

July 18, 2017

IIU concludes investigation into allegation of assault and theft by WPS officers

The Independent Investigation Unit of Manitoba (IIU) has concluded its investigation into a complaint by a suspect that two members of the Winnipeg Police Service assaulted him while he was in custody and stole money from him. The IIU has determined there are no grounds for any charges against the officers.

The man had been arrested October 4, 2016 on a number of charges. Two weeks later, he complained to WPS that, while in custody, an officer had bent his hand behind his back, causing it to break and require surgery. As this is a serious injury as defined by regulations, the IIU assumed responsibility for the investigation. During the course of interviews with the IIU, the man also claimed officers had stolen money from his apartment; this allegation was included in the investigation.

In addition to speaking with the affected person, IIU investigators reviewed video of the man's attendance at WPS headquarters and the Winnipeg Remand Centre; received the opinion of the surgeon who repaired the man's hand; and interviewed a number of police and civilian witnesses--including a woman who told investigators that, shortly before his interactions with police, the man punched a wall with closed fists, hurting one of his hands in the process.

In his report on the investigation, IIU Civilian Director Zane Tessler stated the man's intoxicated state called into question his recollections of the incident. Taking all the evidence into account, Tessler wrote he was not satisfied that reasonable and probable grounds exist to justify any charge of assault, nor of theft, against the officers.

The man remains before the Court on charges arising out of this incident. The civilian director's report on the investigation will be posted online following disposition of the charges.

The details of this investigation were first reported on October 25, 2016.

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