technology.

Recommendation 21: The Province of Nova Scotia lead a collaborative initiative involving all public safety agencies to achieve records and communications interoperability between all police agencies.



Resources and Best Practices to Support Critical Incident Response

Recommendation 22: The RCMP deploy an Operational Communications Centre (OCC) dispatcher to the command post as part of the critical incident package.

Recommendation 23: The RCMP deploy one or more trained analysts and Major Crimes Unit (MCU) investigators as part of the critical incident package.

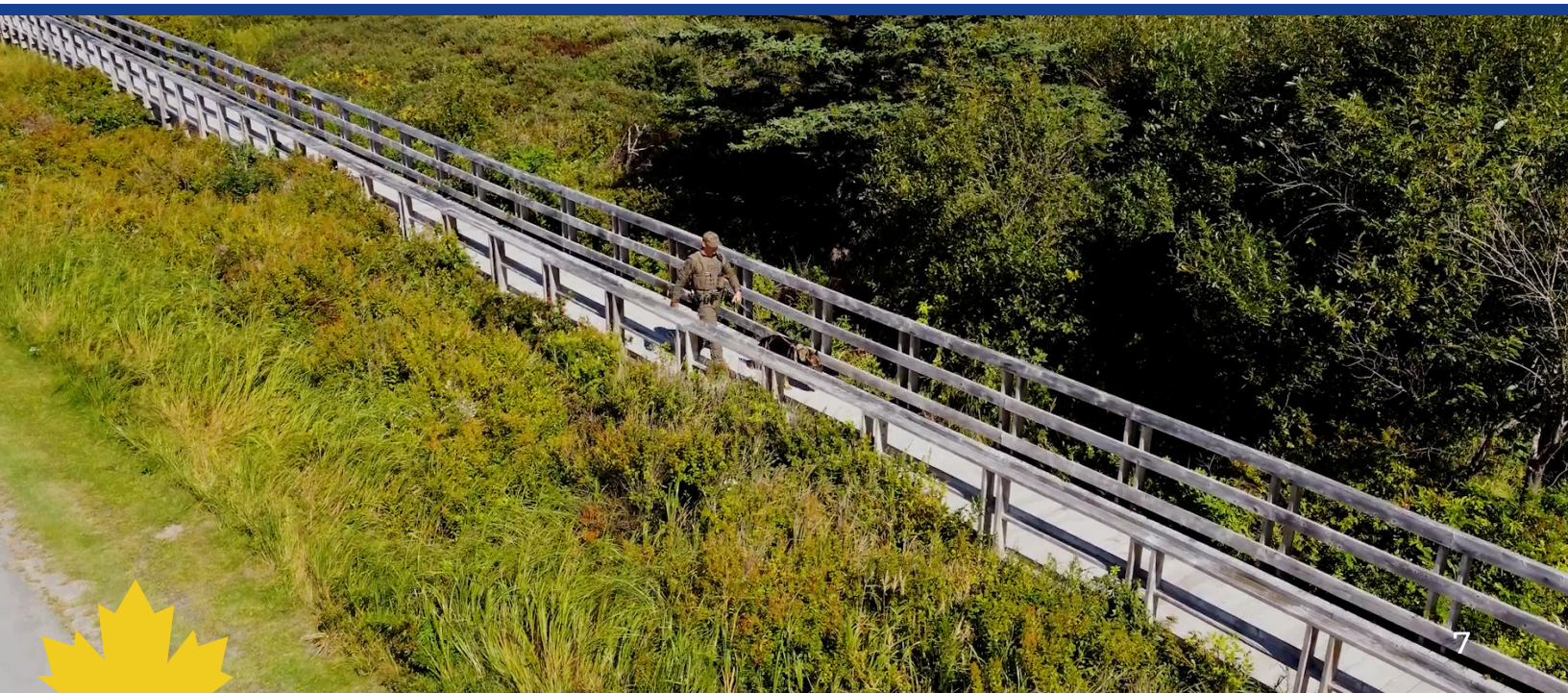
Recommendation 24: The RCMP embed a communications professional within the command post from an early stage of a critical incident.

