



**MASS CASUALTY
COMMISSION**

**COMMISSION
DES PERTES MASSIVES**

**Public Communications from
the RCMP and Governments
after the Mass Casualty**

Foundational Document

Prepared by: Counsel for the Mass Casualty Commission

Version 3.0

NOTE 1: This document is based on an analysis of materials available to Commission Counsel **as of June 13, 2022.** Further production and investigation are ongoing. Should new information reveal inaccuracies in this document, an addendum may be issued.

NOTE 2: **This document contains sensitive and disturbing material.** Please read this information about the potential of being affected and/or overwhelmed when hearing, talking about, and/or reading distressing material:

Sometimes thinking, reading, or hearing about a distressing or emotionally overwhelming experience can remind us of circumstances that are upsetting and disturbing. It can bring up a specific thought pattern or memory that is difficult to think about and could cause psychological distress. Having an immediate short-term effect like this would be a usual way to feel. This is often referred to in literature as having a “triggering effect” or a “flooding of distressing memories.”

If you are experiencing distress and overwhelming emotions you can call the **Nova Scotia Provincial Crisis Line**. This service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It is open to persons of all ages, and you can call for yourself or because you have concern for someone else. The Nova Scotia Provincial Crisis Line is aware they may receive some additional calls and are ready and prepared to take your call as needed. You do not have to be in a crisis to call, and nothing is too big or too small a reason to reach out. The staff responding when you phone are skilled crisis clinicians. They can also provide the contacts for other 24/7 crisis services if you live outside of Nova Scotia. The number is **1-888-429-8167**

SUBJECT MATTER

This document captures the public communications of the RCMP and other government officials after the mass casualty, and compares those statements to material reviewed to date by Mass Casualty Commission counsel indicating what information the RCMP knew internally at the same time. The post-event period commences with the RCMP’s takedown of the perpetrator at the Enfield Big Stop at 11:25 a.m. on Sunday, April 19, 2020. Those events are described in the *Enfield Big Stop* Foundational Document. The reader is cautioned that there is discussion in this document about individual victims, the perpetrator, and the course of events, which may be disturbing.

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Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments after the Mass Casualty: Foundational Document

SPECIAL TERMS

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|------------------|--|
| Alert Ready | The public-facing name of the National Alert and Aggregation Dissemination System (NAADS) and supporting national initiative; capable of sending notifications to cell phones and other electronic devices across the province of Nova Scotia. |
| Blue-on-blue | Police gunfire towards police personnel |
| CFRO | Canadian Firearms Registry Online. The CFRO provides law enforcement access to firearms licence information, licence statuses, and firearms registration information. A negative CFRO check means the database does not contain licence information for the individual or registration information for the individual's firearms. |
| CPIC | Canadian Police Information Centre. CPIC is a computerized database repository maintained by the RCMP. It records information such as missing or wanted persons, stolen goods, and individuals' criminal records. Police and law enforcement agencies throughout Canada can access CPIC. |
| CrOps | Nova Scotia RCMP Criminal Operations Support |
| EMO | Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office |
| FIS | RCMP Forensic Identification Services |
| H-Division/H-Div | Nova Scotia Royal Canadian Mounted Police |
| JEIN | Justice Enterprise Information Network. JEIN is a centralized computer database system maintained by Nova Scotia's Department of Justice. The system includes offender database and case tracking functionality, as well as inquiry access for the RCMP and other police agencies. The JEIN system contains records collected by the Department of Justice relating to court appearances, terms of custody, court orders, and a listing of all charges pertaining to charged individuals in the province of Nova Scotia. |
| NCS | RCMP National Communication Services |
| NHQ | RCMP National Headquarters |
| NOK | Next of Kin |
| SiRT | Serious Incident Response Team. SiRT is the Nova Scotian civilian agency charged with independently investigating matters of |

significant public interest that may have arisen from the actions of any police officer in Nova Scotia.

KEY RESPONDERS

| | |
|--|--|
| Commissioner (Commr.) Brenda Lucki | RCMP Commanding Officer |
| Assistant Commissioner (A/Commr.) Lee Bergerman | RCMP Commanding Officer, Nova Scotia |
| Chief Superintendent (C/Supt.) Chris Leather | RCMP Criminal Operations Officer (CrOps), Nova Scotia |
| Inspector (Insp.) Rob Bell | RCMP Officer in Charge, Career Development and Resourcing, H-Division |
| Glenn Mason | RCMP Emergency Management Section (EMS) Emergency Planning Coordinator |
| Superintendent (Supt.) Darren Campbell | RCMP Officer in Charge of Support Services (OSS), Nova Scotia |
| Lia Scanlan | RCMP Director of H-Division Strategic Communications Unit |
| Corporal (Cpl.) Lisa Croteau | RCMP Public Information Officer, Strategic Communications Unit, Nova Scotia |
| Cpl. Jennifer Clarke | RCMP Public Information Officer, Strategic Communications Unit, Nova Scotia |
| Cindy Bayers | RCMP Senior Communications Advisor, Strategic Communications Unit, Nova Scotia |
| Sharon Tessier | Director General, National Communication Services, RCMP National Headquarters (NHQ) |
| Daniel Brien | Director of Media Relations, Issues Management and Social Media, RCMP NHQ |
| Jolene Bradley | Director of Strategic Communications (Operations), RCMP NHQ |
| Catherine Fortin | Spokesperson at RCMP NHQ |
| Staff Sergeant (S/Sgt.) Steve Halliday | Acting Operations Officer and District Advisory Non-Commissioned Officer, RCMP Northeast Nova District |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Cpl. Angela McKay | Team Commander, RCMP Major Crime Unit, Northeast Nova |
| Constable (Cst.) Jeff MacFarlane | RCMP Major Crime Unit, Northeast Nova |
| Cst. Shawn Stanton | File Coordinator, RCMP Major Crime Unit, Northeast Nova |
| Cst. Aaron Patton | RCMP Bible Hill Detachment, Colchester County |
| S/Sgt. Brian Rehill | RCMP Risk Manager at the Operational Communications Centre (OCC) |
| S/Sgt. Bruce Briers | RCMP Risk Manager at the OCC |
| S/Sgt. Steve Ettinger | RCMP Assistant/Support Risk Manager at the OCC |
| Insp. Dustine Rodier | RCMP Operational Support and Communications Centre Officer in Charge, H-Division |
| S/Sgt. Addie MacCallum | District Commander, RCMP Pictou County Detachment and Acting District Advisory Non-Commissioned Officer |
| Cpl. Tim Mills | RCMP Emergency Response Team (ERT), H-Division, Team Leader |
| Cpl. Carla Sloan | RCMP Forensic Identification Services, Halifax District |
| Sergeant (Sgt.) Laura Seeley | RCMP Major Crime Unit, H-Division |
| Sgt. Larry Peyton | RCMP National Weapon Enforcement Support Team (NWEST) |
| Glen Byrne | ERT and CIC Radio Communications Support and OCC Commander |
| S/Sgt. Jeff West | RCMP Critical Incident Commander, H-Division |
| Sgt. Angela Hawryluk | RCMP, H-Division Headquarters |
| Cpl. Matt Conn | RCMP, H-Division Headquarters |
| Cpl. Jason Anthony | RCMP Bible Hill Detachment, Colchester County |
| Cst. Vicki Colford | RCMP Bible Hill Detachment, Colchester County |
| Cst. Nick Dorrington | RCMP Bible Hill Detachment, Colchester County |
| Cst. Troy Maxwell | RCMP Bible Hill Detachment, Colchester County |

Cst. Wayne Tingley RCMP Sheet Harbour Detachment, Halifax County

Chief David MacNeil Truro Police Service

KEY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable Stephen McNeil Premier, Nova Scotia

The Honourable Bill Blair Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Canada

The Honourable Mark Furey Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Nova Scotia

APRIL 19, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 19, 2020

1. At 11:40 a.m. on April 19, 2020, the Nova Scotia RCMP published a tweet stating that the perpetrator was in custody:



- [RCMP tweet, April 19, 2020, at 11:40 a.m.: COMM0013643](#)
2. At 12:15 p.m., Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addressed the events of April 18 and 19 in the opening remarks of his daily briefing on the federal government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Speaking in French, he said his thoughts were with everyone affected by the events. He thanked the authorities for their work, and the country for its co-operation.
 - Accessed online: [PM Trudeau provides update on federal response to COVID-19 – April 19, 2020 | Posted on April 19, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWI9TB-yBz8\)](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)
 3. At 2:00 p.m., Nova Scotia premier Stephen McNeil addressed the events of April 18 and 19 during a COVID-19 press briefing. He said he never imagined waking up to “the horrific news that an active shooter was on the loose in Nova Scotia” and referred to the events of April 18 and 19 as “one of the most senseless acts of violence in our province’s history.” He did not discuss details of the events or the number of victims. He thanked the RCMP for “apprehending the suspect and for doing your best to protect the citizens of our province” and noted that the RCMP would be holding a press conference later that evening. Premier McNeil emphasized that “this is an active investigation and I know many of you have questions, as I do, but now is not the time to speculate

or to spread rumours. The RCMP will provide you with as much information as possible. We have to let them conduct their investigation and we have to let families grieve.”

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia update on COVID-19 – April 19, 2020 | Streamed lived on April 19, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fit1X_Mn-o\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fit1X_Mn-o)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

4. Also on April 19, the Nova Scotia RCMP prepared its first press briefing. Leading the media strategy was Lia Scanlan, director of strategic communications for H-Division, and her team, which included public information officers (PIO) Corporal (Cpl.) Lisa Croteau and Cpl. Jennifer Clarke. Director Scanlan planned a media response that involved having senior RCMP personnel deliver coordinated updates to the public about the events of April 18 and 19 through press briefings. One-on-one interviews between RCMP and the media were not arranged.

- [Emails Re: NEWS 1130 Request: COMM0016752](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 56–58](#)

5. In her second interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, in February 2022, Director Scanlan explained how she mentally formulated this media strategy:

Krista SMITH [00:32:16]: So just sort of broadly speaking, did you -- did you even -- did you have the opportunity to formulate kind of a media strategy before you had to just start going, doing?

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:32]: Yeah, in my mind.

Krista SMITH [00:32:33]: Okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:33]: Like, I knew right away. Well, because there's just certain things that I knew for sure, you know?

Krista SMITH [00:32:36]: Yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:39]: You know, when a member dies, the CO's [Commanding Officer] speaking.

Krista SMITH [00:32:40]: Yeah, okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:40]: Period.

Krista SMITH [00:32:41]: Okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:32:41]: Whether he, she, anyone wants -- so that's just like a done deal. And then I will get it as, okay, we have a -- so we have a dead member; that's CO. It sounds very pragmatic, but it is how it goes. Then you have an incident where there's dead people; that's Criminal Operations, so the CROPs officer, so that's Chris Leather. And I knew that the number of deaths, like at that time -- like, I'm counting in my mind of what I -- I'm like, what -- like, I have a rough idea. I'm like, "This sounds like a lot of people"; you know what I mean? Like, you're just going through, so -- and it doesn't matter; we have a dead member.

So, we have what I perceive is a lot. I don't even know, I thought it was, like, eight or nine. I don't even know what I thought at the time. And then you've got a dead member; I knew it was a press conference. Because a press conference isn't -- because you get inundated with phone calls and you have to manage the media, and the public deserves to have information and you've killed the person, so we've also killed the gunman. So, hands down, it's a press conference. So that's the media strategy, that's as far as it goes.

And so ---

Krista SMITH [00:33:56]: So is it an either/or decision between sort of interviews with one-off media sources versus a press conference?

Lia SCANLAN [00:34:05]: Yeah -- you would never -- like, I would never do interviews with one-off media in a situation this large because it's impossible to do it.

Krista SMITH [00:34:13]: Okay.

Lia SCANLAN [00:34:14]: The volume on its own is -- you would be -- the purpose of a press conference is to avoid that. Because your phone is ringing off the hook to the point that you can't -- you can no longer do your job. So, [RCMP Public Information Officers] Lisa, Jen, they can't do their jobs; they can't even answer the volume of calls that they're getting, and the voice mails.

Krista SMITH [00:34:30]: Yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:34:32]: So in order to shut all their phones down, like, and not have them return all these voice mails, you do a press conference.

Krista SMITH [00:34:41]: M'hm.

Lia SCANLAN [00:34:42]: And that's a media strategy. So that's just what you do, yeah.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 56–58](#)
6. Director Scanlan said the Nova Scotia RCMP was “doing all communications” about the mass casualty but was required to “brief up to [RCMP National Headquarters (NHQ) in] Ottawa.” She said, “Headquarters certainly was aware, as was the Commissioner,” that the media strategy would be press conferences and not individual interviews with media outlets.
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at p. 58](#)
7. Given the ongoing investigation, Director Scanlan described the information the Nova Scotia RCMP could share at press conferences as “fluid.” It had to be approved by “a command triangle” that would verify the information, “[a]nd then approved by [Supt.] Darren Campbell . . . it’s like a three-layer kind of fact check approach to the information as it was on that day at that time.” According to Director Scanlan, if the Nova Scotia RCMP was “going to do any sort of a release of information, the [investigative command triangle for the H-Strong investigation is] who we got it from.”
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 59–60](#)
8. Director Scanlan added that government officials, including of Bill Blair (minister of public safety and emergency preparedness) and Prime Minister Trudeau, were “weighing in on what we could and couldn’t say” in press briefings about the mass casualty.
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at p. 29](#)
9. In addition to the internal approval process, some RCMP policies set out information that should not be released to the media. In 2019, PIO Cpl. Clarke prepared a document called “Instructions/SOP” (Standard Operating Procedure) to inform risk managers of their media relations duties during public information officers’ off-hours. The document was reviewed by Cindy Bayers, the senior communications advisor in the Strategic Communications Unit of the Nova Scotia RCMP, and it was approved by Inspector (Insp.) Dustine Rodier. The document informs risk managers that “[d]etails in the investigation can be hold-back evidence. Please check with investigators before releasing,” and advises risk managers not to speculate. The document further notes the following:

The Privacy Act prohibits the disclosure of certain types of information. We cannot provide details to the media on the following:

- Marital status (i.e. we can't say 'domestic assault'. We can say a woman was assaulted in a residence by a man.)
 - Relationships between individuals, including parent/child, spouses, siblings, etc. You can say that individuals were 'known to each other'.
 - Employment
 - Criminal history
 - Medical status – we often use terms like “non-life threatening injuries” and no further details.
- [Standard Operating Procedures, Media Relations for Risk Managers, July 30, 2019: COMM0043156 at p. 4](#)

10. The RCMP's Operational Manual, ch. 27.2 on Media Releases, instructs RCMP members to “[e]nsure information released to the media does not . . . interfere with an investigation,” “result in injury, injustice, or embarrassment to the victims or the accused,” or “contravene the provisions of the *RCMP Act*, *Privacy Act*, *Access to Information Act*, *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* or *Canadian Human Rights Act*.” The Operational Manual also states:

2. Do not speculate or offer your personal opinion. Report only the facts.
3. Always protect the integrity of the criminal investigation and the impending trial.
4. Do not release the names of young persons.
5. Never release the names of any injured person.
6. Do not release the cause of death before an autopsy is conducted and the cause of death is determined by a medical examiner.

- [RCMP Operational Manual, ch. 27.2 – Media Releases: COMM0039872 at p. 1](#)

11. The RCMP's Operational Manual, ch. 41.3 on Human Deaths, refers to the limits on public disclosure imposed by the *Privacy Act* and the next of kin (NOK) notification process:

3. 1. 5. According to the *Privacy Act*, deceased persons retain the right to privacy.

3. 1. 6. Confirm with the coroner/medical examiner that the identity of the deceased has been verified, and that their name may be released.

3. 1. 6. 1. The name of the deceased may be released (e.g. to the news media), after the NOK, in the following circumstances:

3. 1. 6. 1. 1. It will further the investigation, or,

3. 1. 6. 1. 2. If there is a police or public safety concern, or,

3. 1. 6. 1. 3. The identity of the deceased has been made publicly available through other means, such as, but not exclusive to, social media sites.

NOTE: An exception under the *Privacy Act* includes the release of the person's identity when, in the opinion of the investigator, public interest in disclosure clearly outweighs any invasion of privacy that could result from the disclosure.

3. 1. 7. Do not release the cause of death to the news media (refer to OM ch. 27.2., Media Releases):

3. 1. 7. 1. Until it has been determined by an autopsy; and

3. 1. 7. 2. if the death was a result of a criminal action, and/or if the information could compromise the investigation/court proceedings.

- [RCMP Operational Manual, ch. 41.3 – Human Deaths: COMM0039885 at p. 4](#)

12. In accordance with the communications plan set by Director Scanlan, the Nova Scotia RCMP delivered its first press briefing at 6:00 p.m. on April 19, 2020. PIO Cpl. Croteau opened the press briefing and announced that Nova Scotia RCMP commanding officer Assistant Commissioner (A/Commr.) Lee Bergerman would deliver a statement about the events of April 18 and 19, following which Nova Scotia RCMP criminal operations officer Chief Superintendent (C/Supt.) Chris Leather would provide an update on the criminal investigation.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

13. In her statement, excerpted below, A/Commr. Bergerman notified the public of the death of RCMP Constable (Cst.) Heidi Stevenson, the injury of another member, and “many victims outside the RCMP.” The Nova Scotia RCMP published A/Commr. Bergerman’s statement regarding the

death of Cst. Stevenson and the injury of another member as a tweet, a Facebook post, and on its website at 7:57 p.m. on April 19.

Today is a devastating day for Nova Scotia and it will remain etched in the minds of many, for years to come. What has unfolded overnight and into this morning is incomprehensible and many families are experiencing the loss of a loved one. That includes our own RCMP family. It is with tremendous sadness that I share with you that we lost Cst. Heidi Stevenson, a 23-year veteran of the Force who was killed this morning, while responding to an active shooter incident. . . . Unfortunately, I have to also share that another one of our officers was injured and is in hospital receiving treatment of non-life threatening injuries. He and his family will be supported and we will be alongside him as he begins his road to recovery. This tragic incident has also resulted in many victims outside of the RCMP. Countless families are in mourning today.

- The excerpt above was accessed online: [Statement from Nova Scotia RCMP Commanding Officer, Assistant Commissioner Lee Bergerman | Posted on April 19, 2020 | RCMP website \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-nova-scotia-rcmp-commanding-officer-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-nova-scotia-rcmp-commanding-officer-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman)
- [Statement from A/Commr. L. Bergerman, April 19, 2020: COMM0058925](#)

14. C/Supt. Leather then provided an update on the criminal investigation. He began by offering his condolences to the family of Cst. Stevenson and to the families of all the victims. He also acknowledged the member who was injured, and his family. C/Supt. Leather said the RCMP's focus was "to gather all evidence and information about these incidents and to get answers to many unanswered questions."

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 5](#)

15. C/Supt. Leather described the RCMP's initial response to the mass casualty and their search for the perpetrator. He confirmed that the perpetrator was deceased and that the matter of the perpetrator's death had been referred to the Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT). He said the perpetrator was not known to the police and that it was too early in the investigation for the RCMP to discuss the perpetrator's possible motive. He noted that during the mass casualty, the perpetrator "was armed," appeared to have been wearing a police uniform, and was driving a "mock-up or a vehicle that was made to look like an RCMP police cruiser."

