

August 14, 2020

IIU concludes investigation into WPS officer-involved shooting in Winnipeg

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into an officer-involved shooting involving the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS), which occurred on November 21, 2019.

On that date, WPS notified the IIU of an attempted robbery that occurred on November 21, resulting in the discharge of a service pistol and serious injuries to a 16-year-old male.

The incident began around 5:30 p.m., when WPS officers were dispatched to a 7-Eleven store at the corner of Ellice Avenue and Arlington Street, in response to 911 calls advising that the store was being robbed by a male wielding a machete.

Upon arrival at the store, officers observed the male inside of the store, with a large knife or sword in his possession. The male subsequently left the store via the front door, walking directly towards a WPS officer with the weapon raised over his head. The male ignored officers' demands to drop the weapon, and continued to advance toward a WPS officer. A conductive energy weapon was discharged at the male, but had no observable impact.

As the male proceeded to within two to three feet of the subject officer and began to bring the weapon down towards the officer's head, the subject officer fired his weapon, striking the male five times. After the male fell to the ground and was disarmed, WPS officers administered first aid until paramedics arrived. The male was transported to the Health Sciences Centre (HSC), where he underwent emergency surgery and orthopedic surgery. The male was discharged from HSC in mid-December.

As an injury caused by the discharge of a firearm is defined as a serious injury under IIU regulations, the IIU was mandated to investigate. A team of investigators was assigned to the investigation.

The IIU interviewed or reviewed statements provided by nine civilian witnesses, and interviewed 10 witness officers. The affected male declined to meet with IIU investigators, but a consent

form releasing his medical information was provided to investigators. Other information obtained by investigators included:

- officers' notes and narratives
- call history and WPS radio transmission recordings
- video recordings from the interior of the 7-Eleven, a traffic camera located at the intersection of Arlington Street and Ellice Avenue, and a cell phone video from a civilian witness
- photographs and physical evidence from the scene, including a machete and nine shell casings

The extensive investigation and thorough review of evidence clearly indicated the actions of the subject officer were appropriate to the situation, and the use of potentially lethal force was necessary, justified and unavoidable.

The investigation is now complete and the matter is closed. The civilian director's complete report is available online at www.iiumanitoba.ca. The details of this investigation were first announced on November 22, 2019.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
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Information on the IIU can be found at www.iiumanitoba.ca or at www.twitter.com/IIUManitoba