Recommendation 25: The RCMP deploy additional scribes in major critical incidents to support Risk Managers and other members of the command triangle, such as the Tactical Operations Officer.

Recommendation 26: The RCMP endorse, as a best practice, that a second Risk Manager be called in to support the CIC in major critical incidents.

Recommendation 27: The RCMP provide a summary of key up-to-date information during a critical incident, to be broadcast over the radio and through the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system, at regular intervals so Members can maintain situational awareness and assess risk.

Recommendation 28: The RCMP continue to provide regular training on the command structure to frontline supervisors and general duty Members to ensure that Members remain knowledgeable about recent changes in the policy governing the command and control of critical incidents.

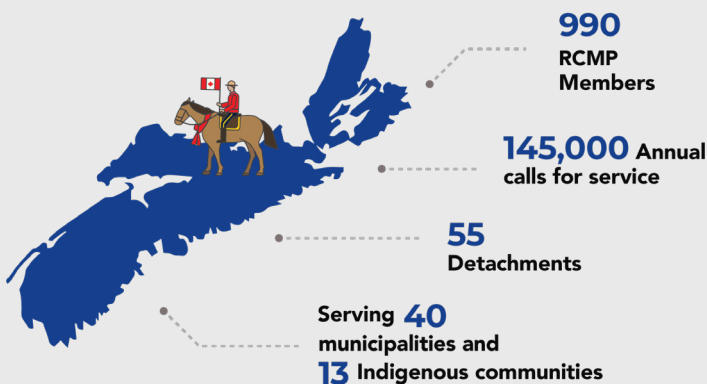


RCMP Policing in Nova Scotia

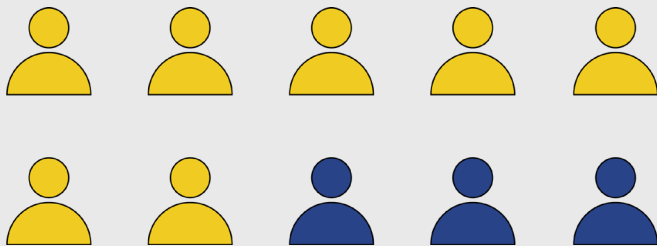
The RCMP has served as Nova Scotia's provincial police service since 1932 under the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA). As the provincial police service, the RCMP provides policing services to all Nova Scotians, offering a wide range of services to keep residents safe such as general duty policing, emergency and critical incident response teams, and specialized support services to other police agencies in the province.

The Nova Scotia RCMP operates under significant oversight by the Government of Nova Scotia. The RCMP work in partnership with the Attorney General and Minister of Justice to set the objectives, priorities, and goals of the provincial police service. The RCMP also works directly with the municipal governments to best serve their communities across the province.

The Nova Scotia RCMP by the numbers:



Support for the RCMP:



Nova Scotians support our recommendations*:

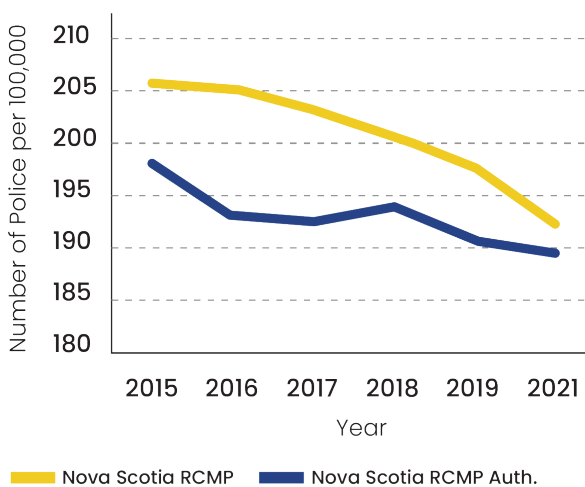
- 93% want consistent training and operational standards for police services.
- 91% want improved technology to enable police to communicate effectively.
- 90% want secure GPS technology to track police vehicles and officers
- 88% want mandatory wellness after-care for police and other public safety personnel
- 87% want province-wide emergency management coordination with full-time incident commanders
- 86% want improved coordination of air services between agencies
- 84% want increased resources for policing in rural and remote areas.

