



October 25, 2017

Ms. Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Province of British Columbia
PO Box 9259
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J4

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

Thank you for your correspondence of August 22, 2017, regarding the verdict at inquest into the death of Naverone Woods, and the recommendation with respect to expediting ballistic services provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) National Forensic Laboratory Services.

The National Forensic Laboratory Services (NFLS) agrees with the recommendation that a more appropriate response time is needed. In 2014, a consolidation of national forensic laboratories was undertaken to ensure the long-term sustainability of forensic services in Canada. This decision was based on several internal and external studies conducted over the years, some of which indicated that reducing the number of laboratories would increase efficiency while decreasing operating costs. The goal of the laboratory consolidation was to enable the RCMP to more effectively deliver quality and timely forensic services to its police and provincial clients.

Although the forensic capacity for programs such as firearms has been maintained, a number of laboratory personnel, however, choose not to relocate when the sites closed. The resulting 60% reduction in experienced scientists within the Firearms and Toolmark Identification caused significant loss of capacity and concomitantly significant increases in response time. Unfortunately, until the positions are fully staffed and the employees trained there will be a temporary negative impact on capacity. NFLS has therefore taken steps to remedy the situation, including initiating an aggressive capacity re-building exercise (hiring and training); undertaking a comprehensive program review to identify and implement program efficiencies; and, contracting qualified external service provider(s) to assist with backlog reduction. These activities are nearing completion and it is anticipated that response times should be improved within the next fiscal year. NFLS will consult (post capacity build) with its clients with respect to developing an appropriate service standard in police involved shootings.

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During the transition, cases/requests within the firearms service load are continually reprioritized based on the severity of the crime, the forensic value of the examination requested, and the requirement to meet any identified upcoming court dates or investigational pressures. This ensures that key evidence is examined in the most timely and effective fashion to meet the needs of our clients within the law enforcement and legal communities.

I trust that this information is satisfactory.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Oldford', written over a horizontal line.

Chief Superintendent Wade Oldford
Director General
National Forensic Laboratory Services



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Ms. Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
PO Box 9259
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J4

Dear: Ms. Lapointe:

Thank you for your letter of August 22, 2017, regarding the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Mr. Naverone Christian Landon Woods. The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) has carefully reviewed the recommendations and has outlined its response to the Jury's recommendation number eight, that was directed to the Ministry.

Jury Recommendation #8 to the Ministry of Health, Province of BC:

Provide education through advertising to inform and educate the public and families on how to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health issues and drug and alcohol addiction problems, as well as available resources and assistance programs.

Presiding Coroner Comment:

The jury noted that regular education regarding mental health and substance misuse issues may prevent similarly tragic incidents from occurring in the future.

MoH RESPONSE:

The Ministry accepts this recommendation

A range of evidence-based mental health and substance use literacy and education initiatives are delivered by health authorities, K-12 and post-secondary educational settings, workplaces, and community-sector organizations.

Further, the province has implemented efforts to make it easier for the public to identify and access mental health and substance use resources.

1. www.heretohelp.bc.ca is a provincial website, coordinated by the Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division, in collaboration with other community-based mental health and substance use organizations. This website contains a broad range of evidence-based and plain language resources designed to help people recognize signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use problems and seek help. This work is stewarded by the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority.

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2. The province has funded the implementation of SafeTalk and ASIST, to train thousands of British Columbians to recognize the signs that someone might be contemplating suicide and seek appropriate help. Funded by the Ministry of Health, this effort is led by the Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division in partnership with community crisis line agencies and is designed to reach average citizens with this life-saving information. More information can be found here: <https://www.cmha.bc.ca/programs-services/community-gatekeeper-training/>.
3. A number of community organizations deliver specific psycho-educational courses in communities throughout British Columbia, designed to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote help-seeking. Partnership Education Presentations are delivered by the BC Schizophrenia Society (BCSS). More information about this work can be found here: <http://www.bcss.org/aboutbcss/2007/05/partnership-education/>. Mental Health First Aid training has also been delivered in key settings across British Columbia. This training is designed to help the public recognize signs of distress and respond accordingly. The training has been implemented in educational settings and workplaces across BC. General information can be found here: <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca/en>.
4. Earlier in 2017, the Ministry of Health launched a provincial hub of mental health and substance use resources coupled with the 811 telephone resource to help people find and access help. This online resource contains descriptions and links to a wide range of mental health and substance use supports and is accessible here: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc>.

The Ministry recognizes that public education about mental health and substance use is a key pillar in reducing stigma, increasing help-seeking, and helping to ensure the right kind of help is available at the right time.

Thank you for writing to me and bringing these matters to my attention. This is an issue on which the Ministry, through these and other collaborative projects, is putting a tremendous amount of focus.

Sincerely,



Stephen Brown
Deputy Minister



October 11, 2017

Lisa Lapointe, Chief Coroner
British Columbia Coroners Service
PO Box 9259
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9J4

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

**Re: Verdict at Inquest into the death of:
WOODS, Naverone Christian Landon BCCS Case File #2014-0380-0010**

Three of the eight Jury recommendations made at the Coroner's Inquest concerning the death of Naverone Christian Landon Woods were directed at TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company, the wholly-owned subsidiary of TransLink responsible for bus operations. Coast Mountain Bus Company is providing this response behalf of TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company.

Recommendation #3:

Implement training scenarios for bus drivers, security staff and all personnel to have training in dealing with members of the public with mental health issues, intoxication issues, etc. and be trained in how to access emergency personnel quickly.

Coast Mountain Bus Company supports this recommendation. All new Operator and Security Officer Training classes now incorporate specialized Violent Incident Prevention (VIP) content. This training focusses entirely on difficult passenger situations, including dealing with those who may be intoxicated or impaired as well as those with mental illnesses or other similar afflictions/issues. This training will continue to be provided to existing Transit Operators and Security staff on an annual basis. In addition, Coast Mountain Bus Company will expand this training to Transit Supervisors and additional frontline staff.

Recommendation #4:

Ensure transit personnel have direct access to 911 (i.e. a 'panic button').

Coast Mountain Bus Company supports this recommendation. Currently, Transit Operators have multiple ways of contacting the Transit Communications Centre in the event of an emergency, including the "RTT button" (regular request to talk on digital radio), the "PRTT button" (priority request to talk over radio) and the "EA alarm", or assault/emergency alarm. The "EA alarm"

opens covert microphones inside the bus, which immediately connects to a Transit Communications Supervisor for monitoring and dispatching the appropriate emergency services.

In addition, the Transit Communications Centre has the capability to “3-way” call 911 immediately after the “EA alarm” is received from the operator. This allows for a direct conversation between the Transit Communications Supervisor, the Transit Operator, and the 911 Dispatcher. This is an operational tool that is currently utilized in the event of a “major incident”. Coast Mountain Bus Company will review the “3-way” calling policy to determine if enhancements can be made to the current procedures.

Recommendation #5:

Explore options for a direct communication channel between transit operators.

Coast Mountain Bus Company supports this recommendation. The current radio system allows for the Transit Communications Supervisor to filter all system-wide radio communications to a single channel, which allows for all radio transmissions to be heard system-wide by all Operators in the event of an emergency. In addition, the Transit Communications Centre also has the capability of sending text messages to the display screen of every bus out in the system to ensure all Operators receive important information.

Coast Mountain Bus Company will also explore the possibility of establishing open “channel sectors” once the new radio system is implemented in 2019. If established, this would allow for Operators to hear all radio traffic in their primary service area.

Sincerely,



Haydn Acheson
President & General Manager
Coast Mountain Bus Company