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)

- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 5](#)
16. In response to journalists' questions, C/Supt. Leather stated that "in excess of 10 people have been killed" in "several locations across the province."
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 6](#)
17. The 6:00 p.m. press briefing was the Nova Scotia RCMP's last statement to the media on April 19. This aligned with Director Scanlan's plan for the post-event media strategy, which she shared with the RCMP's National Communication Services (NCS) team. The NCS is based at the RCMP's National Headquarters (NHQ) in Ottawa and operates the "HQ Media Relations" email account. In the days after April 19, Director Scanlan corresponded most frequently with NHQ staff Sharon Tessier (director general of NCS), Daniel Brien (director of media relations, issues management and social media at RCMP NHQ), Jolene Bradley (director of strategic communications for the Operations team at RCMP NHQ), and Catherine Fortin (spokesperson at RCMP NHQ).
- [Emails re: NEWS 1130 Request: COMM0016752](#)
 - [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at p. 64](#)
18. On April 19, as media requests for information about the number of victims continued to roll in after 6:00 p.m., the NCS shared those questions with Director Scanlan. Director Scanlan explained by email at 10:08 p.m. to "HQ Media Relations," Sharon Tessier, and Daniel Brien, that "[t]he [H] Division plan to manage this is we will be doing an update and not doing one off interviews." Director Scanlan intended for the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide an update to the public on the investigation, including a revised number of victims, at the next press briefing on April 20, instead of responding to individual media requests in real time on the evening of April 19. Director Scanlan emphasized this plan to NCS, writing: "We [H Division] will do updates tomorrow [a]nd first order will be number of victims."
- [Emails re: NEWS 1130 Request: COMM0016752](#)
 - [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 56–58](#)
19. In the early post-event period, some RCMP personnel at NHQ adopted a media strategy that differed from H-Division's preferred approach of press conference updates with no one-off interviews. In particular, Commissioner (Commr.) Brenda Lucki at NHQ participated in one-on-one interviews with different media outlets throughout the evening hours of April 19 and into April 20.

- Accessed online: [CBC News Alerts Twitter](https://twitter.com/CBCAlerts/status/1252003208798572544) (<https://twitter.com/CBCAlerts/status/1252003208798572544>)
 - [Twitter – CBC News Alerts – April 19, 2020, at 7:36 p.m. ADT: COMM0058900](#)
 - Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia shooting | CTV News](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954) (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954>)
 - [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage, CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
 - [Email – Fwd: \(Urgent\) Toronto Star: number of deaths in Nova Scotia: COMM0016741](#)
 - [RT: CBC News’ Ian Hanomansing Interviews RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki regarding the fatal incident in N.S.: COMM0038513](#)
 - [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 60–61](#)
20. During these one-on-one interviews, Commr. Lucki provided updates on the number of victims. The information she shared about the rising death toll differed from the information provided by the Nova Scotia RCMP at the 6:00 p.m. press briefing, which had numbered the victims at 10 (and C/Supt. Leather’s phrasing “in excess of 10 victims”).
- Accessed online: [CBC News Alerts Twitter](https://twitter.com/CBCAlerts/status/1252003208798572544) (<https://twitter.com/CBCAlerts/status/1252003208798572544>)
 - [Twitter – CBC News Alerts – April 19, 2020, at 7:36 p.m. ADT: COMM0058900](#)
 - Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia shooting | CTV News](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954) (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954>)
 - [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage, CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
 - Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 6](#)
 - [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at p. 60](#)
21. This resulted in different news outlets receiving and reporting different information about the number of victims throughout the evening of April 19. Media outlets that had not received direct updates from Commr. Lucki started emailing RCMP communications personnel to confirm the numbers they were seeing reported by other outlets. At 7:03 p.m., for example, a journalist from NEWS 1130 radio emailed the RCMP saying, “I’m seeing the RCMP confirm at least 13 people are dead in Nova Scotia not including the shooter” and asking for comment. At 7:19 p.m., a journalist from the *Toronto Star* emailed the RCMP requesting “to verify the confirmed number of deaths resulting from the series of shootings in NS today. Commissioner is saying 13 to some media, is this accurate?”
- [Emails re: NEWS 1130 Request: COMM0016752](#)

- [Emails – Fwd: \(Urgent\) Toronto Star: number of deaths in Nova Scotia: COMM0016741](#)
22. At 7:36 p.m., CBC News reported that Commr. Lucki had confirmed that 13 people were killed, not including the perpetrator. At 7:40 p.m., CTV News reported that Commr. Lucki had confirmed that 14 people had died, including the perpetrator.
- Accessed online: [CBC News Alerts Twitter](#) (<https://twitter.com/CBCAlerts/status/1252003208798572544>)
 - [Twitter – CBC News Alerts – April 19, 2020, at 7:36 p.m. ADT: COMM0058900](#)
 - Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia shooting | CTV News](#) (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954>)
 - [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
23. In internal emails, the RCMP discussed how to respond to media inquiries requesting confirmation of the updated numbers Commr. Lucki was communicating to different media outlets. Jolene Bradley wrote: “Suggest the following as an answer after the Commissioner’s interviews: We can confirm that, to date, there are 13 deceased including RCMP Cst. Heidi Stevenson. Our important investigational work is continuing. Out of respect for the families who have yet to be notified, we cannot provide any additional information at this time.” Catherine Fortin agreed to “close all these [media] requests with that line and I will cc Lia.”
- [Emails re: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016747](#)
24. At 7:47 p.m., the Government of Canada published a statement by Prime Minister Trudeau on its website, in which he thanked first responders and offered his condolences. He did not name victims other than Cst. Stevenson, and he acknowledged another RCMP member who was injured and recovering in the hospital. Prime Minister Trudeau’s statement did not contain further details about the events of April 18 and 19.
- Accessed online: [Statement by the Prime Minister on the shooting in Portapique, Nova Scotia | April 19, 2020](#) (<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2020/04/19/statement-prime-minister-shooting-portapique-nova-scotia>)
 - [Statement by the prime minister on the shooting in Portapique, Nova Scotia, April 19, 2020: COMM0058902](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)
25. At 7:56 p.m., Commr. Lucki confirmed to the Canadian Press that 17 people had died. In response, the Canadian Press reported to the public that the death toll had risen to 17, including the perpetrator. Internally, Commr. Lucki asked Daniel Brien to communicate the updated number to the other media outlets she had spoken to earlier that evening. This updated number was shared with some media outlets, and then reported to the public over several hours.

- [Media Snapshot – Nova Scotia Shooting: COMM0027814 at p. 2](#)
 - [Emails – FW: FW: Request: Globe and Mail: COMM0016762](#)
26. At 9:00 p.m., Minister Blair released a statement that paid tribute to Cst. Stevenson and the “RCMP officer who is currently in hospital recovering from injuries.” Minister Blair did not provide details but highlighted that “[i]n the coming days, the RCMP will continue to share information about what happened today.”
- [Minister B. Blair statement on shooting, April 19, 2020: COMM0016748](#)
27. At 9:27 p.m., Jolene Bradley emailed Director Scanlan to check in and offer support. Ms. Bradley wrote: “Doesn’t help you the Commr keeps giving the number!!!! Am really trying to get that back in the box for you.” At 9:29 p.m., Director Scanlan replied: “Thank you it looks awful and I’ve had to ask my entire team to turn their phones off as a result. Lord help me!! Or Jolene :)”. At 9:33 p.m., Ms. Bradley wrote back: “Spoke to Sharon [Tessier]. She emailed the Commr office advising to stop releasing the number and let you guys lead on that front. I was copied, will see what the reply is.”
- [Emails – RE: You ok?: COMM0016818](#)
 - [Emails – RE: You ok?: COMM0016819](#)
28. By 10:06 p.m., CityNews Toronto was reporting that RCMP Commr. Lucki had confirmed 17 people were dead. By 10:14 p.m., CBC News was reporting that Commissioner Lucki had confirmed 17 people were dead, including the gunman.
- Accessed online: [CityNews Toronto Twitter | April 19, 2020](#)
(<https://twitter.com/CityNewsTO/status/1252040856800034816>)
 - [Twitter – CityNews TO – April 19, 2020, at 10:06 p.m. ADT: COMM0058903](#)
 - Accessed online: [CBC News Alerts Twitter | April 19, 2020](#)
(<https://twitter.com/cbcalerts/status/1252042917386076160?lang=en>)
 - [Twitter – CBC News Alerts – April 19, 2020, at 10:14 p.m. ADT: COMM0058904](#)
29. At 10:15 p.m., CBC News aired a pre-filmed interview with Commr. Lucki, where she shared that “there were 13 victims so far plus the suspect that are deceased.” She confirmed the RCMP did not believe the events were terror attacks and that the mass casualty started “last night just after 10:00, after multiple 911 calls.” She said there were “multiple scenes spreading over at least 50k. Buildings, vehicles . . .”
- [RT: CBC News’ Ian Hanomansing Interviews RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki regarding the fatal incident in N.S.: COMM0038513](#)
30. In the interview, Commr. Lucki also spoke about the perpetrator’s motive, stating: “I believe that at the beginning that there was an initial motivation. And then I think that it turned to randomness.”

And our investigation will tell that. We don't know for sure. And we're going to have to do a lot of work on finding the motivation, a lot of background, a lot of profiling type of events and a lot of crime scene processing." After airing the pre-filmed clip, CBC's Ian Hanomansing announced to viewers: "We did that interview a little earlier this evening when the death toll was lower and it is as you can see on the screen now at 16 people, including the gunman."

- [RT: CBC News' Ian Hanomansing Interviews RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki regarding the fatal incident in N.S.: COMM0038513](#)

31. At 10:21 p.m., Director Scanlan sent an email to Sharon Tessier, Daniel Brien, and other NHQ staff addressing the inconsistency between H-Division's media strategy and the NHQ's media strategy in relation to the changing number of victims Commr. Lucki was communicating to the public:

Can I make a request that we stop changing numbers on victims. Please allow us to lead the release of information.

It looks fragmented and inconsistent.

The release of 10 was decided upon for good reason.

I spoke with the CO tonight and we will be updating this tomorrow.

We knew at the time of the press event that it was more than 10 but that is what we came to ground on for the event.

That is our plan tomorrow, to update as our members continue their jobs and discover more crime scenes and bodies.

The changes in number is causing our phones to ring off the hook and we are prepared tomorrow to provide updates where we can and victims are included in this update.

For consideration

Lia

- [Emails – For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016755](#)

32. At 10:22 p.m. Daniel Brien replied to Director Scanlan's email: "I agree. Call if you can." Director Scanlan also forwarded her email to C/Supt. Leather, who wrote back: "Thank you Lia and I fully support your position on this."

- [Emails – RE: For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016756](#)

- [Emails – RE: For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016760](#)
33. At 10:26 p.m., following receipt of Director Scanlan’s email, Sharon Tessier emailed Daniel Brien: “We have to be careful that we aren’t out of step with the ops plan. There’s a reason they didn’t want to release the numbers. Thanks!”
- [Emails – FW: FW: Request: Globe and Mail: COMM0016762](#)
34. At 10:28 p.m., Sharon Tessier emailed a reply to Director Scanlan. She wrote: “I sent a message to commr office, asking that they stop giving updates. Should the media continue to enquire, we’ll let them know there will be an update tomorrow. I’m not sure why the numbers were being released...”
- [Emails – RE: For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016757](#)
35. At 10:32 p.m., Daniel Brien emailed a reply to Sharon Tessier. He wrote: “I understand. But the commissioner asked me to update those she had spoken to with the number of 17, which she confirmed to Canadian Press at 7:56. Since Cat [Catherine Fortin] had closed calls after that, we made sure all outlets were on the same footing. There’s a full lid now and everyone knows updates will come from H tomorrow.”
- [Emails – FW: FW: Request: Globe and Mail: COMM0016762](#)
36. Various media outlets closed their reporting for April 19 with the updated victim number of 17. At 10:32 p.m., for example, CTV News reported that RCMP Commr. Brenda Lucki confirmed 17 people had been killed, and that any additional updates would be communicated in the morning.
- Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia shooting | CTV News \(https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954\)](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954)
 - [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
37. By the end of the day on April 19, SiRT issued the following statement about its investigation:
- The Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT) is investigating the shooting of a male in Enfield by RCMP officers.
- Overnight Saturday, RCMP members responded to a series of serious criminal events in Colchester County. The male suspect fled the area. On Sunday morning, the suspect was involved in a serious criminal event in Shubenacadie. A confrontation with police followed in Enfield, resulting in officers discharging their firearms. The suspect was found to be deceased at the scene.

SiRT was contacted by RCMP and has assumed responsibility for the investigation of the shooting of the suspect. SiRT is responsible for investigating all serious incidents involving police in Nova Scotia, whether or not there is an allegation of wrongdoing. Investigations are under the direction and control of SiRT's independent civilian director.

The Police Act requires the director to file a public report summarizing the results of the investigation within three months after it is finished.

- Accessed online: [Investigation begins into Enfield death | April 19, 2020](https://sirt.novascotia.ca/investigation-begins-enfield-death) (<https://sirt.novascotia.ca/investigation-begins-enfield-death>)
- [Investigation Begins into Enfield Death – SiRT: COMM0058905](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)

38. In her interview with the Mass Casualty Commission in February 2022, Director Scanlan provided insight into the Nova Scotia RCMP's communications strategy, the pace of the investigation on April 19, 2020, and the tension between wanting to release information to the public and needing to ensure they did not compromise the RCMP's ongoing investigation into the mass casualty:

Lia SCANLAN [00:01:58]: . . . So, it's always the integrity of the investigation. Like, not compromising it. And I know that's a buzzword, but that's exactly what it is; not compromising the investigation.

...

You know, like in early days on the 19th, oh my God, like, we didn't even -- we're just learning. Like, we didn't even realize what has happened, I don't think, even at that time. Like, you're going, okay, we don't have body counts, things are still burning; we were still looking through buildings, structures. So it's more about what is it that we can say for kind of a certainty at this point that we're aware of. Because this wasn't in a building; this wasn't in one location. It was a mass shooting that spanned a huge landmass area. And that's -- and we didn't even really know the extent of that. Like, you have to piece it together with video footage, and that all takes time. So that's -- yeah, like that.

So, it's about -- people think that you might have something new to say every day; you really, maybe, don't. And there's other things that you have to factor in, is your ability to actually do it. Like, we have a small team of people here. Do I think it's a good media strategy to release new information every single day when you might have one new thing to update? I don't. I would never do that. . . .

So there's no cut and dry approach, but what I can tell you is that you always tell the facts; you always tell the truth; you always ensure that victims' families, if

there needs to be informed, you don't release names until next of kin have been notified; you don't release names until the charges have been laid. And when there's enough information to make it worthwhile for the people receiving it, and those telling it -- because at the end of the day, then you give it, then you share it.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 69–70](#)

Information About Victims

Total Number of Victims

39. During the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather told the public that “in excess of 10 people have been killed, but the investigation is still ongoing . . . it almost certainly will be more than 10, how much more than 10 I do not know.” When pressed by the media, C/Supt. Leather explained that the RCMP could not state a definitive number because the investigation was ongoing across the province:

[Canadian Press:] Canadians would very much like to know how many people have died?

[C/Supt. Leather:] I can tell you that in excess of 10 people have been killed, but the investigation is still ongoing and I expect to have more details in that regard in the coming days.

[Canadian Press:] Thank you very much and can you please explain what you mean by “in excess of”?

[C/Supt. Leather:] I'm afraid at this time I can't expand on that any further.

[Canadian Press:] You mean that you don't know?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Correct. We don't have a complete, uh... we're not fully aware of what that total may be because as we're standing here the investigation continues into areas that we've not yet explored across the province.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 6](#)

40. In another exchange with a journalist, C/Supt. Leather explained that the burned properties posed a problem for RCMP investigators locating and identifying victims:

[Journalist:] As the investigation continues, have you cleared the properties that have burned, and were there victims found in the properties?

[C/Supt. Leather:] The clearing of properties, the investigation into other locations, is ongoing. Suffice to say, those activities have only just begun.

[Journalist:] So this is where there's some difficulty, when you say "in excess of ten", there quite possibly could be more victims within these properties?

[C/Supt. Leather:] That's correct sir.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 8](#)

41. Internal knowledge shared with C/Supt. Leather an hour before the 6:00 p.m. press briefing suggested the victim count was at least 17. Meeting minutes from a Criminal Operations (CrOps) meeting that C/Supt. Leather attended state that the victim count was "Likely 14+" at 3:55 p.m., and by 5:01 p.m., C/Supt. Leather was advised three more victims had been discovered (bringing the total to at least 17). As Director Scanlan acknowledged in her email to NHQ at 10:21 p.m., "We knew at the time of the press event that it was more than 10 but that is what we came to ground on for the event." Director Scanlan's notes from a CrOps briefing at 9:00 a.m. on April 20, 2020, reflect that C/Supt. Leather "spoke about the decision for the #10 and I would do it again. Not helpful that the Commissioner is speaking on this."

- [Minutes for CrOps meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at pp. 4, 6](#)
- [Emails – For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016755](#)
- [Handwritten notes of Lia Scanlan, April 20, 2020: COMM0013737](#)

42. In her interview with the Mass Casualty Commission in February 2022, Director Scanlan explained why the Nova Scotia RCMP chose the number 10, when they knew the victim count was higher:

Krista SMITH [00:51:35]: --- would be helpful. So, like, how did you decide on 10?

Lia SCANLAN [00:51:39]: Well, because at a certain point you have to call your information final –

Krista SMITH [00:51:41]: Yeah.

Lia SCANLAN [00:51:41]: --- because we do have to it translated, and we send it to translation. And we have to prepare Darren [Campbell] for remarks.

So, in those early days, the body count would change, and you just have to land on a number go to with for the press conference, knowing you're going to be providing an update the next day. So that's why 10 was decided upon.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 64–67](#)
43. In her interview, Director Scanlan also clarified that the decision to settle on the number of 10 victims was not related to incomplete next of kin death notifications, which were ongoing at the time of the press briefing. Director Scanlan said the public “have a right to know how many people that we are aware of are dead. So that’s why I’m calling it a body count so at that time we’re aware of 10 people. And no, we can’t confirm the identities because some of the next of kin likely haven’t been notified.”
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at p. 63](#)
44. By 7:00 p.m. on April 19, the RCMP had internal confirmation that Cst. Stevenson and 17 civilians were deceased, with the possibility of additional victims being identified in the ongoing investigation. Though Commr. Lucki and her team communicated the number 17 to select media outlets during the evening of April 19, there was confusion among media outlets about whether that number included the perpetrator.
- [SITREP Update to Comm – Multiple Homicides, H-Division: COMM0016263](#)
45. Shortly after 7:00 p.m., meeting minutes from a CrOps teleconference show that Superintendent (Supt.) Darren Campbell advised the RCMP had found “2 more scenes with more bodies – should bring total to 19.” At 11:00 p.m., the Nova Scotia RCMP’s investigative decision log stated: “Based on the information gathered from the scenes we believe that there are potentially 23 people deceased including the suspect and Cst. Stevenson. Task to complete all NOK’s [next of kin notifications] is well underway. Confirmation with family members is still needed to determine the exact number of deceased parties.” The Nova Scotia RCMP did not share an updated victim number with the public until the next press briefing, at 2:00 p.m. on April 20, at which time they said there were “in excess of 19 victims.”
- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at p. 6](#)
 - [Task action report, Task ID 3: COMM0002624 at p. 4](#)
 - Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

Perpetrator’s Relationship to the Victims

46. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, media also asked C/Supt. Leather about whether the perpetrator's wife, children, or relatives were among the casualties. C/Supt. Leather replied: "Sorry I'm not at liberty to answer that at this stage."
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)
47. By the time of the 6:00 p.m. press briefing, the Nova Scotia RCMP had known for almost 12 hours that the perpetrator had assaulted his common-law partner, Lisa Banfield, and that she had survived. They also knew that the perpetrator did not have children and that members of his family were safe. Specifically, the Nova Scotia RCMP confirmed that the perpetrator's parents were safe by 4:05 a.m. on April 19. Ms. Banfield told the RCMP that the perpetrator did not have family in the area in the statement she provided at 6:58 a.m. The Halifax Regional Police (HRP) had picked up two of Lisa Banfield's sisters for their security by 7:21 a.m. that morning.
- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948 at lines 388–407, 653–58](#)
 - [Timeline of actions taken by S/Sgt. S. Halliday: COMM0010696 at p. 4](#)
 - [Member report of S/Sgt. K. Surette: COMM0003913 at p. 3](#)
48. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing, a journalist asked C/Supt. Leather if he could speak to "any type of relationship between the victims and the suspect", to which he replied: "I'm sorry due to privacy reasons I'm not able to discuss relationship with the victims, other than to say, there were some that appeared not to have a relationship with the uh, assailant-- the shooter."
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)
49. In response to a journalist's question about "how many victims are injured that haven't died?" C/Supt. Leather replied: "two for sure, perhaps three." By 6:35 a.m. on April 19, the RCMP were aware that Lisa Banfield was injured but alive. By 4:46 a.m. they knew that Andrew MacDonald had been shot by the perpetrator and taken to the hospital to recover. They also knew by the time of the 6:00 p.m. press briefing that Cst. Chad Morrison had been shot by the perpetrator but had survived.
- [Handwritten notes of Cpl. G. Rose-Berthiaume: COMM0005598 at pp. 5, 7](#)
 - [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at pp. 2, 6](#)