* Pollara Strategic Insights. July 2022.



Policing Resourcing

Nova Scotia RCMP Officers per 100,000



The RCMP is well positioned to provide comprehensive policing services that are responsive to the unique community needs of Nova Scotians. However, RCMP services must be adequately resourced to enable Members to conduct their duties.

In the past years, all police services across Canada have been facing resourcing shortages, spanning from challenges in recruitment to maintaining effective staffing levels. Since 2011, the rate of police strength in Canada¹ has either declined or held stable rather than increased.² This decline indicates the increased pressure on personnel resources, resulting in fewer police officers serving an ever-growing public population. These declines do not reflect day-to-day strength fluctuations, impacted by hard and soft vacancies or other resource strains that reduce the amount of available personnel.

During the mass casualty event, only four general duty Members were scheduled to work in the Bible Hill detachment as compared to the full staff

¹ Calculated through the rate of officers per 100,000 individuals, population-wise

complement of six Members.³

Detachments regularly operate at the minimum complement,⁴ with none of the detachment or district supervision roles staffed on the weekend or after hours.⁵ This is largely reflective of the lack of adequate resourcing for rural and remote policing across Nova Scotia.

The lack of resources during the mass casualty can also be seen in the specialized policing services in Nova Scotia. The Emergency Response Team (ERT) was not operating at its recommended complement of 18 full-time Members.⁶ Off-duty Members were called on to stand-up a team of 12 to be deployed to the mass casualty event of April 2020, resulting in Members not completing necessary shift breaks and not ending their shifts as usual.⁷ This led to those Members working double or triple shifts. In addition to personnel shortages in the ERT, the Emergency Medical Response Team (EMRT) was also understaffed. Only four out of six EMRT positions were filled in “H” Division and none were on-call at the beginning of the mass casualty event.⁸ Of these four filled positions there was no one available to serve in a coordination role for the team, greatly limiting its effectiveness.

Funding and Cost Recovery

- Under the PPSA the federal government pays for 30% of the cost of policing with the province covering 70%.

- However, the current billing model used by the province follows a “per officer” cost. This means that municipalities can only reduce their police budgets by reducing the number of police officers in their area.

- Without minimum standards for police service levels across the province, this results in the decline in the number of officers exasperating resource shortages.



Recommendation 1:

The Province of Nova Scotia discontinue the use of the “per officer” funding formula as a basis for cost recovery from municipalities policed by the RCMP under the PPSA, and conduct a review of its police resourcing models and funding formula, to allow for the identification and maintenance of an effective level of police personnel and resources in Nova Scotia.

Recommendation 2:

The Province, RCMP, and municipal police services enter into formal cost-recovery agreements with respect to the provision of specialized services outside of RCMP contract jurisdiction.

Recommendation 3:

The Province of Nova Scotia identify and support municipalities to maintain a minimum police strength in Nova Scotia that:

- Is effective for Nova Scotia's current population;
- Maintains 24-hour service coverage across the province;
- Permits Members to respond rapidly to calls for service, with consideration for the vast geographic areas of rural Nova Scotia, road conditions, weather systems, and other obstacles;
- Is informed not only by trends in crime reporting, but also by other community needs and expectations;
- Enables Members to respond with a partner in dangerous situations, in calls for service where the presence of firearms is likely, and for other tasks requiring both communication and security roles (e.g., containment);
- Allows for proactive policing assignments that enable personnel to engage in consistent community policing activities and establish and maintain situated local knowledge; and,
- Factors in “worst case scenario” and critical incident planning and preparedness.

Recommendation 4:

The Province of Nova Scotia must immediately provide permanent stable funding and staff for specialized services in “H” Division including:

- 24 full-time ERT Members;
- One full-time EMRT Member in a coordinator and operational role; and,
- Four full-time Police Dog Services positions.



