

October 16, 2020

**DELIVERED VIA EMAIL**

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**RE: Verdict at Coroners Inquest**  
**File Number 2015-0666-0050**

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Dear Ms. Lapointe:

I write with respect to the jury recommendations which resulted from the above Inquest. Specifically, the recommendation below.

*To: Chief Civilian Director of the Independent Investigations Office of British Columbia (IIO)*

*4. Recommendation: The IIO open an office in Prince George to address the issue of delay in getting to scenes in Northern BC rural/remote areas.*

It is unfortunate that I was not asked about the many considerations that surround this issue while I was testifying before the jury. That would have allowed me to provide the background information that would have been relevant for a jury when considering a question such as this.

Those considerations are many and varied, and include cost, ability to share resources between investigative teams, training and mentoring, team morale, culture development, and ensuring investigative excellence.

Of particular concern is the fact that the *Police Act* requires that the Chief Civilian Director (CCD) give oversight to all investigations and provides that the CCD is the only person who makes decisions regarding whether a matter is forwarded to the Crown for the consideration of charges. These are essential features to the basic principles of civilian oversight: that a non-police civilian is responsible for all investigations.

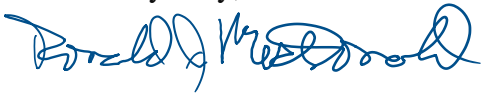
Locating a portion of our investigative team permanently away from the central office of the IIO may present challenges to these principles. Of note, the culture of an investigative office is

critical to our process, as it ensures thoroughness, timeliness, and objectivity. Influencing an appropriate culture is more effectively achieved within a single office. Simply put, ensuring consistency is much more easily achieved when the work is all performed under one roof.

Having said that, the experience of the past seven months has forced the IIO to work in a more virtual environment. We have learned lessons from the experience, both positive and negative. Those experiences have already caused us to give consideration to alternate work models. Whether that includes the potential for having a satellite office elsewhere in the province remains to be seen but will likely be a future discussion topic.

Thank you very much.

Yours very truly,



Ronald J. MacDonald, QC  
Chief Civilian Director