Information About Scenes

50. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather was asked whether there were locations besides Portapique where victims were killed. He replied: “Yes there are several locations across the province where persons have been killed.” When asked whether he could share the other locations with the public, he said: “No. I don’t have those locations at my disposal, suffice to say there were several locations, I don’t have that information currently.”
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)
51. When another journalist asked whether C/Supt. Leather could share “the locations and number of people that were deceased at any given site,” he responded:
- Outside of the one village that I mentioned earlier in my talking points, I can tell you that they were scattered across the province and I don’t have a list here to give you the specific locations or times because that’s very much under investigation. That sort of information will be coming hopefully in the coming days when we have a better idea of where the victims were taken, and some timing around that. We simply do not have that as of yet. Some of these crime scenes we’ve not even begun to process, and as I said earlier it is an ongoing investigation that could reveal additional details in the coming days.
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)
52. Minutes from the CrOps meeting at 3:55 p.m. on April 19 show that Supt. Campbell advised C/Supt. Leather that there were “13 scenes. Several burned out. 4 victims at least at Portapique.” At 5:01 p.m., C/Supt. Leather learned that two more scenes had been identified, bringing the total scenes known before the 6:00 p.m. press briefing to at least 15.
- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at pp. 4, 6](#)
53. The number of scenes continued to rise after the press briefing, and by 9:01 p.m. on April 19, the Nova Scotia RCMP shared an internal update with all its members that said “a minimum of 18 scenes have been identified with more anticipated.” Consistent with Director Scanlan’s approach, the Nova Scotia RCMP shared this information at its press briefing at 2:00 p.m. on April 20.
- [SITREP Update to Comm – Multiple Homicides, H-Division: COMM0016263](#)

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

Information About the Perpetrator

Confirmation of the Perpetrator’s Death

54. Video surveillance shows RCMP members assessing the perpetrator’s vital signs at 11:34 a.m. on April 19, 2020. At 11:37 a.m., someone identified only as “Caroline” used NCS’s HQ Media Relations email account to inform Jolene Bradley: “FYI he is in Custody. Shot but alive. This info coming from friends there working.” The Nova Scotia RCMP tweeted at 11:40 a.m. that the perpetrator was “in custody.” In her interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, Director Scanlan explained that the term “in custody” was used based on information her team was told at the time: “we were told he was in custody. We didn’t care. We were just told it was over, he’s in custody. And that was the information they had at the moment. So, we put it out; there wasn’t like waiting, let’s confirm that he’s dead.” C/Supt. Leather confirmed that the perpetrator was deceased at the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19.

- [Emails – RE: H Division: COMM0017109](#)
- [Emails – RE: H Division: COMM0017115](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, September 14, 2021: COMM0015883 at p. 20](#)
- [Surveillance video from Enfield Big Stop, Pump 5: COMM0050927 \(estimated 44 seconds slow\)](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

Prior Police Interactions and Knowledge

55. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather was asked whether the suspect was known to police. He replied: “No, he was not.” Later, in response to the same question from another journalist, he shook his head no and answered: “Again, it’s early, and I’m not aware of that.” Similarly, in response to a question about whether the suspect had a history of violence or extreme political opinions, C/Supt. Leather replied: “Not that I’m aware of.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

56. Internally, some members of the Nova Scotia RCMP had information about the perpetrator's history of violence and threats of violence in records of the perpetrator's prior encounters with police, which they learned of as early as 11:36 a.m. on April 19. On April 19, Sergeant (Sgt.) Angela Hawryluk conducted a search on the perpetrator using the Canadian Police Information Center (CPIC) and Justice Enterprise Information Network (JEIN) databases. The CPIC query showed that the perpetrator did not have a criminal record. The "JEIN Offender Summary" for the perpetrator showed that he had been charged with assault in 2001 and had received a conditional discharge with nine months of probation.

- [Email – Fwd: Profile information: COMM0017346](#)
- [Email attachment – WORTMAN Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348 at p. 2](#)
- [Information to Obtain a Search Warrant and a related Sealing Order: COMM0050754 at paras. 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 14](#)
- [JEIN database query on offender summary for Gabriel WORTMAN: COMM0003586](#)
- Note: Nova Scotia RCMP members conducted more than one JEIN search on the perpetrator on April 19, 2020; see, for example, [Email from S/Sgt. B. Briers to S/Sgts. A. Carroll, S. Halliday, A. MacCallum, and K. Surette, "Fwd: pic – \[perpetrator's name\]": COMM0016095.](#)

57. At 11:36 a.m., Cst. Shawn Stanton emailed the findings from the database searches to Cpl. Matt Conn in an attachment called "WORTMAN Profile – Additional information." The attachment included information known about the perpetrator's interactions with HRP and mentioned that the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS) record contained only two files: a 2019 accident and a 2020 speeding ticket.

- [Email – Fwd: Profile information: COMM0017346](#)
- [Email Attachment – WORTMAN Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348](#)
- [PROS Occurrence Details, May 21, 2020: COMM0012144](#)
- [NS Chiefs Package: COMM0025966 at p. 9](#)

58. Cst. Stanton noted that the perpetrator's file included a 2010 complaint of uttering threats. Cst. Stanton summarized the 2010 complaint, which involved a firearms check, as follows:

On 2010-06-02 [Glynn] Wortman contacts Codiac RCMP from Edmonton to report Gabriel WORTMAN called [Glynn] a day earlier, was drunk and angry at his father (Paul) made death threats toward WORTMAN's parents. WORTMAN told [Glynn] he was going to drive to Moncton and kill his parents. Belief WORTMAN may have access to several long guns.

...

CFRO [Canadian Firearms Registry Online] checks negative.

...

WORTMAN later told police the only guns in his possession is [sic] a pellet rifle and 2 inoperable antique muskets. Cst. Greg Wiley, RCMP, is a friend of WORTMAN, says he has been in WORTMAN's cottage and has never seen a firearm. Father of WORTMAN convinced WORTMAN still has weapons, had seen them in the Portapique cottage in a storage closet over 5 years ago.

- Note: A negative CFRO check means the database did not contain licence information for the perpetrator or registration information for the perpetrator's guns.
- [Email Attachment – WORTMAN Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348 at p. 1](#)

59. Cst. Stanton also summarized a second threat of violence in the perpetrator's file:

March 2011 a source debrief indicated WORTMAN had said he wanted to kill a cop, that WORTMAN is in possession of at least one handgun, and possibly several long guns located at his cottage in Portapique. WORTMAN was reported as being upset at police as WORTMAN did not think the police did their job in regards to his complaint of a B&E. The source stated WORTMAN was under a lot of stress lately, starting to have mental issues, becoming squirrely. The source of the information has seen the firearms, including the handgun.

- [Email Attachment – WORTMAN Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348 at p. 1](#)

60. Finally, Cst. Stanton summarized a third interaction involving the police from the perpetrator's file:

On 2020-02-12 two plain clothes police officers parked their vehicle in a parking lot adjacent to the business owned by WORTMAN on Portland Street. The officers had been conducting inquiries for video surveillance. Upon the return of the officers to their vehicle a male inside the business, believed to be WORTMAN, was refusing to remove the chain and lock from the parking lot entrance unless the officers paid money. Responding supervisor found there was a sign indicating the parking lot was for customers only. The supervisor walked into the Denture business where he found a male who was pacing back and forth, extremely irate, and shaking. The supervisor explained what the officers were doing, had believed the business was closed, and were not simply parking there to go to Tim Hortons. The male refused to identify himself and yelled at officers for letting out his heat when the door was opened. The male appeared to try to use his size and aggression in a manner in which to intimidate the officers. The male began taking photos of the members, saying he would send them to Frank magazine. The male said even if he had video surveillance he would not provide same.

- [Email Attachment – WORTMAN Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348 at p. 2](#)

Motive

61. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, a journalist asked C/Supt. Leather if he could speak to the perpetrator's motive. C/Supt. Leather replied that it was "[t]oo early in the investigation, and we simply don't know at this time. Those are of course the very issues that will be under close investigation in the coming days, but I'm afraid I don't know at this time."

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

62. Journalists also asked C/Supt. Leather about the perpetrator's motives, and whether he had a history of violence or encounters with the police:

[Journalist:] Regarding the victims, can you tell us, do they belong to a specific demographic, religion, or ethnicity? Are they women or men? Could this have been a hate crime motivation?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Too early to tell, in terms of what the motivation was, as I said earlier. What I would say is it appears to be uh, at least in part, very random in nature.

[Journalist:] Did the suspect have a history of violence or extreme political opinions of any kind?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Not that I'm aware of.

[Journalist:] Was he known to police in any way?

[C/Supt. Leather:] [shakes head no] Again, it's early, and I'm not aware of that.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

Involvement of SiRT

63. During the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather shared that the matter of the suspect's death had been referred to SiRT because an RCMP member had been "involved in terminating the threat," but he declined to confirm that the perpetrator had been shot by a police officer:

[Journalist:] You mentioned the Serious Incident Response Team. Can you explain their involvement-- if I understand it they're called in whenever there's a discharge of a police officer's firearm, is that right?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Any time there is death or injury that occurs, a member of the public in this case. As I noted in my speaking points the threat was ended and the lone suspect has... that part of the investigation has now been turned over to SiRT for investigation because our officers were involved in terminating the threat.

[Journalist:] I'm sorry, they were or they were not?

[C/Supt. Leather:] They were. An RCMP officer was.

[Journalist:] So in plain language, he was shot by a police officer?

[C/Supt. Leather:] I can't speak to the details of what exactly occurred there, but uh. . . [interrupted by phone line]

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

64. The H-Division Operational Manual instructs RCMP Strategic Communications to direct all media inquiries related to a SiRT investigation to SiRT.

- [H-Division Operational Manual 54.1: RCMP External Investigation or Review: COMM0040369 at p. 4](#)

65. When asked a related question about whether there was gunfire exchanged between RCMP members and the perpetrator in Shubenacadie, C/Supt. Leather replied: "I can't tell you exactly what location because I'm not sure, but at one point during the course of the evening, there was an exchange of gunfire."

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

66. Additional information about gunfire exchanges and SiRT referrals had been reported to C/Supt. Leather in advance of the 6:00 p.m. press briefing. During a CrOps briefing at 2:10 p.m. that afternoon, he was informed that SiRT would be engaged in relation to the shooting of the perpetrator. Then, during a 2:14 p.m. teleconference call, Supt. Campbell reported to C/Supt.

Leather that it appeared there was gunfire at the Cst. Stevenson scene in Shubenacadie and that “SiRT will be involved in the STEVENSON scene.”

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at pp. 1–4](#)

67. When asked during the press briefing to provide additional information about Cst. Stevenson’s death, C/Supt. Leather replied: “I’m not at liberty to discuss the specifics of the death of Cst. Stevenson at this time.” Internally, in addition to the information about the gunfire exchange in Shubenacadie, C/Supt. Leather had been told other details about Cst. Stevenson’s death in advance of the 6:00 p.m. press briefing, including that she appeared to have been shot and that her sidearm and magazine were gone.

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at p. 1](#)

68. The RCMP’s Critically Injured and Fallen Member Guide sets out directions for the sharing of information regarding fallen RCMP members, including the need to engage the Strategic Communications Unit and to ensure accurate information is relayed.

- [RCMP Critically Injured and Fallen Member Guide, Version 1.5 \(September 2019\): COMM0053641 at p. 13](#)

69. After the 6:00 p.m. press briefing, RCMP members discussed a “blue-on-blue” incident (referring to the events at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall) at a 7:00 p.m. CrOps meeting on April 19. At 7:42 p.m., Supt. Campbell reported to C/Supt. Leather that “it is believed a member fired on another member who returned fire.” It was decided that Supt. Campbell would get more details and C/Supt. Leather “will then make any necessary contact with referral to SiRT.”

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049, at pp. 6 and 8](#)
- Additional information on the blue-on-blue incident is contained in the *Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Hall Foundational Document*.

Use of Firearms

70. At the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather provided the following information about the perpetrator’s use of firearms during the mass casualty:

[Journalist:] What is the-- is it correct to say the person was armed with a gun or some kind of firearm?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Yes, at one point during the course of the evening, he was armed.

[Journalist:] And is this the-- the method he used to kill people, or were there other methods?

[C/Supt. Leather:] I'm not at liberty to discuss that, other than to say that he did use his firearm during the course of the evening. It's quite possible he used other methods, I simply don't know at this early stage.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

Police Paraphernalia

71. In response to a journalist's questions at the 6:00 p.m. press briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather provided an update on the perpetrator's access to police paraphernalia, including pieces of police uniforms:

[CTV News:] I'm wondering if you can discuss-- earlier today there was some information that the suspect had both what appears to be a police uniform and a police car. Can you discuss that?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Yes, I can confirm that at one point during the course of the evening hours he appears to have been wearing uh-- if not all then a portion of-- a police uniform, and that we believe that he was driving-- well he was driving at one point a mock-up or a vehicle that was made to look like an RCMP police cruiser.

[CTV News:] Does that speak to his pre-planning [inaudible] or any kind of motive at all [inaudible]?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Of course that's an important element in the investigation. The fact that this individual had a uniform and a police car at his disposal certainly speaks to it not being a random act.

- Accessed online: [RCMP say at least 10 people dead after N.S. gunman rampage | Streamed live on April 19, 2020 | CBC News YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3L7aPtIFm4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 4](#)

APRIL 20, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 20, 2020

72. At 8:43 a.m. on April 20, 2020, Sharon Tessier at RCMP National Headquarters emailed Director Lia Scanlan at H-Division Strategic Communications Unit indicating that National Communication Services intended to defer to the Nova Scotia RCMP's media strategy for the day. Sharon Tessier wrote:

NCS will need to keep in the loop today. Is there someone we can have as a liaison so we're not reaching in all over the place, bugging everyone? Also, what time is your update (approximately)? We're getting inquiries from the media and I've said nobody is to provide further info before your update, but media are already asking what time that will be. Thanks. And don't hesitate to task us with anything.

- [Emails – RE: For review: Fwd: Urgent Canadian Press request: COMM0016769](#)

73. At 8:48 a.m., RCMP Headquarters spokesperson Catherine Fortin emailed Director Scanlan affirming that NCS would direct media requesting information to the Nova Scotia RCMP's press briefings. Ms. Fortin noted that Daniel Brien had closed media calls the night before at 10:20 p.m. "with the number 17 [victims]." She said there had been three media requests for updates since then, and she asked when the Nova Scotia RCMP would be doing another media update. Ms. Fortin told Director Scanlan: "I plan on just pointing media to your next media update once you let us know what time it will be at."

- [Emails – Touching base: COMM0016770](#)

74. At 9:48 a.m., Nova Scotia RCMP's senior advisor of strategic communications, Cindy Bayers, emailed Jolene Bradley, Daniel Brien, Catherine Fortin, and Sharon Tessier (with Director Scanlan copied) to share H-Division's plan for the April 20 press briefing:

We will be providing an update to media/public today through a briefing by the CrOps Officer. We are aiming for 1 p.m. ADT, but that time isn't yet confirmed. I will confirm asap. We will not be providing an update before that. We intend to focus on providing # of crime scenes, # of victims and gender and whether adults/children, updating on injured member and status of investigation. When our materials are ready, we will provide through HQ Comms Alert.

- [Emails – Hdiv liaison and plan: COMM0016776](#)

75. Meanwhile, at 9:39 a.m., CTV News reported that Commr. Lucki had confirmed that 18 people had been killed, plus the perpetrator.

- Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage | Published by CTV News on April 19, 2020 \(https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954\)](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954)

- [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)

76. The media outlets that had not communicated with Commr. Lucki directly sent emails asking the RCMP to verify the numbers they were seeing reported by other outlets. The news director for a radio station in Saint John, New Brunswick, for example, emailed the RCMP at 9:29 a.m. to ask: “I understand Commissioner Brenda Lucki is providing some updates to media on the shooting incident which took place in Nova Scotia on Sunday. Wondering if there is a way our newsroom could be included in those updates? Also, I understand the death toll from the incident now stands at 18 – I wanted to confirm if that number is correct.” Similarly, a national reporter from a newspaper chain in Nova Scotia, including the *Chronicle Herald*, emailed the RCMP at 11:45 a.m. to say:

We are hearing conflicting information about the number of deaths in yesterday’s tragic shooting but have seen reports out of [Canadian Press] and other news outlets from Brenda Lucki with larger numbers than we have been able to confirm independently. Can you please confirm for us the number of confirmed dead and if there is likely or expected to be more victims discovered?

- [Emails – Nova Scotia Shooting: COMM0017649](#)
- [Emails – Nova Scotia newspapers looking for info: COMM0017703](#)
- [Emails – Re: Nova Scotia newspapers looking for info: COMM0017749](#)

77. By 10:57 a.m., it appears that NCS and NHQ had started directing media to the Nova Scotia RCMP’s press briefings for updates. Catherine Fortin responded to media requests for information by directing media to the Nova Scotia RCMP’s press briefing, which was scheduled to take place that afternoon. She told media the RCMP did not expect Commr. Lucki to provide any additional updates. When a journalist from CTV asked Ms. Fortin whether another RCMP representative could appear on their television show, Ms. Fortin forwarded the request to “HQ Media Relations.” Daniel Brien wrote a response by email to Ms. Fortin, Director Scanlan, and others at 12:58 p.m.: “Unless H changes its plans, I would stick to ours, which is not to conduct interviews at this time.”

- [Emails – Fwd: RE: Interview request – CTV Power Play: COMM0016795](#)
- [Emails – Fwd: RE: Interview request – CTV Power Play: COMM0016796](#)

78. In a media advisory published on its website by 11:25 a.m., the Nova Scotia RCMP advised that it would be “providing an update on the investigation into yesterday’s events that resulted in multiple deaths, including of an RCMP member, and the injury to a second RCMP member,” at 2:00 p.m.

- Accessed online: [Media Advisory: Update on Investigation into Active Shooter Events | Posted on April 20, 2020 | RCMP website \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/media-advisory-update-investigation-active-shooter-events\)](#)

- [Media Advisory – Update on Investigation into Active Shooter Events, April 20, 2020: COMM0058906](#)
 - [Emails – RE: NBC News Inquiry | Divisional Update on Nova Scotia Shootings: COMM0016789](#)
79. At 11:29 a.m., Sharon Tessier emailed Director Scanlan, Cindy Bayers, and others to summarize a phone call they had about releasing victims' names to the public. Ms. Tessier wrote: "we support releasing the names of the victims. We'll work with ATIP [Access to Information and Privacy] on preparing the [public] interest disclosure document and some wording re why you are doing so." She added: "we are not confirming numbers or providing any information, telling media that there will be an update this afternoon from H Div."
- [Emails – Follow up: COMM0016791](#)
80. During his daily COVID-19 address to the nation at 12:15 p.m., Prime Minister Trudeau again referred to the "senseless violence and tragedy in Nova Scotia," where, he said, "a gunman claimed the lives of at least 18 people, among them a woman in uniform, whose job it is to protect lives, even if it endangers her own." He acknowledged the public had a lot of questions and offered assurances that the RCMP and local authorities would keep them updated on the investigation. He then asked the media "to avoid mentioning the name and showing the picture of the person involved. Do not give him the gift of infamy. Let us instead focus all our intention and attention on the lives we lost and the families and friends who grieve."
- Accessed online: [PM Trudeau on Nova Scotia shootings and the federal response to COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUblBdLaGYI\)](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)
81. Journalists asked Prime Minister Trudeau about banning assault-style weapons, whether the perpetrator was "on the Federal government's radar," and about the perpetrator's police impersonation. He did not provide any specific information in response to the questions.
- Accessed online: [PM Trudeau on Nova Scotia shootings and the federal response to COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUblBdLaGYI\)](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)
82. At 2:00 p.m., the Nova Scotia RCMP's press briefing commenced. C/Supt. Leather named Cst. Chad Morrison as the member who had been injured, and shared that Cst. Morrison was recovering at home from gunshot wounds. C/Supt. Leather confirmed there were "in excess of 19 victims" and that the total was expected to rise as members continued to process the crime scenes that had structure fires. He said the victims, some of whom were known to the perpetrator, were "both men and women, and all were adults." C/Supt. Leather also provided information about the

perpetrator's replica police cruiser and police uniforms; the use of Twitter as opposed to the emergency Alert Ready system; next of kin notifications; and the course of events. He added that the RCMP made two further referrals to SiRT, in addition to the referral regarding the perpetrator's death, as the investigation progressed.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

83. In a separate press briefing from Ottawa at 2:30 p.m., Minister Bill Blair and Commr. Lucki addressed the media. Minister Blair said there were “18 innocent lives that were lost” during the mass casualty. He acknowledged both Cst. Stevenson and Cst. Morrison by name. He said the RCMP was actively investigating “16 crime scenes and they will be releasing information as it becomes available.”