Provincial Policing Standards

Provincial police training standards are typically issued by the provincial Department of Justice and Public Safety. The department and the Minister provide advice and direction to police services in response to new legislation or changes in law, or to address emerging police and public safety issues. Nova Scotia's current police training standards do not reflect current training needs or provide clear guidance in consistency of training to police services. Policing Standards Chapter 18,⁹ which highlights training of law enforcement personnel, does not provide details for basic training standards, such as firearms and ammunition training and re-certification. The Provincial Government needs to focus on increasing the consistency of training standards and develop a clear set of standards that each police service is required to maintain.

Strong provincial policing standards will support better interoperability between policing services in Nova Scotia.

Fragmented policing models create significant challenges for interoperability, when members of different police agencies do not have the same type or level of training, equipment, technology, or protocols. Provincial policing standards can provide a strong foundation for better cooperation by ensuring that police officers receive the same training and equipment.

Recommendation 5:

The Province of Nova Scotia adopt comprehensive, modern, and substantive provincial standards across all areas of police service delivery, including training, equipment, technology, specialized services, records management, administration, and operations, as developed by the provincial working group.

Recommendation 6:

The Province enforce minimum levels of service delivery by requiring all agencies to have formal agreements for the provision of all necessary specialized services that they do not offer.

Recommendation 7:

The Province set provincial policing standards, including training standards, that are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet legal requirements and best practices based on learning in police science, and expectations for adequate, consistent police service delivery and interoperability.

Recommendation 8:

The Province of Nova Scotia conduct audits and evaluations of all police services based on provincial standards.





Enhanced Support for Member Mental Health

The Nova Scotia mass casualty was a traumatic event that impacted many people in a significant way. These events are sudden, emotionally powerful, and outside the range of usual human experience and may have a strong emotional effect, even on well-trained and experienced police officers. Mental health outcomes related to mass shootings include, but are not limited to:

- Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS)
- Major depression
- Anxiety
- Acute stress disorder
- Mood disorders
- Addiction-related conditions.¹⁰

“Traumatic exposures can be significantly associated with several mental disorders, including PTSD, but also depression, generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder”¹¹

These require emotional and psychological supports, including in the immediate aftermath and ensuing years through to recovery. Unfortunately, following the mass casualty, many Members of the RCMP reported that they did not feel they received the care that they needed. Due to resourcing constraints,

many of those who have experienced negative impacts to their mental health have not taken time off. Additional organizational barriers have also impacted RCMP Members' ability to seek the support they need following this tragic event.

Following a tragedy, such as the mass casualty, it is important for the RCMP to be flexible in the care they provide to their Members, even allowing temporary modifications to policies to allow for the individualized care needed. Additionally, it is critically important that staffing levels are maintained so that Members can take off the time they need to recover, and that the organization embraces a shift in culture so that officers, supervisors, and others understand the need to seek care and support.

RCMP Member Mental Health:

- First Responder's may be exposed to between 800 to 1000 traumatic incidents over their career.¹²
- According to an internal survey conducted by the NPF between July 29, 2022, to August 8, 2022 of H Division RCMP Members, 72% of respondents reported the mass casualty had a notable impact on their mental health.
 - This was most common for those who responded or were part of the investigation with 87% reporting a notable impact to their mental health.¹³



Recommendation 9:

The RCMP must take steps to address organizational stressors which contribute to the risk of OSI in its Members. In particular, the Commission should recommend that the RCMP must provide:

- Policy for the temporary modification of regular duties to allow for appropriate individual or team reintegration or recovery from a critical incident, without going “off duty sick” or first being deemed medically unfit for regular duties;
- Adequate staffing to reduce burnout and permit administrative, medical, or other leaves necessary to promote wellness; and
- Enhanced mental health training for supervisors and officers, to promote cultural change.

Recommendation 10:

The RCMP provide critical incident aftercare for Members, including:

- Ensuring sufficient, appropriately trained resources are available to conduct CISD;
- Following up in a structured manner with all involved Members, to ensure they are receiving the support they need after the CISD, including one on one counseling; and
- Improving effectiveness of formal peer support programs through appropriate training, staffing, and resourcing, and ensuring that the approach to peer support is evidence-based.

