

March 9, 2018

IIU concludes investigation into officer-involved shooting in Portage la Prairie

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into the pursuit and shooting of a male suspect in Portage la Prairie last summer. It has concluded that no charges should be laid against the subject officer.

On June 27, 2017 RCMP officers responded to reports of an armed male who had stolen a vehicle in Headingley and fired shots. After police located the vehicle in Portage and collided with it, a male suspect ran from the vehicle with a firearm. Officers searched for the suspect throughout the city as schools were placed in lockdown and warnings were issued throughout the community.

The man was eventually spotted hitch hiking on the Trans Canada highway and was chased into a potato field. As several officers pursued the suspect on foot across the field, the man refused demands to stop and show his hands. When he appeared to reach for his waistband, one of the officers fired two shots, hitting the suspect once in the buttocks. He was transported to hospital in stable condition and was discharged several days later.

The issue for the IIU was whether the officer's decision to fire at the suspect was reasonable and justified in the circumstances. In his report on the investigation, IIU Civilian Director Zane Tessler noted the officer was in a potentially volatile situation and believed the suspect intended to shoot the officers. He found it was reasonable, in the circumstances, for the subject officer to fire at the suspect to prevent the death of any of the officers.

The suspect faces outstanding charges related to this incident. The complete report on this investigation will be posted online once those charges are dealt with by the courts.

The details of this investigation were first announced on June 28, 2017.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
Barbara Czech
Communications, Independent Investigation Unit
204-803-9644
bczech@mts.net