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

84. Speaking about the ongoing investigation, Commr. Lucki warned that “in the face of this unprecedented crime, it’s going to be very long, and very complicated. It’s not going to be gone through overnight. As the Minister said, there’s 15 – at least 15 crime scenes. But our focus must and will be to put names to the victims, to the heroes, to the people who serve their community.”

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

85. Minister Blair and Commr. Lucki then opened the floor to questions, which covered topics such as the final number of victims; whether the perpetrator left a note; the perpetrator's firearms and gun control in Canada; whether the perpetrator was known to police; SiRT investigations; public alerting; and the perpetrator's replica police cruiser and police uniforms.

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

86. At 3:30 p.m., Nova Scotia premier Stephen McNeil said in a routine COVID-19 press briefing that the province had been prepared to send out an emergency alert, but the RCMP did not request an alert.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil on shootings, COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Posted on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnrCleolCcA\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 21](#)

87. By the end of the day on April 20, SiRT issued the following statement about its investigations:

The province's independent Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT) will investigate the circumstances surrounding the discharge of firearms by two members of the RCMP.

This is an additional referral from the RCMP.

Earlier today, the RCMP indicated there were two additional matters referred to SiRT, however, SiRT has determined the other matter is best investigated by the RCMP. Therefore, all inquiries for that matter should be directed to them.

The discharge of the firearms happened on April 19 while the RCMP were continuing their investigation into a gun-related incident in the northern region of Nova Scotia. RCMP referred the matter to SiRT later that day and SiRT commenced the investigation at that time.

SiRT's mandate is to investigate actions of police that may have led to serious injury or death, or where those actions may raise a significant public interest.

The team can independently begin an investigation after a referral from a chief of police, the head of the RCMP in Nova Scotia or the Minister of Justice. It can also investigate after a complaint from the public.

The Police Act requires the director to file a public report summarizing the result of the investigation within three months after it is finished.

- Accessed online: [SiRT to investigate discharge of firearm by RCMP officers | April 20, 2020 \(https://sirt.novascotia.ca/sirt-investigate-discharge-firearm-rcmp-officers\)](#)
- [SiRT to Investigate Discharge of Firearm by RCMP Officers: COMM0058907](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 22](#)

Information About Victims

Total Number of Victims

88. By end of day April 19, 2020, the Nova Scotia RCMP's investigative log stated that there were believed to be "potentially 23 people deceased including the suspect and Cst. Stevenson. Task to complete all NOK's [next of kin notifications] is well underway. Confirmation with family members is still needed to determine the exact number of deceased parties." At 2:00 p.m. on April 20, C/Supt. Leather emailed an update to all Nova Scotia RCMP members that said: "I can confirm there are 19 victims, but we expect there may be more."

- [Task action report, Task ID 3: COMM0002624 at p. 4](#)
- [Email – Msg. from CrOps Officer: COMM0015944](#)
- [Criminal Operations Officer Update: COMM0015978](#)

89. At his 12:15 p.m. briefing, Prime Minister Trudeau said there were 18 victims. At their 2:00 p.m. briefing, the Nova Scotia RCMP said there were "in excess of 19 victims." C/Supt. Leather said the RCMP expected that total to rise in the coming days as members continued to examine the crime scenes, particularly those related to "five structure fires, most of those being residences," because the RCMP believed "there may be victims still within the remains of those homes which burnt to the ground." At their 2:30 p.m. briefing, Minister Blair referred to "18 innocent lives that were lost" and Commr. Lucki added that "Heidi will not lose her life in vain, nor will the 17 other victims."

- Accessed online: [PM Trudeau on Nova Scotia shootings and the federal response to COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUbIBdLaGYI\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)

90. As on April 19, the changing number of victims caused confusion among media outlets. For example, a journalist from APTN emailed Cpl. Clarke at 3:59 p.m. on April 20 to ask: "Can you please confirm how many people died yesterday? Minister Blair said '18 innocent lives lost', [a]nd C/Supt. Chris Leather said '19 victims' Not sure if victims means deaths?" Cpl. Clarke replied: "The Crim Ops Officer [C/Supt. Leather] said 'in excess of 19' That's what we're going with.."

- [Emails – Media response re: # of deaths-APTN: COMM0010549](#)

91. As for whether that total included the perpetrator, a journalist at the 2:00 p.m. press briefing asked in French whether the number of 19 deaths included the suspect. Cpl. Croteau replied, in French, that the phrasing "more than 19" included the perpetrator too.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

Demographics

92. By 1:49 p.m. on April 20, 2020, C/Supt. Leather had signed off on an internal update to be sent out under his name to all Nova Scotia RCMP members, which said the victims “were both men and women and were all adults.” C/Supt. Leather’s internal update also stated that “some of the victims were known to the suspect and were targeted while others were not known to the suspect.” C/Supt. Leather shared this information publicly at the 2:00 p.m. press briefing.

- [Email – Msg. from CrOps Officer: COMM0015944](#)
- [Criminal Operations Officer Update: COMM0015978](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

93. At the time of the 2:00 p.m. press briefing, members of the Nova Scotia RCMP knew that one of the victims, Emily Tuck, was 17 years old. RCMP members had completed the next of kin notification for Emily Tuck and her parents, Jolene Oliver and Aaron Tuck, by 11:30 p.m. on April 19. By April 20, a public GoFundMe page to raise money for the Tuck/Oliver family stated that Emily was 17 years old when she was killed by the perpetrator.

- [Handwritten notes of Cpl. G. Rose-Berthiaume: COMM0005598 at p. 13](#)
- [GoFundMe front page for TUCK family fundraiser: COMM0006727](#)
- [Handwritten notes of C/Supt. C. Leather: COMM0051406 at p. 86](#)

94. In response to C/Supt. Leather’s internal update, S/Sgt. Steve Halliday emailed Sgt. Laura Seeley and Cpl. Angela McKay at 2:22 p.m. to say: “Just making sure this is accurate. I thought there was a 17 year old.” At 2:32 p.m., Sgt. Seeley wrote back:

Hi Steve,

C/Supt. Leather is aware of all the victims and ages. He released what he felt comfortable confirming at the time. Thanks for following up though.

Laura

- [Email – Msg. from CrOps Officer: COMM0015944](#)
- [Emails – Re: Fw: Criminal Operations Officer Update: COMM0016294](#)

Identifying the Victims

95. Earlier on the morning of April 20, 2020, Director Scanlan and Cindy Bayers had discussed the issue of releasing victims’ names on a phone call with Sharon Tessier at NCS. At 11:29 a.m. on April 20, Ms. Tessier confirmed by email that NCS supported releasing the names of the victims.

- [Emails – Follow up: COMM0016791](#)

96. By April 20, RCMP and government officials had shared Cst. Stevenson’s and Cst. Morrison’s names with the public, but had not shared the names of other victims. During the 2:00 p.m. press briefing, C/Supt. Leather told the media that “until we have confirmation from the Medical Examiner that certain victims have been identified, we’re unable to formally release the names and information of the deceased, and that would include family members.” Cpl. McKay’s notes on the RCMP’s NOK notification process reported that by 5:25 p.m. on April 20, “[s]ome of the victims have been ID’d via photos or in person and some are yet to be verified via DNA through the MEs office. All families have been notified, even if forensic comparison is still required.”

- [Overview of Next of Kin Notification Notes, Cpl. A. McKay: COMM0002938 at p. 3](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

97. At a 2:30 p.m. press briefing, Minister Blair shared that the victims included “[a] nurse, a teacher, correction officers, a serving police officer, parents, neighbours, and friends.”

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

Perpetrator’s Relationship to the Victims

98. At the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, a journalist asked C/Supt. Leather if the mass casualty “began at the home of the suspect’s spouse and partner, and whether she has passed away?” He replied: “I’m not at liberty to discuss that . . . it’s too early for me to confirm that.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

99. As for other relationships between the victims and the perpetrator, RCMP and government officials shared different degrees of information on April 20. At the 2:00 p.m. press briefing, for instance, C/Supt. Leather declined to elaborate on the relationships between the perpetrator and the victims “other than to confirm again that there was a relationship, or, I should say, the subject did know some of his victims and yet others he did not know.” In addition to information about the victims themselves, the RCMP had learned information from witnesses about victims’ relationships with the perpetrator by April 20, and was in the process of verifying that information.

- [Handwritten notes of Cpl. G. Rose-Berthiaume: COMM0005598 at p. 3](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

100. In response to a question about “how many people are still perhaps in the hospital, or how many people that we know of have been injured,” C/Supt. Leather said: “Obviously our own member was injured, received medical attention, and I believe is now home, but we also had information that others may have been injured during the course of this shooting spree. However, that is yet to be confirmed. I don’t have a fixed number for you, but that is something we’re looking at.” As detailed under this heading on April 19, C/Supt. Leather knew of at least three people who had been physically injured by the perpetrator but survived: Lisa Banfield, Andrew MacDonald, and Cst. Morrison. The Nova Scotia RCMP also knew that four children had been taken to the hospital by 4:15 a.m. on April 19.

- [Handwritten notes of Cpl. G. Rose-Berthiaume: COMM0005598 at p. 4](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

Information About Scenes

101. During the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, C/Supt. Leather said there were “16 crime scenes in Portapique and other communities in central and northern Nova Scotia.” He confirmed, in response to a journalist’s question, that the RCMP was “relatively confident we’ve identified all the crime scenes.” At their 2:30 p.m. press briefing, Minister Blair said the Nova Scotia RCMP was “actively investigating almost 16” crime scenes, and Commr. Lucki said “there’s 15 – at least 15 crime scenes.” This number was less than the 18 scenes that the Nova Scotia RCMP had identified and reported in an internal update to H-Division at 9:01 p.m. on April 19, as the RCMP continued to process and release scenes.

- [SITREP Update to Comm – Multiple Homicides, H-Division: COMM0016263](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)
- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

Information About the Perpetrator

102. In his 12:15 p.m. briefing on April 20, 2020, Prime Minister Trudeau did not directly answer a journalist's question about whether the perpetrator was known to the federal government or being monitored by federal law enforcement agencies. Later that day, at the 2:30 p.m. press briefing, a reporter asked Commr. Lucki whether the perpetrator was "known to police, to RCMP . . . in any way before these acts." Commr. Lucki answered that the perpetrator "was not well-known to police."

- Accessed online: [PM Trudeau on Nova Scotia shootings and the federal response to COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUblBdLaGYI\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUblBdLaGYI)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 11](#)
- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

103. As noted in the entry under this heading for April 19, the RCMP had access to databases that held information about the perpetrator's prior encounters with the police and the criminal justice system, including that he was charged with assaulting a minor in 2001 and received a conditional discharge with nine months' probation. The Nova Scotia RCMP also had access to information from HRP records about the perpetrator's past threats of violence.

- [Email Attachment – \[PERPETRATOR'S NAME\] Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348](#)
- [NS Chiefs Package: COMM0025966 at p. 9](#)

Involvement of SiRT

104. The Nova Scotia RCMP knew by end of day on April 19 that there were at least three incidents of members discharging their firearms: (1) the Enfield scene where the perpetrator died; (2) the Shubenacadie scene where Cst. Stevenson exchanged gunfire with the perpetrator before she was killed; and (3) the "blue-on-blue" incident at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall. At the briefing on April 19, 2020, C/Supt. Leather told the public only that the perpetrator's death would form part of a SiRT investigation. At the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, he announced that the RCMP had made two further referrals to SiRT. However, he repeatedly declined to disclose the topics of those two additional referrals.

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at pp. 1, 4, 8](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg)

- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

105. When media at the 2:00 p.m. press briefing asked C/Supt. Leather to provide details about the two additional referrals to SiRT, C/Supt. Leather reiterated that the first SiRT referral was for “the final takedown of the suspect. The other two have come to light pursuant to our investigation and we thought it was appropriate to make those referrals. They’re sensitive in nature. I’m afraid I can’t say anything more about those and I would suggest and recommend that you direct those questions to SiRT. I don’t believe they’ve yet commented on those two additional referrals and it wouldn’t be fair for me to comment in that regard.” In response, the reporter emphasized that in “the five-year history of SiRT, I can’t think of any other time when it’s been announced that something has been referred to SiRT with absolutely no detail whatsoever. I mean, does it involve the—police involvement in the injury and/or death of one of the victims, is that fair to say? One or more of the victims?” C/Supt. Leather replied: “Two separate instances obviously two separate referrals, with very different circumstances, and there was a use-of-force issue in both instances, however I cannot speak to the-- who was involved, other than to say it was RCMP members in both those instances due to the fact that both of those are under investigation.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

106. Prior to the 2:00 p.m. press briefing, C/Supt. Leather had been informed of Cst. Stevenson’s death at the Shubenacadie scene, which was the second incident referred to SiRT, and about the “blue-on-blue” incident, during which RCMP members fired on another RCMP member, that was the third SiRT referral. CrOps meeting minutes from April 19 note that the plan was for Supt. Campbell to convey information about the “blue-on-blue” incident to C/Supt. Leather, and for C/Supt. Leather himself to make the referral to SiRT.

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at p. 8](#)

107. At the 2:30 p.m. press briefing in Ottawa, a reporter asked Minister Blair and Commr. Lucki about the two additional SiRT referrals announced by C/Supt. Leather during the Nova Scotia RCMP’s 2:00 p.m. press briefing. The reporter said: “We’re trying to understand-- were there civilians, or other members of the police who might’ve been fired upon in this incident? It wasn’t clear who these incidents involved.” Commr. Lucki replied that SiRT investigates “[w]henver there is a use of force by police . . . So it’s based on use of force by the RCMP, and that’s all I can comment on. There’s two specific incidents that they’ve been requested to investigate.” In response to a follow-up question, Commr. Lucki confirmed that “no innocent civilians were harmed . . . in these use of force incidents.”

- Additional information on the events that led to the second and third SiRT referrals is contained in the *Shubenacadie* and *Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Hall* Foundational Documents.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

108. By the end of the day on April 20, SiRT issued a statement that they would investigate the discharge of firearms by two RCMP members, but not “the other matter,” which was “best investigated by the RCMP.” This meant SiRT was investigating the “blue-on-blue” incident at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall, but not the Cst. Stevenson scene.

- Accessed online: [SiRT to investigate discharge of firearm by RCMP officers | April 20, 2020 \(https://sirt.novascotia.ca/sirt-investigate-discharge-firearm-rcmp-officers\)](#)
- [SiRT to Investigate Discharge of Firearm by RCMP Officers: COMM0058907](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 22](#)

Use of Firearms

Cst. Stevenson’s Firearm

109. A reporter at the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, asked C/Supt. Leather whether the perpetrator at any point had “police magazines and firearms,” since the “report in the Sun last night about Cst. Stevenson’s death . . . said that the shooter took her guns and mags.” C/Supt. Leather replied that he was “not at liberty to discuss the firearm portion because that moves into the SiRT investigation.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

110. The day before – at 2:14 p.m. on April 19 – Supt. Campbell informed C/Supt. Leather that Cst. Stevenson’s “sidearm and mag are gone.” Earlier in the day, at 11:35 a.m., RCMP members on scene at the Enfield Big Stop observed a member’s pistol in the Mazda3 the perpetrator was in when he was killed. It is unclear whether or when this information was communicated directly to C/Supt. Leather. The forensic identification report on the firearms in the Mazda3 was not completed until April 21.

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049, at p. 1](#)
- [Member report of S/Sgt. K. Surette: COMM0003913 at p. 8](#)
- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cst. C. Sloan, April 19, 2020: COMM0007446 at pp. 3–4](#)

The Perpetrator's Unlicensed Firearms

111. At the 2:30 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, a reporter asked Commr. Lucki to provide “a sense of the firearms that were used, whether or not they were registered, [and] whether they were properly obtained.” Commr. Lucki responded that the RCMP “will be doing a lot of tracing, we’ll be doing a lot of background work into that, but to date we don’t have that information.” She added that it would take time for the RCMP to determine the cause of each victim’s death and therefore to identify which weapon was used at each location. Another journalist asked Commr. Lucki whether the perpetrator had a firearm licence. Commr. Lucki did not answer that question.

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

112. RCMP members on site observed multiple firearms in the Mazda3 the perpetrator was using when he was killed at the Enfield Big Stop. Forensic Identification Services (FIS) personnel completed evidence collection at the Enfield scene by 11:00 p.m. on April 19, which included preserving the Mazda3 with the firearms inside. Forensic Identification member Cpl. Carla Sloan did not examine the firearm exhibits from the Enfield scene until April 21. In the interim, FIS personnel continued to collect evidence from other scenes, including spent shell casings corresponding to firearms found in the Mazda3.

- [Member report of S/Sgt. K. Surette: COMM0003913 at p. 8](#)
- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cst. C. Sloan, April 19, 2020: COMM0007446 at pp. 3–4](#)

113. At 4:07 a.m. on April 19, S/Sgt. Jeff West recorded in his notes that S/Sgt. Halliday had advised Incident Command that there was “no CFRO” for the perpetrator. That meant that the perpetrator did not have a licence to own firearms and, if the perpetrator had any firearms, they were not registered.

- [Typed notes of Sgt. R. Lewis, scribe of S/Sgt. J. West: COMM0003901 at p. 5](#)

114. At 9:40 a.m. on April 20, Sgt. Larry Peyton of the RCMP’s National Weapon Enforcement Support Team (NWEST) conducted a “firearms trace” on the perpetrator, with the following queries and results:

RWRS (Restricted Weapons Registration System) name queries for [the perpetrator] were all negative.

CFIS (Canadian Firearms Information System) firearms licence & application queries for [the perpetrator] were all negative.

- [NWEST Firearms Trace Report, authored by Sgt. L. Peyton: COMM0003099](#)

115. At 12:38 p.m., Sgt. Peyton emailed C/Supt. Leather with the results of his firearms inquiries:

The accused has never been in possession of a firearms license. Further, he has never made application for a firearms license from the Canadian Firearms Program.

As such, every gun in his possession, whether used or not, is a crime gun, and work-ups ought to be completed by NWEST and the Canadian National Firearms Tracing Centre on each and every firearm determined in his possession or related to him via investigation. I have advised Cpl. ROSE-BERTHIAUME, Bible Hill MCU, of same, as this morning he requested a work-up of information regarding the accused.