Recommendation 11:

The RCMP provide evidence-based training and peer support to spouses and families of RCMP Members, recognizing the role they play in supporting Member wellness and the vicarious trauma they experience.



Multi-Agency Support for Victims and Families

Throughout the MCC it became apparent that there is a severe lack of dedicated support for victims and their families outside of the services provided by the RCMP. This reflects a larger, and problematic trend, where police are required to fill in service for those in need. Support services need to be dramatically improved and the role of police officers, when required to provide this support, needs to be more clearly and narrowly defined.

To strengthen these support services the Province of Nova Scotia should invest in existing programs such as Nova Scotia Victims Services. This organization already has a clear mandate to help victims and their families navigate the criminal justice system, however, was not adequately resourced to deal with the events of the mass casualty. By expanding supports to services such as these, the province can limit the responsibilities of police services to do so while at the same time ensuring families get the care they need, from those who are trained appropriately.

Police officers are an integral part of support services needed for families, however their responsibilities must be more clearly defined. Through the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) program, police officers are best suited to aiding in the identification of victims and performing investigative tasks in support of the reunification of victims and families. They can also help in the sharing of timely and accurate information, in a way that protects an ongoing investigation. However, beyond this there needs to be specialized supports for families provided by civilian agencies who can provide the trauma-informed care the families need.

“Most police officers have that opportunity to deal with people, they develop some skills... [however] a family liaison is only to be a conduit for the information. To me, the family liaison is not to call insurance companies” – Cst. Wayne Bent¹⁴

Recommendation 12:

The RCMP and municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia establish policies to define the role of FLOs following a mass casualty or comparable critical incidents, which is to identify victims and crime scenes, perform investigative tasks in support of the reunification of victims with family members, and facilitate the sharing of timely and accurate information about the mass casualty event and subsequent investigation with victims and families.

Recommendation 13:

The RCMP and municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia establish protocols to guide the training and work of FLOs.

Recommendation 14:

The RCMP and municipal police agencies review

existing policies and protocols applicable to critical incidents to provide for the activation of FLOs as part of the critical incident package in mass casualty events, and to ensure that an adequate team of dedicated FLOs are trained and available in the event of a mass casualty or comparable critical incident.

Recommendation 15:

The Province of Nova Scotia, in coordination with the RCMP and municipal police agencies, establish a dedicated 1-800 number for families to share and seek information about missing relatives during a mass casualty event, and provide appropriate public education about the 1-800 number.

Recommendation 16:

The Province of Nova Scotia formalize its integrated support model to ensure appropriately resourced, seamless delivery of wraparound services to victims and families following a mass casualty event.



An Emergency Air Support Strategy for the Atlantic Region

The RCMP's Atlantic Region Air Services (ARAS) is based in Moncton, New Brunswick, and provides air services to all four Atlantic provinces. Air support was requested during the mass casualty event but was unavailable.

In Moncton, there was a helicopter equipped with thermal imaging and certified to fly at night and a fixed-wing aircraft; however, the thermal imaging equipment was removed from the fixed-wing aircraft after a 2015 budget cut.¹⁵

On the weekend of April 18 and 19, 2020, neither aircraft was available to provide air support as both were grounded for scheduled maintenance. The helicopter went out of service March 1, 2020. Typically, this inspection would take four weeks but, in this case, it was grounded until May 12, 2020, due to COVID-19 related staff shortages.¹⁶

The fixed-wing aircraft would have usually been available before the helicopter was grounded; however its maintenance was also delayed due to the pandemic.¹⁷

Implementation of an Atlantic Emergency Air Support Strategy could help prevent a future casualty event from happening in the future by ensuring air support availability at all times.

This Emergency Air Service Strategy should incorporate police helicopter interoperability with search and rescue and fire services. Air services would need to be equipped with enough staff and aircraft to operate 24/7 to ensure there are no gaps in availability.

