

SIRT

Serious Incident Response Team

Investigation Summary:

Incident Type: Serious Injury

SIRT File No.: 2023-14

Incident Date: June 27, 2023

Agency Involved: RPS/RCMP

Civilian Executive Director: Greg Gudelot

Date of Report: December 28, 2023

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Timeline	2
The Investigation	2
Summary	3
Analysis	4
Decision.....	4

Introduction

On Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at approximately 10:20 a.m. the Saskatchewan Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT) received a notification from the Regina Police Service (RPS) regarding injuries incurred by an individual in the process of being taken into custody. SIRT's Civilian Executive Director accepted the notification as within SIRT's mandate and directed an investigation by SIRT.

Earlier that morning, members of the Saskatchewan Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) unit executed a search warrant at a residence in Regina as part of an ongoing investigation. The Saskatchewan Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) unit comprise members from police services throughout the province, but the members involved in this search were from RPS and the RCMP exclusively. As a result of the search, the members informed a 42-year-old male occupant of the residence, subsequently referred to as the affected person, that he was under arrest. Prior to being taken into custody, the affected person retrieved a knife from a drawer and self-inflicted several stab wounds to his chest. Police took the knife and provided first aid before the affected person was taken to the hospital with serious injuries, where he was admitted in serious condition.

Timeline

SIRT was notified of the incident on June 27, 2023 at approximately 10:20 a.m. A SIRT team consisting of the Civilian Executive Director and three SIRT Investigators was immediately deployed to Regina to begin the investigation. On October 13, 2023, the completed investigation was submitted to the Civilian Executive Director for review.

The Investigation

SIRT's investigation was comprehensive and thorough, conducted using current investigative protocols, and in accordance with the principles of Major Case Management (MCM). During the course of the investigation, all relevant police and civilian witnesses were interviewed, a scene examination was conducted of the incident location, and all relevant documentary evidence was seized.

Eight police officers were interviewed during the course of SIRT's investigation. As the affected person's injuries were determined through independent evidence to have been self-inflicted, rather than the result of a police use of force, each of the officers was designated as a Witness Officer pursuant to the relevant sections of the *Police Regulations*. In addition to the police officers present during the incident, a civilian member of the RCMP attached to the ICE unit as a technician was interviewed and provided his notes of the incident.

The affected person's mother was interviewed by a SIRT investigator shortly after the incident. She was present for the search of the residence and the ultimate arrest of the affected person, observing the affected person to take possession of the knife and to self-inflict the injuries in question.

The affected person's father was also interviewed by a SIRT investigator, but was less cooperative, refusing to provide a recorded statement. During the course of his interview, the affected person's father confirmed that he was in another room during the incident and did not directly observe the events in question.

The affected person himself was interviewed by SIRT investigators while in custody at Regina Provincial Correctional Center (RPCC). The affected person indicated he had little memory of the incident, but stated he felt forced to take the actions he did, though he was unable to clearly articulate how he was forced or the basis for that belief. Pursuant to consent from the affected person's family, SIRT obtained the affected person's medical records relating to the incident. Those records confirmed three penetrating stab wounds to the chest, one to the left side and two to the central chest. These injuries resulted in the hospitalization of the affected person and constituted a serious injury within the meaning of *The Police Act, 1990*.

Summary

On June 23, 2023, members of the Saskatchewan Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit were granted a search warrant for a residence in Regina. The warrant authorized police to enter and search the residence on June 27, 2023 for evidence of offences related to possession of child pornography.

That same day a search briefing was conducted with members of the ICE unit, during which members were provided with a summary of the investigation, the charges being investigated, a description of the evidence that was the subject of the search, and the identities of the individuals expected to be inside the residence. Those individuals included a 42-year-old man (the affected person), his 72-year old father, and 70-year old mother.

On June 27, members of the ICE unit, accompanied by two uniformed members of RPS assembled near the residence. At approximately 6:50 a.m., a member of the ICE unit knocked on the door which was answered by the female occupant of the residence. The warrant was explained and police entered the residence without any resistance. At the time, the affected person was in the basement of the residence showering, while his father was walking the family's dogs. The father returned home a short time later and the affected person emerged from the shower. He was permitted to dress and all three occupants were brought to the main floor of the residence, shown a copy of the warrant, and advised of their rights. The affected person requested to speak with a lawyer, and was provided with an opportunity to do so, making the call from the basement bathroom for the purposes of privacy.

As the search progressed, several electronic devices were located in the affected person's basement bedroom. The affected person was asked for, but refused to provide, the password for these devices. A short time later, several USB drives were located and turned over to the technician on site. An examination of these drives revealed child sexual abuse material and provided grounds to arrest the affected person for Possession of Child Pornography.

In advance of the anticipated arrest, RPS patrol members were requested to re-attend to the residence to provide transport and members of the ICE unit went upstairs in the residence to arrest the affected person. The affected person, who was standing near the kitchen island, was verbally informed that he was under arrest. At this point, the affected person rapidly backed up and reached into a drawer, retrieving a kitchen

knife. The affected person held the knife to his chest as a police officer and his mother both shouted words to the effect of “don’t do it.” Several police officers drew their firearms at this point, and one attempted to negotiate with the affected person before he began stabbing himself in the chest. Three officers, joined shortly thereafter by a fourth, struggled with the affected person, falling to the ground with him. Following a struggle, a police officer was successful in taking the knife from the affected person and handed it to another officer. The affected person was handcuffed and police immediately commenced first aid. EMS was contacted and attended a short time later, assuming responsibility for care of the affected person before transporting him to hospital in serious conditions, accompanied by police. During the struggle to obtain the knife from the affected person, two police officers sustained cuts to their hands.

The affected person was admitted to hospital in serious condition, suffering from three stab wounds to the chest, and was treated before being released on July 1.

Analysis

Following a comprehensive review of the evidence gathered during the course of SIRT’s investigation, it is beyond dispute that the serious injury sustained by the affected person during this incident was self-inflicted. Accordingly, the primary consideration of any jeopardy on the part of the involved police officers would be negligence-based rather than drawing from the direct actions of police. Leaving aside the fact that the independent and free-standing actions of the affected person likely serve to sever any chain of causation to the actions of police, under the *Criminal Code*, negligence offences require demonstration of wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of other persons. In this case, the evidence falls far short of demonstrating such a departure. Instead, based on the efforts of the involved police officers to disarm the affected person and stop his self-harm, then to immediately summon EMS and provide first aid prior to their attendance, it is evident that the involved police demonstrated significant concern for preserving the life of the affected person. Accordingly, there are no grounds to believe any police officer committed any *Criminal Code* offence during the course of this incident and no charges will be laid.

Decision

There being no grounds to believe an offence was committed by any police officer, SIRT’s involvement with this matter is concluded without referral to the Attorney General for Saskatchewan in accordance with S.91.08(10)(a) of *The Police Act, 1990*.

Original Signed

Greg Gudelot
Civilian Executive Director
Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT)

December 28, 2023

Date of Report