- [Email – FW: NWEST Information: COMM0017435](#)

Police Paraphernalia

116. At the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, a journalist asked C/Supt. Leather to provide details about where the RCMP found the replica RCMP cruiser, where they found the photograph of the replica RCMP cruiser, and “any other information you’ve been able to ascertain regarding the shooter’s access to a uniform and what appears to be a police car.” C/Supt. Leather replied that “what we refer to as the mock police car” was “first reported to us early in the morning but then discovered at the crime scene that involved the killing of Cst. Stevenson and that vehicle was one of the two vehicles that were then fully engulfed in flames.” C/Supt. Leather did not answer the question of the source of the photograph of the perpetrator’s replica RCMP cruiser.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

117. When C/Supt. Leather told the media the RCMP had learned about the replica RCMP cruiser early in the morning on April 19, he was presumably referring to the information the RCMP learned about the perpetrator’s vehicles from Lisa Banfield shortly before 8:00 a.m. that morning.

- Additional information on the RCMP’s knowledge of the perpetrator’s access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

118. The first reports about the perpetrator driving a “police car” came early in the mass casualty. Shortly after 10:00 p.m. on April 18, 2020, the RCMP Operational Communications Centre (OCC)

in Truro, Nova Scotia, began receiving calls regarding incidents in Portapique, Nova Scotia. Within the first 30 minutes of the mass casualty, RCMP members and OCC telecommunications operators received reports that the vehicle involved in the incident was a “decked and labelled RCMP car”; a vehicle that was “just like a police car” with “lights and stuff” and “the cop symbol on it”; and “a cop car” that was white with stripes, but possibly no roof lights.

- Additional information on the RCMP’s knowledge of the perpetrator’s access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

119. Around 10:25 p.m., Andrew and Kate MacDonald advised RCMP members about the perpetrator’s vehicle. In her statement on April 18, Ms. MacDonald told RCMP risk manager S/Sgt. Brian Rehill: “It was somebody in a cop car shot at us.” At 10:30 p.m., while speaking with Mr. and Ms. MacDonald in Portapique, Cst. Aaron Patton broadcast: “It’s somebody names [*sic*] [perpetrator’s name], he has a car that looks like a police car.”

- [Transcript of recorded 911 calls, April 18, 2020: COMM0002628 at lines 586–99](#)
- [Colchester radio: COMM0003806 at lines 223–33](#)
- Note: The Colchester radio transcript uses Eastern Daylight Time. Transcript times have been converted to Atlantic Daylight Time throughout this foundational document.
- Additional information on the RCMP’s knowledge of the perpetrator’s access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

120. At approximately 5:16 a.m., Andrew MacDonald, who had been released from the hospital following the shooting on Orchard Beach Drive, provided a statement to Cst. Jeff MacFarlane. In his statement, Mr. MacDonald gave a detailed description of the perpetrator’s replica RCMP cruiser, stating: “It was definitely a white Ford Taurus marked like a police officer, yeah.”

- [Statement of Andrew MacDonald: COMM0002703 at lines 203–15](#)
- Note: Investigation is ongoing into whether or how Cst. MacFarlane disseminated the information he obtained from Andrew MacDonald to other RCMP members.

121. As detailed in the *RCMP Replica Cruiser* Foundational Document, at 7:15:05 a.m., Cpl. Tim Mills broadcast that the licence plate of the burnt Taurus found at the perpetrator’s cottage was GJX 365. As a result of this broadcast, the perpetrator’s connection to Berkshire Broman Corporation was discovered. S/Sgt. Briers asked an OCC supervisor to search the JEIN database for other vehicles owned by that corporation.

- [Colchester radio: COMM0003806 at lines 3865–68, 3880–87](#)
- [Member report of S/Sgt. B. Briers: COMM0009061 at p. 1](#)

122. At this time and based on the perpetrator's registered vehicles, both in his own name and under Berkshire Broman Corporation, it was believed that the perpetrator owned three Ford Tauruses. Emergency Response Team (ERT) members believed that the perpetrator's marked RCMP cruiser may have been one of the two burned-out Ford Tauruses they had seen in Portapique, and the RCMP had located a third Ford Taurus at the perpetrator's residence in Dartmouth that morning. At around 7:15 a.m. on April 19, 2020, the RCMP believed they had accounted for all three Ford Tauruses of which they were aware.

- [Colchester radio: COMM0003806 at lines 3895–909](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Cst. T. Milton: COMM0037115 at p. 57](#)
- Additional information on the RCMP's knowledge of the perpetrator's access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

123. The photo of the perpetrator's replica RCMP cruiser was provided to HRP by Lisa Banfield's then brother-in-law David McGrath shortly before 7:30 a.m. on April 19. HRP obtained the photo during an interview with Mr. McGrath and Lisa Banfield's sister Maureen Banfield. HRP officers shared the photo with S/Sgt. Addie MacCallum of the Nova Scotia RCMP at 7:25 a.m. on April 19.

- [Timeline of actions taken by S/Sgt. S. Halliday: COMM0010696 at p. 6](#)
- Additional information on the RCMP's knowledge of the perpetrator's access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

124. With respect to the perpetrator's access to a police uniform, C/Supt. Leather said "we don't know the origin of the uniforms, but we certainly have reason to believe that they were all either actual uniforms or very good facsimiles thereof." In an interview that began at 6:58 a.m. on April 19, Lisa Banfield told the RCMP that the perpetrator's uncle was a retired RCMP member and that the perpetrator had his RCMP uniform, "but he couldn't fit into it cause it's smaller." The RCMP was continuing to investigate the source of the perpetrator's police paraphernalia.

- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948 at lines 509–748](#)
- [Audio of Lisa Banfield interview: COMM0002957 at 26:55](#)
- Additional information on the RCMP's investigation into the origins of the perpetrator's police uniform items is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

125. In a later interview, Lisa Banfield clarified that the perpetrator had his uncle's Red Serge uniform, but that it didn't fit him. In that same interview, Ms. Banfield also said the perpetrator had "the khaki shirts like the police officers have you know. The beige-y kind of one."

- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 28, 2020: COMM0004070 at pp. 27, 32](#)

126. At the 2:30 p.m. press briefing in Ottawa, a journalist asked Commr. Lucki how someone could obtain or put together a replica police cruiser and RCMP paraphernalia, including whether this is something the police watch for and whether the perpetrator was on the RCMP's radar. Commr. Lucki replied: "For that he wasn't on our radar, as far as we know, but there's a lot of investigative steps that have already been followed to trace all of that back and how it did happen and how it could occur. Some of it-- most of which we think is replica. It wasn't actually an RCMP vehicle, but it was made to look identical to one, and we will trace back every part of that vehicle to find out how that happened, as well as with the uniforms."

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

Emergency Alert Ready System

127. In response to journalist questions at the 3:30 p.m. press briefing on April 20, Premier McNeil explained that the protocol for issuing an emergency alert in Nova Scotia in April 2020 required the RCMP to craft the language of the alert and request Nova Scotia's Emergency Management Office (EMO) to send out the alert:

[CTV News:] For the Premier, I'm wondering-- last weekend, or Easter weekend, we saw quite a few emergency alerts put out on TV and through cell phones warning people to stay home because of COVID. Yesterday when there was a manhunt that lasted almost 12 hours that service wasn't utilized. Can you explain why, and whether or not you feel perhaps we missed an opportunity with that-- to spread the message further, and if that could have made a difference in this tragic situation?

[Premier McNeil:] Well EMO needs to be ordered to put that out. Public Health ordered us to put the COVID one out, we were happy to support them. We had people in and ready, but we were not asked to put out that alert on the weekend.

[The Canadian Press:] Yes Premier on that point, are you concerned that the RCMP did not ask you to do that? They didn't have answers for us today as to why that wasn't done. Is that a concern for you?

[Premier McNeil:] Listen this is a province in mourning. There will be lots of questions. I can tell you I'm not going to second-guess why someone or the organization did what they did or didn't do at this moment in time. This was an active environment, I can tell you-- you know, deaths, gunfire, you know. Let's give them an opportunity as an organization to explain that to you. My job today

as the Premier of this province is to do all I can to provide support and comfort to those families and the citizens across this province as we deal with this tragedy.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil on shootings, COVID-19 – April 20, 2020 | Posted on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnrCleoICcA\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnrCleoICcA)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 21](#)
- [Nova Scotia EMO Standard Operating Procedures and Overarching Policy \(undated, prior to April 2018\): COMM0001001 at p. 7](#)
- Additional information on the Alert Ready process is contained in the *RCMP Public Communications, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document.

128. The Nova Scotia RCMP did not initially contact EMO to issue an emergency alert during the mass casualty. Instead, EMO contacted the RCMP at 10:35 a.m. on April 19 to ask whether the RCMP wanted EMO to issue an alert. At 11:17 a.m., the RCMP approved the use of the emergency Alert Ready system. As detailed in the *Enfield Big Stop* Foundational Document, the perpetrator was killed in Enfield by RCMP members at 11:25 a.m. The alert was cancelled and, as a result, no emergency alert was broadcast during the mass casualty.

- Additional information on the discussions around the use of the Alert Ready system is contained in the *RCMP Public Communications, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document

129. At the 2:30 p.m. press briefing in Ottawa, a journalist had the following exchange with Commr. Lucki:

[CBC:] [A] question that's been raised is about the fact that while there was information sent out on Twitter, there was no sort of public alert sent out through the telephone over the course of this incident, and I wonder if that's something that you're looking into now, if you have any questions about whether that might have helped preserve public safety?

[Commissioner Lucki:] I do say that in any incident such as this, we always have to look back at what we did. Nobody can lose their life in vain, and Heidi will not lose her life in vain, nor will the 17 other victims. We have to ensure that whatever happened there-- there is always going to be a better way to do things, and so if we can take this and move forward and find a better way to advise the public... But I have to say in these incidents, they are so dynamic, and they are so quick, and it was just over 12 hours that all of this took place, and it was-- there was a lot of-- 15 different crime scenes, so you can imagine the dynamic nature of this. But again, we look at all the criminal side and then of course we look at sort of the administrative side of all of that to say what could we have done better to make Canadians safer, because that is ultimately our goal.

- Accessed online: [Public Safety Minister Bill Blair speaks on Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 16](#)

130. In response to media questions at the 2:00 p.m. press briefing about why the RCMP used Twitter instead of the emergency Alert Ready system, C/Supt. Leather said: “I believe there was an Amber Alert that went out at some point.” Cpl. Croteau corrected him, saying: “No, we just used the Twitter and Facebook just because it was unfolding. We were in contact with the province about it though, but it just never... We apprehended the suspect prior to-- .”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

131. In follow-up, a journalist asked C/Supt. Leather about when the emergency Alert Ready system should be used. The journalist noted that the RCMP had not given an answer about why the emergency Alert Ready system was not activated, and questioned: “If not for this, what would it be activated for?” C/Supt. Leather responded:

It’s a good question and I don’t have an answer for you at this moment. We’ll be looking at that and I hope to have a more fulsome response for you tomorrow or in the coming hours. We had relied on Twitter as my colleague said because of its-- the instantaneous manner that we can communicate. We’re aware that we have thousands of followers in Nova Scotia and felt that it was a way—a superior way—to communicate this ongoing threat.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

132. The media continued to press C/Supt. Leather on the use of the emergency Alert Ready system and communication through Twitter:

[Halifax Examiner:] I have a follow-up question about communication in general. It’s the belief of some people in the public that because the emergency alert system was not activated, at least one person was killed who may have been warned. But additionally to that, why did the Twitter account announce that the suspect was in custody, when he had been killed?

[C/Supt. Leather:] So in terms of that description, I could see how for instance passers-by would-- may have considered [the perpetrator] to be in custody, but again we're moving into a SiRT investigational area. I think that question would be better posed to them. Thank you.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

133. Draft statements prepared by Director Scanlan's team on April 21, the day after the April 20 press briefing, address the RCMP's internal knowledge about the use of the Alert Ready system during the mass casualty. The draft statements were to be released under C/Supt. Leather's name, and stated that the RCMP "did not consider the option of using the public emergency alert system" until Sunday morning. That line was removed from the draft before the statement was released to the public on April 22.

- [Emails – Re: Statement – track changes: COMM0027595](#)
- [Emails – Re: Urgent review, please: COMM0022781](#)
- [Email – As discussed: COMM0027596](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

134. Insp. Rodier, who was in charge of H-Division's Emergency Management Section (EMS) on Sunday, April 19 and approved EMO to issue an emergency alert on behalf of the RCMP, said she "knew nothing" about the use of Nova Scotia's Alert Ready system in policing before the mass casualty. Other RCMP personnel, including OCC commander Glen Byrne and S/Sgt. Jeff West, also told the Commission they were not familiar with the Alert Ready system and did not consider it to be a tool in their toolbox.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Insp. D. Rodier: COMM0015496 at p. 45](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Glen Byrne: COMM0015499](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of S/Sgt. Jeff West: COMM0035916 at p. 50](#)

135. An email on April 21 further suggests that the RCMP was not aware of the process to issue an emergency alert, or the circumstances for the use of the system. At 8:18 a.m. on April 21, Glenn Mason, EMS emergency planning coordinator, emailed Jason Mew and Michael Bennett of EMO:

Good morning Gentlemen,

As you are both aware everyone is getting grilled for not employing the Emergency Cell phone broadcast on Sunday.

Does EMO have any policy drafted around the use of this system and how it is to be engaged?

Has there been any correspondence with partner agencies (RCMP) on the rules for engagement? We are not looking to throw anyone under the bus, but need to address the issue as a united front.

Glenn

- [Email – Emergency Broadcast System: COMM0000450](#)

136. In a follow-up email on April 22, Glenn Mason added that he had searched RCMP records and that the RCMP did not appear to have a policy for public alerts on file.

- [Email – Emergency Broadcast System: COMM0000450](#) (see also: [Emails – Use of Social Media vs. Alert System: COMM0020394](#), [COMM0020393](#), and [COMM0020392](#))

137. However, EMO records show it had presented a slideshow to the RCMP in 2016 on the public alerting system (which did not then include cell phone alerts). The slide show stated that the ability to broadcast alerts over cell phones was “under development.” EMO’s executive director, Paul Mason, confirmed that EMO has kept its partners, including the RCMP, updated on the progress of the system since then through regular discussions and meetings with RCMP representatives. Available evidence indicates that, at the time of the mass casualty, an Alert Ready alert for a civil emergency or police emergency had not been sent in any province or territory in Canada.

- [EMO Public Alerting System Presentation: COMM0001015](#)
- [Memorandum from Paul Mason, executive director of NSEMO, to Deputy Minister Nancy MacLellan, Overview of Alert Ready System, April 29, 2020: COMM0000997 at p. 1](#)
- [Broadcast Immediate Alerting Statistics by Jurisdiction: COMM0057352](#)

Course of Events

138. At the 2:00 p.m. press briefing on April 20, 2020, a journalist asked if C/Supt. Leather could speak about whether the events “began at the home of the suspect’s spouse and partner, and whether she has passed away?” C/Supt. Leather said he was “not at liberty to discuss that . . . it’s too early for me to confirm that.” By this time, C/Supt. Leather knew that Lisa Banfield was alive and that the events had begun at the cottage she shared with the perpetrator on the night of April 18. Lisa Banfield confirmed those details in interview beginning at 6:58 a.m. on April 19.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)
- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948 at lines 372–407](#)

139. In response to a question about how the perpetrator moved from Portapique to Wentworth and onwards while evading police, C/Supt. Leather said that the perpetrator’s ability to move around the province undetected was “greatly benefited by the fact that he had a police—or vehicle that looked identical in every way to a marked police car, and beyond that he was wearing a police uniform.” C/Supt. Leather added that “after the police vehicle that he was driving was no longer driveable, he was able to acquire other citizens’ vehicles—to which I will not say anything more about because it’s subject to an ongoing investigation—to then circulate around the province steps ahead of our investigators.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia shootings – April 20, 2020 | Streamed live on April 20, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0g_tHvQMLg\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 12](#)

140. By end of day on April 19, the Nova Scotia RCMP knew that the perpetrator had stolen both Joey Webber’s grey/silver Ford Escape SUV and Gina Goulet’s grey Mazda3 during the last hour of the mass casualty. Cpl. Jason Anthony’s Forensic Identification Occurrence Report shows that he completed a scene examination at a residence on Highway 224 on April 19. He was informed that the residence “is where it was believed that the suspect had changed vehicles” from Joey Webber’s grey/silver Ford Escape SUV to Gina Goulet’s Mazda3. Cpl. Anthony found the grey/silver SUV at the residence on Highway 224. The Nova Scotia RCMP also knew the perpetrator was driving Gina Goulet’s Mazda3 when he was killed at the Enfield scene.

- Note: Meeting minutes from the CrOps briefing on April 19, 2020, show that Supt. Campbell advised C/Supt. Leather at 3:55 p.m. that the perpetrator at one point “gets Silver Tracker. Body in back of fake PC might be related to a car jacking” (see: [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at p. 4](#)).
- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cpl. J. Anthony: COMM0002740 at pp. 2, 3](#)
- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Sgt. M. McKenna: COMM0018505 at p. 1](#)

APRIL 21, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 21, 2020

141. In a routine COVID-19 press briefing at 3:30 p.m. on April 21, 2020, Nova Scotia premier Bill McNeil reiterated that the RCMP did not request to use the province's emergency Alert Ready system during the events of April 18 and 19.

- Accessed online: [Premier Stephen McNeil on Nova Scotia shooting, COVID-19 – April 21, 2020 | Streamed live on April 21, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQyMC8Gqun4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQyMC8Gqun4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 23](#)

142. At 4:10 p.m. on April 21, the Nova Scotia RCMP published an update on the investigation on its Facebook page. The text was uploaded to the RCMP website the next day (April 22) as a news release entitled "Update on the investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19." The text of the Facebook post on April 21 originally stated that there were 23 victims. Later that evening, at 8:26 p.m., the Nova Scotia RCMP edited the number of victims reported in the Facebook post to 22 victims, and wrote a comment on the Facebook post saying: "The above post was edited to reflect that there are 22 victims. The suspect . . . also died in the incident."

- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)
- Note: The 4:10 p.m. time of the original Facebook post was sourced from a CTV News article, accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage | Published by CTV News on April 19, 2020](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954) (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954>)
- [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
- Note: The updated Facebook post has a timestamp of 8:26 p.m. Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post](https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn_=-R) (https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn_=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m.: COMM0058909](#)
- Note: The Nova Scotia RCMP also issued a public clarification at 8:27 p.m.: "Please note that the release issued earlier today about the investigation into incidents on April 18 and 19 should have read 22 victims rather than 23. The suspect . . . also died in the incident" (see: [Email – Clarification: Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0034860](#)).

143. The edited text of the RCMP's update, which was posted on Facebook on April 21 and on the RCMP website on April 22, provided the following information, as well as a "Q&A" section:

On Saturday, April 18, Nova Scotia RCMP members responded to a possible shooting incident at a home in Portapique in Colchester County.

When police arrived, members located several casualties inside and outside of a home. They did not, however, locate a suspect. Officers secured the area and began to search for the suspect.

Residents of the immediate area were being evacuated by police while the search was ongoing.

The initial search for a suspect led to multiple sites in the immediate area, including structures and vehicles that were on fire.

[The perpetrator was] identified as the suspect and the search for him continued overnight and into the morning of Sunday, April 19 through multiple communities in Colchester County.

The search ended on April 19 when [the perpetrator] was located by members at a service station in Enfield. [The perpetrator] was shot by police and later died. This matter has been referred to SiRT.

Nova Scotia RCMP are currently at 16 specific locations in the communities of Portapique, Wentworth, Debert, Shubenacadie/Milford and Enfield to gather evidence and learn more about what occurred at each location.

We believe there to be 22 victims, including a 17-year-old, plus the shooter who is deceased. All other victims are adults, both men and women. Among the victims is Cst. Heidi Stevenson, a 23-year veteran of the RCMP. Some of the victims were known to [the perpetrator] and were targeted while others were not known to the suspect.

Our thoughts are with all of the victims' families and we are particularly mindful of families who have not yet received confirmation that their loved ones were involved. This is an unprecedented incident that has resulted in incredible loss and heartbreak for countless families and loved ones. So many lives will be forever touched, including all who responded, community members, multiple RCMP units, including our Operational Communications Centre, municipal police services, firefighters, and EHS.