Recommendation 17:

The four Atlantic provinces and the Government of Canada develop and implement an Emergency Air Services Strategy, to ensure that air support is available to all police services in Atlantic Canada during critical incidents, including active shooter situations. This strategy must:

- Ensure that all police services in Atlantic Canada have formal agreements to access either RCMP ARAS or other air support resources at any time.
- Consider the various purposes for which police may require air support, including (but not limited to) transport of specialised personnel, surveillance, or active shooter cover.
- Ensure that as a top tier of air support, police in Atlantic Canada have access at any time on an urgent basis to an aircraft and pilot which are capable of flying at night, and during an active shooter situation, equipped with thermal imaging technology and other search and rescue equipment.
- Allow for collaboration between police and other emergency response agencies to share access to civilian agency or private aircraft, for efficient allocation and shared funding of resources.
- Provide for clear policies and procedures to rapidly access air support throughout the Atlantic provinces, depending on police requirements and for all partner agencies, and ensure that critical incident commanders and police dispatchers are trained to request these services.
- Ensure that RCMP ARAS or other air support resources that form part of the regional strategy are resourced to ensure sufficient aircraft, pilots, and maintenance personnel, to offer support 24 hours per day/365 days per year.





Improved Technology for Situational Awareness and Interoperability

The mass casualty event in Nova Scotia was an unpredictable and complex event that required swift response from various frontline services, including an integrated and cohesive approach from multiple police services. This integrated approach had to be quickly executed in a rapidly evolving, high-stress environment.

Interoperability issues between public safety personnel have been discussed in other major events, including Moncton in 2014. The independent review that followed recognized there were challenges with communications systems including radio technology and use, interoperability, and encryption, which limited effective communications between officers during the incident.¹⁸

Part of the post-event examination of the Portapique mass casualty event has included evidence that demonstrated RCMP Members and dispatchers provided regular updates to other districts and police agencies throughout by telephone calls and “be on the look out” (“BOLO”) alerts. The available technology however, limited the effectiveness of this interagency communication.

Establishing consistent and interoperable systems is integral for effectively sharing information between police services while minimizing risk of disjointed response or information gaps.¹⁹

Throughout the MCC, a lack of adequate access to technology such as GPS, radio, case management, and dispatch systems, and high-resolution satellite mapping was demonstrated. These tools would have aided the RCMP’s efforts on the ground and improved the integration of other police services in the response. Going forward we need to learn from these events and must allow for incident commanders to better track and communicate with Members of the RCMP and other police agencies.



Recommendation 18:

The RCMP acquire and implement technology necessary to:

- Immediately equip all specialized and unmarked vehicles (e.g., ERT, EMRT, PDS, TAV, GIS, FIS) with MWS.
- As soon as possible and no later than December 2023, equip the OCC/CIC and all Members with, and train all Members in the use of, GPS and mapping technology to allow them to be tracked and monitored in and out of their vehicles in real time, such as the Android Tactical Assault Kit (ATAK) system and/or a GPS-enabled portable radio system that integrates with CIIDS.
- Integrate the computer aided dispatching systems used in its operational communications centres, such as by establishing a “super agency” CAD, to enable the tracking and monitoring of Members across provincial borders.

Recommendation 19:

The Province of Nova Scotia:

- Consult with the RCMP and municipal police agencies to develop a procurement strategy for the adoption of technology that allows for a common operating picture and situational awareness during a multi-agency response.
- Adopt a provincial standard requiring, at a minimum, that all municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia adopt GPS and mapping technology to allow their general duty and specialist members to be tracked and monitored by their dispatchers both in and out of their vehicles, in real time.

Recommendation 20:

The RCMP and all municipal police agencies in Nova Scotia:

- Adopt and maintain up-to-date satellite mapping technology, such as Pictometry, capable of providing high-resolution images of all areas within their policing jurisdictions.
- Provide training to Critical Incident Commanders, Risk Managers, dispatchers, and frontline supervisors on the use and functionality of the mapping technology, which should be refreshed on an annual basis.

Recommendation 21:

The Province of Nova Scotia lead a collaborative initiative involving all public safety agencies, similar to that used to develop the TMR2 radio system, to achieve records and communications interoperability between all police agencies, including to adopt:

- A common CAD system, or CAD systems that are interoperable, so that accurate information can be shared and accessed easily between public safety agencies in real time as a critical incident unfolds.
- A provincial standard requiring all police agencies in Nova Scotia to operate on PROS, or another common records management system.