- Note: The 4:10 p.m. time of the original Facebook post was sourced from a CTV News article, accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage | Published by CTV News on April 19, 2020 \(https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954\)](https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954)
- [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)

- Note: The updated Facebook post has a timestamp of 8:26 p.m. Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post \(https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R\)](https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Note: The Nova Scotia RCMP also issued a public clarification at 8:27 p.m.: “Please note that the release issued earlier today about the investigation into incidents on April 18 and 19 should have read 22 victims rather than 23. The suspect . . . also died in the incident” (see: [Email – Clarification: Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0034860](#)).
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)

Information About Victims

144. In the statement posted to their Facebook account on April 21, 2020, and on their website the next day, the Nova Scotia RCMP told the public they believed there were 22 victims, not including the perpetrator, who was also deceased.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post \(https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R\)](https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)

145. The RCMP clarified that one victim was 17 years old, and the rest were adults. They did not provide the names of the victims, but said they continued to work with the Nova Scotia Medical Examiner Service to identify victims and notify their next of kin.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post \(https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R\)](https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)

- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)

146. The RCMP reiterated that some victims were known to the perpetrator and were targeted, while others were not known to the perpetrator. They did not elaborate on these relationships. Instead, the RCMP stated: “We will not be providing more information on how the victims may have been known to [the perpetrator].”

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post \(https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R\)](#)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](#)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)

147. By April 21, the RCMP knew the names and ages of all 22 victims, as well as preliminary information about whether or not they were known to the perpetrator. Cpl. McKay’s notes show that the RCMP had completed next of kin notifications for each of the 22 victims by 5:25 p.m. on April 20. Her notes state that “Some of the victims have been ID’d via photos or in person and some are yet to be verified via DNA through the [Medical Examiner’s] office. All families have been notified, even if forensic comparison is still required.”

- [Overview of Next of Kin Notification Notes, Cpl. A. McKay: COMM0002938 at p. 3](#)

148. RCMP members were actively interviewing individuals who knew the victims and the perpetrator, and as a result the RCMP continued to collect information about the relationships between the victims and the perpetrator.

- [Member’s handwritten notes of Cpl. G. Rose-Berthiaume: COMM0005599](#)

149. The RCMP also confirmed in their April 21 statement that members of the public were injured, in addition to Cst. Morrison. Although they did not name the individuals, they knew that the perpetrator had physically injured Lisa Banfield and Andrew MacDonald, in addition to Cst. Morrison.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post \(https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R\)](#)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)

- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, posted April 22, 2020: COMM0058908](#)

Information About the Perpetrator

150. The RCMP's update on April 21, 2020, stated that the perpetrator did not have a criminal record. This statement was an accurate reflection of the perpetrator's CPIC records. The RCMP did not provide information about the perpetrator's criminal history, including that he was charged with assaulting a minor in 2001 and received a criminal discharge with nine months of probation, that he had made threats of violence, and other dealings with the police, which the RCMP knew about by this time.

- [Email attachment – \[PERPETRATOR'S NAME\] Profile – Additional Information: COMM0017348](#)
- [NS Chiefs Package: COMM0025966 at p. 9](#)

151. The statement also said the RCMP would not speculate about the perpetrator's motives but continued to investigate whether he had planned the mass casualty and, if so, why.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post](https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R) (https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 4:10 p.m.: COMM0058908](#)

Involvement of SiRT

152. In their April 21, 2020, statement, the Nova Scotia RCMP confirmed that “[t]wo matters, including the death of the suspect, are being investigated by SiRT,” and that as a result they would not be providing more detail. The RCMP did not disclose the subject of the second investigation, which was the “blue-on-blue” incident at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall.

- [Minutes for CROPS meeting, April 19, 2020: COMM0009049 at p. 8](#)
- Additional information on the blue-on-blue incident is contained in the *Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Hall Foundational Document*.

Police Paraphernalia

153. In their statement on April 21, 2020, the Nova Scotia RCMP confirmed that the perpetrator was wearing an authentic police uniform and driving “a very real look-alike RCMP vehicle.” The RCMP said they were investigating how the photo of that vehicle was obtained. In fact, they received it from the HRP at 7:25 a.m. on April 19; the HRP had, in turn, just received it from Lisa Banfield’s then brother-in-law, David McGrath.

- [Timeline of actions taken by S/Sgt. S. Halliday: COMM0010696 at p. 6](#)
- Additional information on the RCMP’s knowledge of the perpetrator’s access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

Emergency Alert Ready System

154. Premier McNeil reiterated the process for sending out an emergency alert at his 3:30 p.m. press briefing on April 21, 2020, and he redirected media questions about why the RCMP had not used the system to the RCMP:

[Global News:] I just wanted to ask about-- switching gears to the shooting over the weekend, I’m wondering when the Government was informed of what was happening and if EMO was in the loop Saturday night rather than Sunday morning, and do they need to have an explicit request to send out an emergency alert?

[Premier McNeil:] Thank you for the question. We were notified that there was a structure fires in Portapique around midnight, little after, only for information. Told that they could not be attended to. We were told potentially this could spread into a forest fire. We were notified then-- we were then asked for some, later in the morning, air support to go provide air support in the air. Our EMO Centre was activated-- has been activated. We brought in staff that did come in-- those that especially deal with the alert system. And yes we need to be-- the lead agency, in this case the RCMP, has to ask for that alert to go out, because quite frankly we need the information from them-- what is it that they want in that alert to notify to citizens. They had-- but we had staff on hand in the morning to be able to do that and-- but it was not requested.

...

[Globe & Mail:] A question for the Premier: do you know why an emergency alert was not requested by the RCMP, and is that something that that you are looking into?

[Premier McNeil:] Well that is something that all Nova Scotians are wondering. What I can tell you, we looked-- I looked internally on the processes that we had

taken place, the contact that we had had, and what was requested of us. EMO, on their own, brought in their alert technicians to make sure that we would be ready to issue an alert, but the reason why the RCMP have not-- didn't ask would be a question for them, not for us.

- Accessed online: [Premier Stephen McNeil on Nova Scotia shooting, COVID-19 – April 21, 2020 | Streamed live on April 21, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQyMC8Gqun4>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 23](#)

155. The Nova Scotia RCMP did not discuss the emergency Alert Ready system in their April 21 statement. Internally, however, they continued to prepare their response to media questions about why the emergency Alert Ready system was not used to warn the public about the active shooter situation.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia RCMP Facebook post](#) (https://m.facebook.com/rcmpns/posts/10157512693344779?_tn=-R)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 8:26 p.m. April 21, 2020: COMM0058909](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, 4:10 p.m.: COMM0058908](#)

156. At 8:16 a.m. on April 21, Insp. Rob Bell emailed C/Supt. Leather to request a phone call to discuss the use of the emergency Alert Ready system. Insp. Bell said he was upset by the “incessant questions from the media about use of the emergency alert system. The question is a valid one, but the critical lens for the operational response at this stage is very inappropriate in my opinion. As one of the people in the command post when events were unfolding, I thought I might be able in providing some perspective to help shut this line of questioning down for now.” It is unclear whether this phone call between Insp. Bell and C/Supt. Leather took place.

- [Email – Phone call: COMM0020287](#)

157. At 1:53 p.m., Glenn Mason emailed C/Supt. Leather, Director Scanlan, and others with excerpts from the EMS directory on public alerting, emphasizing when “the service should **not** be used” (emphasis in original), including “where the information could reasonably be transmitted via other media in a timely fashion (e.g. press release, news conference, television interview).”

- [Email – Public Alerting: COMM0027573](#)

158. At the same time, Director Scanlan’s team was working with NCS to draft a statement about the Emergency Alert that could be released to the public on behalf of C/Supt. Leather. The excerpts

of the draft statement presented in the following paragraphs were edited out before the statement was released to the public on April 22.

- [Emails – Re: Statement – track changes: COMM0027595](#)

159. One version of the draft statement approved by Cpl. McKay on April 21 said that on Saturday April 18, RCMP members were in “the initial stages of a homicide investigation and at that time we did not consider an Emergency Alert.” Later that night, Director Scanlan sent a revised version to A/Commr. Bergerman that said the RCMP “did not consider the option of using the public emergency alert system” until Sunday morning:

Throughout the evening Saturday and into the early morning hours Sunday, the RCMP established and maintained a significant presence in the area of Portapique in response to an active threat. Our response centred on protecting people, which included providing information on Twitter. The RCMP did not consider the option of using the public emergency alert system, Alert Ready, during this time.

- [Emails – Re: Urgent review, please: COMM0022781](#)
- [Email – As discussed: COMM0027596](#)

160. The draft statement went on to note that the Nova Scotia RCMP began using its Twitter account to communicate “real-time information” with the public at 8:02 a.m. on Sunday, April 19. It said Nova Scotia Provincial Emergency Management officials contacted the RCMP at 10:15 a.m. on April 19 to offer the use of the public emergency alerting system, and that the RCMP was in the process of establishing an alert with EMO officials when the perpetrator was shot and killed. The draft statement concluded:

The RCMP will be conducting a thorough review of all of its actions over the course of this incident, which will include a review of its internal policies and procedures, as well as its processes with the Province of Nova Scotia for public emergency alerts.

- [Email – As discussed: COMM0027596](#)
- Additional information on the discussions around the use of the Alert Ready system is contained in the *RCMP Public Communications, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document.

161. The draft statement of April 21 was amended to remove the line that said that the RCMP had not considered the option of using the public emergency Alert Ready system and the paragraph about investigating its use of the emergency Alert Ready system. In subsequent statements, the RCMP told the public only that it had been in the process of preparing an emergency alert when the perpetrator was shot and killed.

- [Email – As discussed: COMM0027596](#)
- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058908](#)

Course of Events

162. In their April 21 statement, the RCMP said “[t]he call RCMP first responded to was a firearms complaint.” They said the first call was received at approximately 10:30 p.m. on April 18.

- Accessed online: [Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058908](#)

163. The initial 911 call from Jamie Blair was in fact received by the OCC in Truro at 10:01 p.m. on Saturday, April 18. She described the perpetrator shooting her husband, Greg Blair. During the call the perpetrator shot Jamie Blair multiple times. The RCMP learned in the first call that at least two people had been shot and possibly killed in Portapique. The RCMP consistently described this initial 911 call to the public as a “firearms complaint,” including on Twitter and in their post-event statements.

- [Transcript of recorded 911 call of Jamie Blair: COMM0002881](#)
- [Overview of calls to and from OCC on April 18–19, 2020: COMM0002902](#)
- [H-Strong Communication Product Timeline: COMM0037113 at p. 1](#)

APRIL 22, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 22, 2020

164. At 2:56 p.m. on April 22, 2020, Cpl. Croteau received a question about the timeline of events from *NOW* magazine by email, as follows:

are u able to shed any light on why the public was not made aware immediately of the possibility someone who was armed and dangerous impersonating an rcmp officer..? any insight u can offer is appreciated

- [Email – Media response re: NOW magazine various questions: COMM0010635](#)

165. By reply email, Cpl. Croteau acknowledged that the RCMP knew the perpetrator was driving something that looked like an RCMP cruiser on the night of Saturday, April 18:

RCMP officers responded to the community of Portapique at 10:26 p.m. As part of the response, officers began notifying residents in the immediate area and searching for suspect(s). The RCMP then issued a public instruction on Twitter that we were aware of a firearms complaint in the Portapique area and advised them to stay inside.

As soon as a witness told officers that the suspect was driving what looked like a police vehicle, we looked into the gunman's background and learned that he had three plated vehicles that were probably former police vehicles. We knew that the suspect had a residence in the Halifax region, so we sent officers to that area. They confirmed that one of those vehicles was at that location and the other two were burning at the suspect's residence in the Portapique area. At that point, we had accounted for three of the plated vehicles. We weren't aware at that particular time that the gunman had a fourth registered vehicle with no license plate and that was the vehicle he was using.

After 6:30 a.m., a victim emerged from hiding after she called 911. Our officers responded and it was at that time we confirmed more details about the gunman. This included the fact that he was in possession of a fully marked and equipped replica vehicle and was wearing a police uniform.

At 8:02 a.m. the RCMP issued a follow up Tweet advising Portapique residents to remain inside their homes. Updates on the situation were provided via Twitter from that point to when the gunman was killed by police.

- [Email – Media response re: NOW magazine various questions: COMM0010635](#)

166. Later that afternoon, at his routine 3:30 p.m. COVID-19 press briefing, Nova Scotia premier Stephen McNeil was asked why the province waited for the RCMP's official word before sending out an emergency alert. Premier McNeil said "that's the protocol in place when it comes to EMO . . . the lead agency is the one that has to put the message together. We would not go from what's happening by Twitter, we would need the lead agency to actually craft the message, so that we could put that out, and no message was received, even though EMO had reached out a number of times throughout the morning [of April 19] to the RCMP."

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia update on COVID-19 – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lms07JHX_o\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 28](#)

167. At 4:30 p.m., Cpl. Jennifer Clarke opened the Nova Scotia RCMP's press briefing. She announced that A/Commr. Bergerman and C/Supt. Leather would provide an update on the events of April 18 and 19. A/Commr. Bergerman read a statement acknowledging the pain and heartache caused by the mass casualty and said the RCMP continued to investigate.

- Accessed online: [Remarks from the Commanding Officer, Assistant Commissioner Lee Bergerman](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-the-commanding-officer-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-the-commanding-officer-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman>)
 - [Remarks from A/Commr. L. Bergerman, April 22, 2020: COMM0058910](#)
168. C/Supt. Leather delivered a statement that included information about the ongoing investigation, the emergency Alert Ready system, the course of events, and the RCMP's response. He confirmed that the perpetrator acted alone, adding that the RCMP continued to investigate whether anyone may have assisted the perpetrator leading up to the mass casualty.
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo>)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)
169. After reading the statements in French, Cpl. Clarke opened the floor to questions from the media, who asked C/Supt. Leather about the use of Twitter during the mass casualty; the emergency Alert Ready system; the perpetrator's police paraphernalia; the course of events; the perpetrator's firearms; and the victims.
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo>)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)
170. At 6:00 p.m., CTV News obtained video that appeared to show the perpetrator dressed like a police officer on April 19. CTV News described the video as showing what looked like an RCMP officer pulling off the road at a location in Millbrook, getting out of the car, taking off his jacket, and putting on a safety vest. The vehicle shown in the video did not appear to have a licence plate. CTV News reported that the video had a timestamp of 10:55 a.m., noting that the RCMP tweeted at 11:04 a.m. on April 19 that the perpetrator was last seen leaving Brookfield, Nova Scotia, and that Millbrook is only nine minutes away. The RCMP said they could not confirm it was the shooter at that time.
- Accessed online: [A timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage | Published by CTV News on April 19, 2020](#) (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/a-timeline-of-events-in-the-deadly-nova-scotia-rampage-1.4902954>)
 - [Timeline of events in the deadly Nova Scotia rampage – CTV News: COMM0058901](#)
171. By the end of the day on April 22, 2020, the Nova Scotia RCMP published the following statement from C/Supt. Leather on its website:

As we try and piece together the many details of the incidents that unfolded over the weekend, here is some of the information we know to date.

Throughout the evening Saturday and into the early morning hours Sunday, the RCMP established and maintained a significant presence in the Portapique area in response to an active threat. Our response centered on protecting people, which included providing up-to-minute information on Twitter.

RCMP members were in the community of Portapique at 10:26 p.m. responding to a possible shooting. When they responded, members determined this to be a homicide. As part of the investigation, officers began notifying residents in the immediate area and searching for suspect(s). The RCMP issued a public instruction on Twitter that we were aware of a firearms complaint in the Portapique area and advised them to stay inside.

Within a short period of time, police discovered additional victims and several structure fires in Portapique. A complete search of the area was underway throughout the evening and into the morning hours and the suspect was not located.

Based on the evidence available at the time, the RCMP established a perimeter in the Portapique area as part of their ongoing investigation.

Early Sunday morning, the RCMP began providing real-time information on its Nova Scotia RCMP Twitter account. While doing so, confirmation was obtained about who the suspect was and at 9:35 a.m. police received a call about a possible female victim on Hwy 4 in Wentworth. Throughout this time the RCMP were able to broadcast photos of the suspect, suspect vehicle, locations and sightings. Twitter allowed our information to be shared, followed and broadcast by local, provincial and national news outlets.

At 10:15 a.m. Nova Scotia Provincial Emergency Management officials contacted the RCMP to offer the use of the public emergency alerting system.

The RCMP was in the process of preparing an alert when the gunman was shot and killed by the RCMP.

This incident was dynamic and fluid. The RCMP have highly trained and capable Critical Incident Command staff who were on site in Portapique. Operational Communications Centre operators assisting the response and police presence was significant. The members who responded used their training and made tough decisions while encountering the unimaginable. Collectively, RCMP

employees had one objective and that was to protect Nova Scotians and each other by stopping the threat. At 11:26 the gunman was killed by the RCMP.

We are working towards providing a full timeline, and more information will be provided as it becomes available.

- Accessed online: [Statement by RCMP Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-rcmp-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-rcmp-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather>)
- [Statement by C/Supt. C. Leather, April 22, 2020: COMM0058911](#)

Use of Firearms

172. At the 4:30 p.m. press briefing on April 22, 2020, C/Supt. Leather was asked what firearms the perpetrator owned, whether any were registered, and which he had used during the mass casualty. He was specifically asked whether the perpetrator had used handguns. C/Supt. Leather declined to answer these questions, citing the ongoing SiRT investigation. Instead, he said that SiRT had likely identified all the firearms used by the perpetrator by now, but that the RCMP did not have access to information held by SiRT. C/Supt. Leather said the nature of the perpetrator's licensing, whether he had a Firearms Acquisition Certificate (FAC), and how he obtained the firearms were still part of the investigation. When a journalist pressed: "You do not know what he was licensed to own, at this point?", C/Supt. Leather replied: "We have a fairly good idea, at least in Canada, that he did not have an FAC-- firearms acquisition certificate."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

173. By April 22, the RCMP (through the work of Forensic Identification member Cpl. Sloan) had recovered and identified multiple firearms from the vehicle the perpetrator was driving at the Enfield Big Stop, which included a Glock 23 pistol; a Ruger P89 pistol; a Colt Carbine 5.56 semi-automatic rifle; a Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic rifle; and an RCMP-issue Smith & Wesson handgun issued to Cst. Stevenson. The RCMP also seized eight additional magazine and rounds of unused ammunition from the Mazda3.

- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cst. C. Sloan, April 19, 2020: COMM0007446 at pp. 3–4](#)

174. In addition, the RCMP had interviewed several witnesses who spoke about the firearms in the perpetrator's possession. This included Lisa Banfield, who told the RCMP that she had watched the perpetrator load handguns and military-type guns into the front seat of the replica RCMP cruiser on the night of April 18. Though evidence collection and analysis was ongoing, the RCMP

knew from Cst. Morrison and Andrew MacDonald that the perpetrator had used handguns in his attacks.

- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948 at lines 405–6, 413](#)
- [Hants East radio: COMM0003809 at lines 516–35](#)
- [Statement of Cst. C. Morrison: COMM0003086 at lines 464–69](#)
- [Statement of Andrew MacDonald: COMM0002703 at lines 300–6](#)
- Additional information about the firearms in the perpetrator’s possession and witness evidence about the firearms he used during the mass casualty are detailed in the *Firearms* Foundational Document.

175. As noted under this heading on April 20, RCMP investigators had already determined that none of the perpetrator’s firearms were registered. C/Supt. Leather received information from Sgt. Peyton of the RCMP’s NWEST at 11:38 a.m. on April 20, advising that the perpetrator did not have a firearms’ licence and had never applied for one.

- [Typed notes of Sgt. R. Lewis, scribe of S/Sgt. J. West: COMM0003901 at p. 5](#)
- [NWEST Firearms Trace Report, authored by Sgt. L. Peyton: COMM0003099](#)
- [Email – FW: NWEST Information: COMM0017435](#)

176. C/Supt. Leather’s comment that the perpetrator did not have a Firearms Acquisition Certificate created some confusion because, as a reporter pointed out in a follow-up email to Cpl. Croteau, all FACs expired in 1995 and had to be replaced with a Possession and Acquisition License (PAL). The reporter asked Cpl. Croteau for clarification on C/Supt. Leather’s statement and whether C/Supt. Leather had meant to say that the perpetrator did not have a PAL. Cpl. Croteau instructed the reporter to call NHQ. It is unclear whether he ever received an answer.

- [Email – Media response re: The Star FAC question: COMM0010584](#)

Police Paraphernalia

177. Media at the 4:30 p.m. press briefing on April 22, 2020, asked C/Supt. Leather when and how the RCMP first became aware that there was “a man in the province with a fake but real looking police car and a uniform.” He replied: “Those details came in their totality to us early in the morning of Sunday, after a key witness was located and interviewed. Prior to that time, we did not have all those details. The bulk of the details about our suspect came to us at that time.” C/Supt. Leather stated that it was between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, April 19 that that information came to the Critical Incident Command (CIC) commander.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

178. The RCMP first alerted the public that the perpetrator may have been wearing an RCMP uniform in a tweet at 10:17 a.m. on April 19, 2020.

- [H-Strong Communication Product Timeline: COMM0037113 at p. 2](#)

179. A reporter at the 4:30 p.m. press briefing asked C/Supt. Leather why it took the RCMP so long to warn the public that the perpetrator was driving a replica RCMP cruiser: “If you knew the suspect had a fake but real looking RCMP vehicle sometime between 7:00 and 8:00 on Sunday morning, why wait more than two hours to warn the public about that detail?” C/Supt. Leather said, “[t]he information about the vehicle, the clothing, took some time to learn from the one witness, and once that information was compiled it was immediately tweeted by our communications section.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

180. As Cpl. Croteau had summarized in her April 22 email to *NOW* magazine, the RCMP had received information that the perpetrator was driving a vehicle that looked like a police car from a witness in Portapique as early as 10:01 p.m. on April 18. That information was relayed to Critical Incident Commander S/Sgt. Jeff West by 10:54 p.m. on April 18, at which time S/Sgt. West relayed it to the Emergency Response Team. The RCMP received further information about the perpetrator’s replica police cruiser from Lisa Banfield and David McGrath on the morning of April 19, as detailed in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* and *RCMP Command Post, Operational Communications Centre, and Command Decisions* Foundational Documents.

- [Email – Media response re: NOW magazine various questions: COMM0010635](#)

181. The RCMP had additional details regarding the perpetrator’s replica RCMP cruiser and uniform that C/Supt. Leather declined to provide at the 4:30 p.m. press briefing. For example, C/Supt. Leather was asked where the RCMP had obtained the photograph of the perpetrator’s replica RCMP cruiser and, as in a previous briefing, he refused to answer. He said: “I can’t speak to that, but we did interview a witness and sometime after that the material went out-- that would be the picture of the vehicle, and the suspect’s photo. And that was on Twitter.” As set out above, the RCMP had obtained the photo from David McGrath, via the HRP, at 7:25 a.m. on April 19.

- Additional information on the RCMP’s knowledge of the perpetrator’s access to and use of the replica RCMP cruiser is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.
- [Timeline of actions taken by S/Sgt. S. Halliday: COMM0010696 at p. 6](#)
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)

- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

182. C/Supt. Leather also told media at the 4:30 p.m. press briefing that the RCMP was tracing the source of the perpetrator's uniform. Internally, RCMP members continued to interview witnesses such as Lisa Banfield. At 6:58 a.m. on April 19, 2020, Lisa Banfield told RCMP interviewers that the perpetrator had acquired an RCMP uniform from his uncle. As discussed above, Ms. Banfield stated in a later interview that the perpetrator had received his uncle's Red Serge, but that it was too small for him. However, Ms. Banfield also indicated that the perpetrator had a number of "the khaki shirts like the police officers have you know. The beige-y kind of one."

- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948 at lines 509–748](#)
- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 28, 2020: COMM0004070 at pp. 27, 32](#)
- [Audio of Lisa Banfield interview: COMM0002957 at 26:55](#)
- Additional information on the perpetrator's access to and use of police paraphernalia is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

Emergency Alert Ready System

183. At his routine 3:30 p.m. COVID-19 press briefing on April 22, 2020, Nova Scotia premier Stephen McNeil was asked why the province waited for the RCMP's official word before sending out an emergency alert:

[The Canadian Press:] Good afternoon, Premier, I'm wondering-- the US consulate in Halifax issued an email alert to US citizens on Sunday about an active shooter based on the Nova Scotia RCMP's Twitter feed. Why was the province waiting for official word from the Mounties before issuing an emergency alert?

[Premier McNeil:] Well that's the protocol in place when it comes to EMO. As you know, the emergency alert, the lead agency is the one that has to put the message together. We would not go from what's happening by Twitter, we would need the lead agency to actually craft the message, so that we could put that out, and no message was received, even though EMO had reached out a number of times throughout the morning to the RCMP.

[The Canadian Press:] Why did you have EMO staff in anyway? It appears like you were anticipating that something was needed, and then nothing happened. Is that a question for you, that you're wondering about?

[Premier McNeil:] So, we would have-- that command centre would have been going around COVID, so we had stood that up early on-- EMO had put that up. Though through a number of things that we were seeing on-- or the EMO staff were seeing on Twitter, they called in the support staff around the alert message team, and then began to reach out to the RCMP, who would have to craft the message or work with our team to craft that message, and no message was received.

- Accessed online: [Nova Scotia update on COVID-19 – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lms07JHX_o) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lms07JHX_o)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 28](#)

184. C/Supt. Leather also spoke about the emergency Alert Ready system at the 4:30 p.m. press briefing. He emphasized that the RCMP's response was "dynamic and fluid," and that "critical incident command staff were processing fast-changing information related to what was unfolding in front of them and what they were being told of." He added:

We responded to a possible shooting at 10:26 p.m. on Saturday evening. It was determined to be a homicide, and we immediately started searching the area and advising residents to stay inside. We used Twitter to alert residents of a firearms complaint in the Portapique area, and to stay in. As we searched the area we discovered additional victims and several structure fires. We established a perimeter, and our search continued into the evening and early morning hours on Sunday. In response to new information indicating that the suspect was not in the secure perimeter, at 8:02 a.m. on Sunday the RCMP began providing real-time information on its Nova Scotia RCMP Twitter account. Twitter allowed our information to be shared, followed, and broadcast by local, provincial, and national news outlets. At 10:15 a.m., Nova Scotia provincial emergency management officials contacted the RCMP to offer the use of the public emergency alerting system. We were in the process of preparing an alert when the gunman was shot and killed by the RCMP.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

185. A journalist asked C/Supt. Leather why it took so long for the RCMP to prepare an alert after being contacted by EMO on April 19. C/Supt. Leather said:

the original call to the RCMP was to one of our members here at Headquarters, and you can appreciate then there were a series of phone calls that had to be made to find the officer in charge on the evening and to speak to the CIC-- that's

the incident commander-- to have the conversation about the issuing of a message. So a lot of the delay was based on communications between the EMO and the various officers, and then a discussion about what the message would be-- how it would be constructed and what it would say. So in that hour and a bit, in that amount of time of consultation is when the subject was killed, as we know at 11:26.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

186. A series of internal communications, beginning at 6:16 a.m. on April 19, 2020, led to EMO staff making themselves ready in the event that the RCMP requested use of the Alert Ready system. Glenn Mason, RCMP EMS manager, received a call around 10:15 a.m. from Michael Bennett, the EMO's incident commander at the Provincial Coordination Centre, asking if the RCMP wanted to send an alert. This led to a series of calls between the EMO and the RCMP seeking approval and direction.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Glenn Mason: COMM0053758 at pp. 21–22](#)
- [Notes of Glenn Mason re: RCMP Public Safety Broadcast: COMM0017964](#)
- Note: Glenn Mason's notes do not mention this first call to Insp. Rodier. In Email from Insp. D. Rodier, "Rodier Phone calls *corrected*" ([COMM0020772](#)), Insp. Rodier stated that she thinks Mr. Mason's times are off in his notes.

187. At 11:14 a.m. on April 19, Michael Bennett called Glenn Mason and advised him that EMO Incident Command was prepared and ready to use the Alert Ready system upon request by the RCMP. Mr. Mason reached S/Sgt. Steve Ettinger at 11:17 a.m. and was told to go ahead with an emergency alert. Mr. Mason and EMO personnel placed three missed calls to Insp. Rodier, and left one voicemail to get the content of the alert message approved. Those calls were at 11:19 a.m., 11:28 a.m., and 11:31 a.m. Due to the emergency alert protocol in place in April 2020, EMO could not issue the alert without receiving the exact wording for the message from the RCMP.

- [NS EMO sequence of events: COMM0000999](#)
- Additional information about the discussions around the use of the Alert Ready system is contained in the *RCMP Public Communications, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document.

188. Shortly after 11:33 a.m. on April 19, S/Sgt. Ettinger informed Glenn Mason that the perpetrator was in custody. At 11:41 a.m. on April 19, EMO director of incident management Jason Mew sent a text message to Insp. Rodier asking to confirm that the perpetrator was "in custody" and that EMO could stand down on the emergency alert request. Insp. Rodier replied: "Yes confirmed in custody thx".

- [Text message exchange between Jason Mew and Insp. D. Rodier: COMM0001000 at p. 4](#)
- [Overview of calls to and from OCC on April 18–19, 2020: COMM0002902 at p. 102](#)
- [Transcript of recorded 911 calls, April 19, 2020, 11:30–11:59: COMM0006369 at lines 558–74](#)

Course of Events

189. At the 4:30 p.m. press briefing on April 22, 2020, a journalist noted that the RCMP knew about at least one homicide by the time they issued their first tweet, but the tweet described the incident as a firearms complaint, “which sort of vastly undersold it.” The journalist asked if C/Supt. Leather was satisfied with the RCMP’s messaging on Twitter. C/Supt. Leather replied that he was “very satisfied with the messaging.” He said “the communications that were being provided were the best and clearest information that could be provided”.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

190. A journalist asked in French whether it is the RCMP’s protocol to use Twitter to inform the public about imminent danger. Cpl. Clarke translated the question privately in English to C/Supt. Leather. Some of Cpl. Clarke’s translation to C/Supt. Leather was captured by the microphone. She asked him: “Is it the usual process to use Twitter to notify people when there’s [inaudible] . . . is that the usual way we notify people?” C/Supt. Leather confirmed to Cpl. Clarke that “that is the usual way.” Back at the microphone, Cpl. Clarke replied to the question in French: [TRANSLATION] “We usually use Twitter to notify the public about police activities, at the moment. That’s the usual manner.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

191. Another member of the media asked why the RCMP could not tell the public everything it knew about the investigation to date:

[Frank Magazine:] There isn’t any public safety risk anymore. The shooter is dead, and since he’s dead, we don’t need to protect his right to a fair trial. What is behind your hesitance to provide details on what you know now? We understand that there are things that you don’t know, but what is your hesitance to provide details on what you do know now?

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)

192. C/Supt. Leather provided the following answers:

[C/Supt. Leather:] So for instance the timeline. I would like nothing more than to provide the media and public with the timeline, but it literally is still a work in progress, and it would be unfair and inappropriate for us to give that out in its current state. We are very close, I would say within a day, of providing a timeline with some detail, because appreciate-- and I know I've said this at previous meetings here-- we are still piecing together the movements of this subject. We believe we have identified the locations and sites that he attended and when he did, but there certainly are gaps that still need to be investigated.

[Frank Magazine:] Why does it have to be wrapped up in a bow in order to give that information? Why can't you tell us what you know?

[C/Supt. Leather:] The concern is always that we give information that is not completely accurate, and in a rush to provide the public and the media with that information we ~~air~~ [err], and sometimes those mistakes can be impactful both to the investigation, to the victims and their families. So we're being very careful in terms of providing that information at the appropriate time.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)
- Note: The suggested edit (~~air~~ [err]) is based on Commission counsel's review of the audio file.

APRIL 24, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 24, 2020

193. On the morning of April 24, 2020, the RCMP issued a media advisory that Supt. Campbell, officer in charge of support services for Nova Scotia RCMP, would deliver "a detailed account of the incidents on April 18 and 19" at 11:00 a.m.

- Accessed online: [Media Advisory: Detailed account of the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/media-advisory-detailed-account-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/media-advisory-detailed-account-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)

- [Media Advisory – Detailed account of the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058912](#)

194. Cpl. Clarke opened the 11:00 a.m. press briefing and introduced Supt. Campbell, who delivered a statement that was later posted on the RCMP’s website. Supt. Campbell shared a timeline of the mass casualty and first responders’ actions in Portapique, noting that “the initial complaint was of a shooting.” He described the incidents in three parts: “The first cluster was in the Portapique area on Saturday night. On Sunday, there was a second cluster of incidents in the areas of Wentworth, Glenholme, and Debert. And then, a third and final cluster of incidents were in the Shubenacadie area, Milford and in Enfield.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 24, 2020: COMM0058913](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

195. Supt. Campbell’s speaking remarks were accompanied by a link to the maps he referenced, posted to the RCMP website on the same day.

- Accessed online: [Maps - Speaking notes: Supt. Darren Campbell](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/maps-speaking-notes-supt-darren-campbell>)
- [Maps – Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 24, 2020: COMM0058914](#)

196. Following Supt. Campbell’s statement, Cpl. Clarke opened the floor to questions. Journalists asked Supt. Campbell about how the mass casualty started, the victims, the perpetrator’s movements, the shooting at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall, the perpetrator’s replica police vehicle and other police paraphernalia, the availability of RCMP resources, the emergency alert, and the perpetrator’s weapons.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

Information About Victims

197. During the briefing on April 24, 2020, Supt. Campbell stated that “on April 18th, before the first 911 call was received, there was an assault between the gunman and a person known to him” in Portapique. He did not name Lisa Banfield, but said “[t]he victim managed to escape from the gunman and she hid overnight in the woods.” He then had the following exchange with a journalist:

[Reuters:] I had a question about the way it started. You said that the whole thing had sort of started...the whole rampage had gone...had started after the gunman had assaulted someone known to him, who then escaped. And I was wondering, could you tell me, is that someone a girlfriend or a wife or something like that, and is that the same person that then came out of the woods at 6:30 in the morning the next day and gave you the key information?

[Supt. Campbell:] Yes. Thanks for your question. I can confirm that the individual is a female, and that female was in a relationship over a course of a period of time with the gunman. That female did escape. And that female, as I indicated, had hid in the woods. And that was the same individual that had key information for us that was necessary for us to understand more about [the perpetrator] and what he was currently in possession of at that time.

[Reuters:] Okay, as a follow-up. Thank you. As a follow-up, my question is...is this...I don't want you to speculate, but is there a sense that this assault and the escape of his girlfriend was the trigger that set off this terrible series of events?

[Supt. Campbell:] So, obviously, as part of the investigation, that is a consideration that we have. That could have been a catalyst to this. However, we're open to all possibilities. And we're not excluding the possibility that there was any premeditated planning also involved. At the same time, it was a significant incident, it was a significant assault, and this individual female did manage to escape, and that could very well have been the catalyst to start the chain of events. However, we're not going to discount any possibility of any pre-planning at this time.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 24, 2020: COMM0058913](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

198. As noted under this heading on April 19, the RCMP knew who Lisa Banfield was, and had details about her relationship with the perpetrator and information about the perpetrator's assault on her on the night of April 18. The RCMP also knew other victims' names and details about their relationships to the perpetrator by the time of the April 24 press briefing.

199. The media asked Supt. Campbell what parts of the investigation the former partner (i.e., Lisa Banfield) was helping the RCMP with and whether she could provide insight as to the perpetrator's motive. He answered:

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, as I mentioned, that former partner is a critical witness. That witness is an individual that obviously we have spent a considerable amount of time with and I would imagine we will spend more time in the future with her. She is being cooperative with us. She's currently recovering and with that, it limits the amount of time that we can spend with her. But, of course, she is assisting us and she is identifying other avenues of investigation that we need to pursue. I don't want to speculate about motives. What I would say is that any crime against another person, normal people have a very difficult time understanding it because we wouldn't do such a thing, and trying to understand the mindset of an individual is sometimes a very difficult thing. We'll do everything that we can to understand that, but we are in the process of trying to unpack that and that will continue for what I would imagine a very long time.

[Global National TV:] Okay, I have a follow-up which is related to this. Actually, you've had some time to talk about this with his partner. Are you any closer to understanding that, or is it still something that you have no idea?

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, there's a number of theories and of course, sometimes investigations, they, I wouldn't say they're driven by evidence, but they're guided sometimes by theories. So, there are theories and there's more than one theory and we're conducting a systematic investigation into all of those theories. And it's our hope that we are able to uncover the true motives. But, again, there are times when, you know...you know, unfortunately we don't have the opportunity to sit down with this individual and ask him those questions. Even when we have those opportunities, there are individuals that never provide that information to us.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

200. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell about other witnesses who survived encounters with the perpetrator during the mass casualty. Supt. Campbell answered:

[Supt. Campbell:] I don't have that number for you. I mean, there's certainly other residents that did survive. The only numbers that I have for you are those that were injured in the Portapique area, and in that case, there were two that were provided medical treatment. There could be more. I'm not...I don't have that information available to me. And then, of course, the other injured individual was Cst. Morrison.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

201. Supt. Campbell did not name the victims at the press briefing on April 24, and he did not discuss their relationships with the perpetrator other than to say some were known to the perpetrator. In response to journalists' questions about the perpetrator's motive, Supt. Campbell said "there seems to be a trail of individuals who had had problems with [the perpetrator]."
202. Another journalist asked Supt. Campbell about a possible "hit list," and Supt. Campbell replied that the RCMP had not seen any evidence of such a list:

[The Shoreline:] Yes, thank you for the opportunity and the detail that you've been providing. Understand because there was a media report published this morning that the assailant had a hit list, and the person who was in the media report said he was told by the RCMP that he was seventh or eighth on the list. Do you...can you confirm there was a list and how many people were on that list?

[Supt. Campbell:] So, I can confirm to this point in the investigation, we have not uncovered a list. Maybe what I can do is provide you with a little more context to understand why some individuals may be saying that. As I mentioned earlier, while the situation in Portapique continued to unfold, there was a lot of investigative work that was going on behind the scenes, not just those that were at the Portapique area, and one of the things that, while we were trying to confirm the location of that third police vehicle, we were also...and it was at that time when that critical witness came forward with critical information for us, we identified other family members who could potentially be at risk. So we were contacting individuals who we believed could have been on a list or were potentially at risk. We were contacting them, we were bringing them to safety and we were interviewing them at that time. Another, you know, issue that could play in to the belief that there was a list is that as I mentioned earlier as I was going through the second cluster of incidents, that the 911 call in the Glenholme area where the gunman had attended, he was...he had just finished killing three individuals and setting fire to their home in the Hunter Road area where he attended in the police vehicle. Those individuals knew the gunman. I can't really imagine...I'm not in the mind of the gunman, but I can't necessarily imagine why he would have went there to see those individuals. It's very, very likely that maybe they were also people he might have had an issue with, but, again, I don't want to speculate but to me, that seems to stand out and it could be a contributing factor to people talking about this list.

[The Shoreline:] Just as a comeback, the person who was identified said that he was at odds with them because they had refused to...he had refused to sell him a police vehicle in the past and there was another incident whereby he apparently visited somebody because they had a dispute over an invoice for construction work that was done.

[Supt. Campbell:] Yeah, so, you know, you're making more of a comment than a question, but what I'll say to that is that we have interviewed several individuals or associates, people that had come in contact with the gunman, not during this incident, but in the past, and there seems to be a trail of individuals who had had problems with [the perpetrator]. So naturally, we would be talking to those individuals, and we would want to understand the essence or the origins of those problems, and what they might have known about him. And, of course, the list, when we conduct these investigations, we task out subjects to interview, so there is an interview list, and these are individuals. So, of course, as we carry through an investigation, you know, you conduct one interview and that interview may identify several other individuals who need to speak to as well. So we do create lists of individuals that we are required to contact and determine what it is that they may or may not know.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

Involvement of SiRT

203. At the press briefing on April 24, 2020, a reporter asked Supt. Campbell about the shooting at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall, which was being investigated by SiRT:

[CTV News:] Good morning, Superintendent. Thank you very much. I wanted to ask a question regarding the shooting at the fire hall in Onslow. We know that Serious Incident Response Team is looking into that. We understand it was two RCMP officers, and I'm wondering if you can confirm that and tell us who the target was that they were shooting at?