Support for Critical Incident Response

Members of the RCMP responsible for commanding the critical incident response faced an overwhelming amount of information, while trying to understand a continuously evolving event. These unprecedented circumstances created pressures on individual Members to process, analyze, and communicate information, while making critical decisions.

This incident highlighted the limitations of the command post as currently structured and resourced. **It showed that the creation of additional dedicated roles within a command post to improve a future response to a highly complex or prolonged incident is critical and that best practices be adapted to better prepare commanders.**

These additional roles would allow better management of priorities amongst key Members of critical incident command and allow for more time dedicated to critically important tasks. Additional roles will also need to be paired with additional training and support for members of the command post, and more timely updates on information to Members to improve their own situational awareness and assessment of risk.

Examples of additional dedicated roles that should be integrated within the command post:

- A dispatcher to transfer information more quickly
- Criminal intelligence analysts and investigators to parse through information
- Strategic communications professionals to facilitate better public updates
- Second Risk Manager to support critical incident command with taskings
- Dedicated scribes for key members of the team



Recommendation 22:

The RCMP deploy an OCC dispatcher to the command post as part of the critical incident package, dedicated to monitoring radio traffic and dispatch logs and feeding information to the CIC to ensure that key information is captured, investigated, and actioned as appropriate.

Recommendation 23:

The RCMP deploy one or more trained analysts and MCU investigators as part of the critical incident package to review and analyse intelligence such as early 911 calls, and pursue resulting investigative leads, in support of the critical incident response.

Recommendation 24:

The RCMP embed a communications professional within the command post from an early stage of a critical incident to ensure timely and accurate communication to the public, by reducing opportunities for delays in communication and gaps in information or understanding.

Recommendation 25:

The RCMP deploy additional scribes in major critical incidents to support Risk Managers and other members of the command triangle, such as the Tactical Operations Officer.

Recommendation 26:

The RCMP endorse as a best practice that a second Risk Manager be called in to support the CIC in major critical incidents.

Recommendation 27:

The RCMP provide a summary of key up-to-date information, during a critical incident, to Members so they can maintain situational awareness and assess risk, to be broadcast over the radio and through the CAD system, at regular intervals.

Recommendation 28:

The RCMP continue to provide regular training on the command structure to frontline supervisors and general duty Members, to ensure that Members remain knowledgeable about recent changes in the policy governing the command and control of critical incidents.





Conclusion

The horrific events that happened on April 18-19, 2020 have left a distinct and permanent mark on Nova Scotians and all Canadians. The scale of the tragedy that unfolded and the impact that it had is immeasurable and has left many of us with the distinct feeling that we have a responsibility to work together to ensure that something like this will not happen again.

The NPF and our Members feel this responsibility acutely and are dedicated to ensuring we can prevent such a tragedy in the future. This report outlines some of the key recommendations we believe must be fully and completely implemented in order to adequately and appropriately protect all Canadians. Our Members are committed to providing the best service to all communities across the country and despite the hardships, they continue to proudly serve all Canadians. We hope that others too share this commitment and are willing to work with us to make these recommendations possible.



References

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- ³ Testimony of IARD Witness Panel, March 28, 2022, COMM0053615, p.11, lines 25-28
- ⁴ Testimony of Sgt. Andy O'Brien, May 31, 2022, COMM0058858, p. 9, line 21 to p. 10, line 12
- ⁵ Testimony of S/Sgt. Bruce Briers, May 25, 2022, COMM0058605, p. 13, lines 1-2
- ⁶ Testimony of S/Sgt. Jeff West, May 18, 2022, COMM0058603, p. 81, lines 16-24; Testimony of Cpl. Tim Mills, May 16, 2022, COMM0058513, p. 68, lines 18-19
- ⁷ Testimony of Cpl. Mills and Cpl. Trenton, pg 27, Mass Casualty Commission COMM00585120028 https://masscasualtycommission.ca/files/documents/transcripts/EN_20220516_PublicHearings_Transcript.pdf
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