[Supt. Campbell:] Okay. So, thanks for mentioning that...that the incident is currently being investigated by an independent body, which is the Special Investigation Response Team. What I can do, is I can provide you with some general comments, obviously, things that are known to us and that caused us to engage SiRT in taking carriage of that particular investigation. What I think it may be helpful is to put into context the timing of that incident and, of course, the officers on the road knew that we were looking for a marked police vehicle. And it

was two of our other officers that were involved in that incident. And it also involved a marked vehicle. But I can't go any further than that as it's currently under investigation.

[CTV News:] As a follow-up, if I may, have the two officers been reprimanded at all? Is there any internal investigation within the RCMP in that regard?

[Supt. Campbell:] So, in the course of any of those types of referrals to SiRT, when there's a discharge of firearm, there's always a review and there is always a review of the status of those officers. I know that this entire incident obviously is particularly difficult for every Nova Scotian, certainly horrific for the families, and it's also a traumatic incident for all of the first responders, and I'm not just talking about the police officers. I'm talking about the ambulance attendants and the firefighters, our dispatchers, our officers, and also the public as well.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

204. By April 24, the RCMP had learned further details about the “blue-on-blue” incident at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall, including that Csts. Terry Brown and Dave Melanson had discharged their weapons in the direction of Cst. Dave Gagnon and his RCMP cruiser.

- Additional information about the “blue-on-blue” incident is contained in the *Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade Hall* Foundational Document.

Use of Firearms

205. At the 11:00 a.m. press briefing on April 24, 2020, Supt. Campbell said that “[f]airly early” in the RCMP’s response on Saturday, April 18, they learned of a possible suspect and “that the gunman was in possession of a pistol and long barreled weapons.” Without naming Lisa Banfield, Supt. Campbell added that the RCMP learned more information about the perpetrator’s firearms on the morning of Sunday, April 19. He said the RCMP knew from witness interviews that the perpetrator had used handguns and long guns in his attacks.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)
- Additional information on witnesses who provided information about the firearms in the perpetrator’s possession and the use of handguns and long guns during the mass casualty is contained in *Firearms* Foundational Document.

206. Supt. Campbell told media that RCMP investigators had traced one of the weapons back to Canada and that they believed the perpetrator had obtained the remaining weapons in the United States. He did not provide information about how the perpetrator obtained his firearms. He said the origins of the perpetrator's firearms, including who may have provided those firearms to the perpetrator, was subject to the RCMP's ongoing investigation.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)
- Additional information on the origins of the perpetrator's firearms is contained in the *Firearms* Foundational Document.

207. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell how many weapons the perpetrator had in total and how he got them into Canada from the United States. Supt. Campbell replied:

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, that...the second part of your question is obviously part of an active investigation, so I'm not a position to speak to that at this time, but it is a very important piece of our global investigation. In terms of numbers of weapons, some of the witnesses that we've interviewed since that time have told us about a significant number of weapons. However, our challenge is that the suspect's residence in Portapique has been completely burned to the ground. So our ability to recover certain evidence is limited, and what I would add to that as well is that these weren't structure fires that were put out quickly. These are structure fires that completely burned to the ground with intense amount of heat. But, again, as I mentioned, in terms of the origins of the weapons, who may have provided those weapons, how he obtained them, that's all subject to the ongoing investigation right now.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

208. By the time of the April 24 press briefing, Forensic Identification member Cpl. Sloan had completed her examination and report on the firearms recovered in the Mazda3 the perpetrator was driving when he was killed at the Enfield Big Stop. The RCMP recovered five firearms from that vehicle: a Glock 23 pistol with a CTC laser point grip attached; a Ruger P89 pistol with a CTC laser point grip attached; a Colt Carbine 5.56 semi-automatic rifle; a Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic rifle; and an RCMP-issue Smith & Wesson handgun issued to Cst. Stevenson. The RCMP also seized eight additional magazine and rounds of unused ammunition from the Mazda3.

- Additional information on these firearms is contained in the *Firearms* Foundational Document.

- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cst. C. Sloan, April 19, 2020: COMM0007446 at pp. 3–4](#)

Police Paraphernalia

209. At the press briefing on April 24, 2020, Supt. Campbell said that early in the RCMP's response on Saturday, April 18, they learned the perpetrator owned "several vehicles that looked like police vehicles." He said they later learned from interviewing Lisa Banfield on the morning of Sunday, April 19 that the perpetrator "was in possession of a fully marked and equipped replica RCMP vehicle and was wearing a police uniform."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

210. A journalist asked how many retired police vehicles the perpetrator had in total:

[National Post:] And as a follow-up, I just wanted to make sure that I understood. After the initial incident, I understand that police went back to his house to find...or his cottage to find that it was on fire, and from what I understand on that site, you found two additional police...mock police cars that were burning? So he had three in total? What other police potential equipment did you find at his home?

[Supt. Campbell]: Well, I'll answer the question first in relation to the police vehicles. And that's an important point, actually. When we were doing a work-up of all possible suspects, obviously the gunman came up as one of them. And we were aware that he did have access to police-looking vehicles. And through that, in the background of all of the critical incident response, there are police personnel that are actually doing the background checks. And we did learn that there were three plated vehicles that were Ford Taurus vehicles that were determined to be probably former police vehicles. And those three plated vehicles, what that set off, was a chain of inquiry to determine the locations of those vehicles. We knew that the suspect also had a residence in the Halifax Regional Municipality. And we sent officers to that area as well to confirm that there was one of those Ford Tauruses at that location and that there were two that were burning at the...at the residence in...at the suspect's residence in the Portapique area. So at that point in time, we knew that we had accounted for three of the plated vehicles. We weren't aware, at that particular time, it became known to us later, that he had a fourth registered vehicle, and that was actually the one...there was no plate attached to that. And that was the vehicle that he was using during his rampage. And I know you had a second point to that

question, and I apologize. I started speaking first about the police vehicles. If you could go with that second point for me, please? [Lost connection]

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

211. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell why the RCMP waited so long to warn the public that the perpetrator was driving a replica RCMP cruiser, when they had that information on the night of Saturday, April 18:

[CBC National News:] It became clear on Saturday night that the suspect may be driving a mock police car. Why wait 11, perhaps 12 hours to warn the public of that? Couldn't that have saved lives?

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, I mean, again, you're asking me to provide a crystal ball answer to that question. As I mentioned before, the critical piece of the information including the photograph of the vehicle and particular markings like the call sign on the vehicle, those details did not emerge, and the fact that there was this fourth un-plated vehicle didn't emerge until the early morning hours of the 19th when that critical witness emerged from the woods. And it was at that time as well that we had accounted for the three vehicles that we believed that the suspect actually possessed. So I can assure from a critical incident standpoint, I know that those were factors considered by the Critical Incident Commander as they were going through any kind of public notification potential is that at that time, they believed they had accounted for the three police vehicles that were accessible to the gunman.

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212. Supt. Campbell was referring to information the RCMP learned from interviewing Lisa Banfield at 6:58 a.m. on April 19, and the photograph they obtained from David McGrath by 7:25 a.m. on April 19.

- [H-Strong Communication Product Timeline: COMM0037113](#)

213. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell what the RCMP knew about how the perpetrator acquired his vehicles and how he made them look like RCMP cruisers. Supt. Campbell replied that this was part of the RCMP's ongoing investigation, adding that decommissioned police vehicles are often

sold and can be acquired by members of the public. Supt. Campbell said the RCMP had identified how the perpetrator obtained the light bar for his replica RCMP cruiser and believed they had found the provider of the decals on the perpetrator's vehicle.

- Additional information on the perpetrator's access to and use of police paraphernalia is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

214. Another journalist asked Supt. Campbell "how much of a role the suspect having a police or a mock police vehicle in Portapique would have played in him being able to get through the perimeter that had been secured or would he have left the area before that perimeter was secured?" He replied:

[Supt. Campbell:] It is possible that the suspect was able to leave the area before the initial response. And I can...I can imagine...I don't think it's difficult for non-police personnel or the public to understand that it would obviously complicate things. You know, I've been a police officer for almost 30 years now, and I can't imagine any more horrific set of circumstances when you're trying to search for someone that looks like you. The dangers that that causes. The complications that that causes. That obviously was an advantage that the suspect had on the police, that he had on the public[,] that he had on every person that he encountered through the course of his rampage.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

215. Supt. Campbell told the media that multiple witnesses had come forward to the RCMP to report that they had seen the perpetrator with his replica RCMP cruiser and different types of police agency uniforms before the mass casualty. A reporter from the CBC said the perpetrator's former employer told them the perpetrator had informed a police officer about his replica RCMP cruiser in 2019, and that the perpetrator was instructed to keep it on a trailer off the road. The reporter asked Supt. Campbell what information the RCMP had about the perpetrator's replica RCMP cruiser before the mass casualty and how the RCMP handled that information. Supt. Campbell said he was not aware of this information and asked the CBC's source to come forward and provide the information directly to the RCMP.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)
- Additional information on witness evidence regarding the replica RCMP vehicle is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

216. In response to media questions, Supt. Campbell said the RCMP was still investigating how the perpetrator obtained an authentic RCMP uniform:

[Times and Transcript:] [Y]ou mentioned in relation to his uniform, that was an authentic uniform. Where did he get that? And are any of these components you mentioned under any form of criminal investigation or other investigation, you know, to...was there wrongdoing, I guess, in his acquisition of these things?

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, of course, we're certainly looking at that aspect. That's an important aspect in the investigation, and that continues to this time. What I can say, is that witnesses have since come forward since the critical incident and the...the horrific events that unfolded, and they've indicated to the police and provided information that they had seen the suspect with the vehicles. They had seen the suspect with the marked police vehicle well before this, and that they had seen the suspect with several different types of police agency uniforms. Unfortunately, the suspect's residence in the Portapique area is completely destroyed by fire. So some of those items we're never gonna be able to recover. But what I can tell you, as I mentioned when I was providing the overview of the timeline, is that the suspect did shed the uniform that he had on at the time and that was at the...the shooting that occurred on Highway 224, just before the encounter with police at the Big Stop. We have recovered those pieces, and some of those pieces, I can tell you, are what appear to be discarded or old pieces of police uniform, RCMP uniform, and also, a piece of uniform from another agency as well.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

217. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell whether the perpetrator had access to a police radio or police radio frequencies, and if he was aware of RCMP operations and searches in real-time during the mass casualty. Supt. Campbell replied that to the best of his knowledge, the perpetrator did not have access to those communications. He said the RCMP's radio channels in Nova Scotia are encrypted, and therefore it was unlikely that the perpetrator would have had the advantage of using a radio to monitor their communications.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)
- Additional information on the perpetrator's access to police equipment is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

Emergency Alert Ready System

218. At the April 24, 2020 press briefing, a reporter asked Supt. Campbell whether the RCMP thought it was a mistake not to use the emergency Alert Ready system earlier in the mass casualty. Supt. Campbell answered that the Critical Incident Command team believed they had the perpetrator contained in the perimeter they established in the Portapique area on April 18. The RCMP thought they had a “localized incident” and therefore an emergency alert was “not a consideration” at that time:

[Maclean’s:] You have mentioned the benefit of hindsight, looking back now, is there a feeling that it was a mistake not to utilize an EMO message earlier in the night or morning or not to utilize a...a...I guess a better way of notifying the public?

[Supt. Campbell:] So, you know, a full review is obviously done after every critical incident and that review will take place. However, I’ve had conversations with the Critical Incident Command team that was on the ground at that time. And you know you have to appreciate that they believed that they had that area contained. They believed that they, you know, would more than likely have that suspect either in...or one of...a few possibilities, the suspect was still in the area, the suspect had escaped or the suspect was in one of his burning residences and actually committed suicide. As I had mentioned earlier, you know, we had believed that he had access to three police vehicles and there were two vehicles burning...police style vehicles burning on his property and there was a third police vehicle that was located at his residence in the Halifax Regional Municipality. So through my conversations with Critical Incident Command, you know, obviously it’s fluid, it’s dynamic, it’s a situation that’s evolving and the Critical Incident Commander considers all opportunities available to them, but at that time, we had a localized incident. As I had mentioned earlier, it’s essentially...you know, it’s two kilometres by two kilometres, so a four square kilometre radius that was heavily locked down with a significant number of resources. So at that particular time, I can’t speak for the Critical Incident Commander, but that was not a consideration, I understand, at that particular time.

[Maclean’s:] Thank you. And just as a follow-up for that, I think many people likely understand the fluid nature of this investigation and how things were moving so quickly overnight, but now looking back, many family members, friends of victims are lamenting the fact that they didn’t know what was going on and there’s some criticism there. Is there a feeling that the RCMP may need to rebuild a bit of public trust?

[Supt. Campbell:] Well, public trust is a cornerstone of our ability to do our job, and the RCMP needs that trust, and we do a lot of work to build that trust, so I can certainly understand, and I empathize and I hear the families of those victims. We hear them full force. They have every right to ask those questions. They have every right to be angry. You know, public trust, as I said, is so important, and it's not something that is gained easily. It takes a lot of work and it's lost very easily. And I can say from my experience in this organization, the people that I have had the pleasure of serving with, that element of trust and respect to the public is alive in so many of our employees at every category and every level, and we do enjoy that level of trust by many, but we understand why those questions are being asked, and we are always looking to do better.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

219. As noted under this heading for April 20, RCMP members stated in their Mass Casualty Commission interviews and internal communications that they did not consider the Alert Ready system to be a resource available to them during the mass casualty. Information about the use of the Alert Ready system shared by the RCMP in press briefings before April 24 did not identify that there was a “localized incident.”

220. When the RCMP learned the perpetrator was not contained in the Portapique perimeter on Sunday, April 19, they began tweeting updates to the public at 8:02 a.m. and did not request EMO to issue an emergency alert until they were contacted by EMO at 11:17 a.m. on Sunday, April 19.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 22, 2020 | Streamed live on April 22, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Hvf5zAhtJo\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 29](#)
- [NS EMO sequence of events: COMM0000999](#)
- Additional information about the discussions around the use of the Alert Ready system is contained in the *RCMP Public Communications, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document.

Course of Events

221. At the press briefing on April 24, 2020, Supt. Campbell said that RCMP members responding to the scene in Portapique at 10:26 p.m. on Saturday, April 18 encountered a man leaving the area with a gunshot wound. Supt. Campbell said members learned from the man that the perpetrator was driving “a vehicle that looked like a police vehicle.” Supt. Campbell said it was important to note that the man “indicated to the responding officers that that vehicle was driving towards the beach and that there was one way in and out of the community.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHIc1EXJhho) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHIc1EXJhho>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 24, 2020: COMM0058913](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

222. The man Supt. Campbell was referring to was Andrew MacDonald. Andrew and Kate MacDonald were driving their car in Portapique when the perpetrator shot Mr. MacDonald shortly after 10:25 p.m. on Saturday, April 18. The MacDonalds drove away and later encountered RCMP members responding to Portapique. They spoke with Cst. Vicki Colford at the head of Portapique Beach Road just before 10:48 p.m. Ms. MacDonald advised Cst. Colford of another potential exit out of Portapique. Cst. Colford broadcast a transmission about a possible second escape route at 10:48:41 p.m. on April 18, 2020, via Colchester radio:

Cst. COLFORD (H-05B08/H-BH P12): Mill Brook, if you guys want to have a look at the map we're being told there's a road, kind of a road that someone could come out, before here. Ah, if they know the roads well.

- [Colchester radio: COMM0003806 at lines 423–25](#)
- [Statement of Kate MacDonald: COMM0002706 at lines 249-266](#)
- Additional information about the MacDonalds' encounter with the perpetrator and their communications with Cst. Colford is contained in the *Portapique, April 18–19, 2020* Foundational Document.

223. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell about the chain of events after first responders arrived in Portapique:

[Global Halifax:] [T]here's a significant timeline gap in between the first response in Portapique at 10:26 in the morning [*sic*] and the next pin that we have the next morning at 9:35 on those maps. What...can you fill in the blanks a little bit between that significant timeline gap, what happened overnight?

[Supt. Campbell:] Yeah, what I can tell you is that the critical incident program was fully obviously engaged at that time. And all of the officers involved in that initial response within the Portapique area, they were containing that...that area. They were also checking for residents, and we were removing residents from the scene. We were building up information on any possible suspect. Of course, we have to be alive to the reality that there could be more than one. So all that was happening in the background, and, you know, I am sure that everyone can imagine what that scene would have looked like. You know, multiple victims. Multiple structure fires. We were containing that area and we were checking for

any survivors. We were still checking for any witnesses. We were looking for the suspect. We were engaged in all of those. So that was...that was fully active in that area at the time. And of course, as you mentioned, there's this significant gap in time before we...we have another series of events. Now, obviously, and I don't like to make assumptions, but the suspect had obviously moved beyond the perimeter. Our investigation is ongoing and we've uncovered some information to suggest that there was a vehicle, and this was much after the fact, that was seen leaving through a field, driving through a field. At this point, we are assuming, and I don't like to assume, but we are assuming that could very well have been the suspect that was leaving the area but that information, as I understand it, was not known at the time. And then what the suspect did during that period of time before the second cluster of incidents, we do not know at this point. But that's why we are appealing to the public, because somebody may know something. Somebody may have seen something, and we're collecting all the evidence and video along the way in order to retrace his steps.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 24, 2020 | Streamed live on April 24, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHlc1EXJhho\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

224. Media also asked Supt. Campbell about RCMP resources during the mass casualty:

[The Coast:] My question is in relation to the typical amount of RCMP officers who are working in the Portapique area. I was wondering how many usually are on duty on a Saturday night or Sunday morning and at what time backup was called in, and talking about the number of officers who were on duty.

[Supt. Campbell:] Okay. My apologies. I don't have that information available to me...what we would normally have, and also, it's important that that information we normally don't disclose, because we don't necessarily want to notify individuals who might be thinking of committing crimes as to where our resources are. But what I can tell you is that I've had an opportunity to look through the dispatch sheets, and there are hundreds of pages of them during the course of the original response in Portapique, and within a very short period of time, you know, my count was there were over 25 separate units that had responded to that area.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 37](#)

APRIL 28, 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, April 28, 2020

225. On April 28, 2020, the RCMP issued a media advisory announcing that Supt. Campbell, officer in charge of support services for Nova Scotia RCMP, would provide an update on the investigation of the incidents on April 18 and 19.

- Accessed online: [Media Advisory: Investigation update on the incidents on April 18 and 19 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/media-advisory-investigation-update-the-incidents-april-18-and-19\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/media-advisory-investigation-update-the-incidents-april-18-and-19)
- [Media Advisory – Investigation update on the incidents on April 18 and 19 – April 28, 2020: COMM0058915](#)

226. At 4:00 p.m. on April 28, the RCMP held a press briefing at which Supt. Campbell provided an update on the investigation and information learned to date. The update was later posted to the RCMP's website. In his opening statement, Supt. Campbell said:

Any homicide investigation is a significant endeavor. In this case, we are dealing with 22 homicides. We have a sizeable major crime team dedicated to the investigation and we have engaged several support resources. In addition, we have experts across the country and we are now receiving additional support from RCMP resources from across the country. We have received support from external agencies as well, including the Canadian Armed Forces, the Halifax Regional Police and the Canada Border Services Agency.

I want to extend my appreciation for all the law enforcement agencies who have offered their assistance and their support.

Our job now is to determine the actions of the gunman on April 18th and 19th. Although the gunman will never stand trial, we'll still have a duty to complete this investigation by the same standards that we would have if he was standing trial.

At this time, priority areas for us are to determine how the gunman obtained access to the equipment that he used, and to establish the gunman's movements before and after April 18th and 19th. We also want to determine if anyone had knowledge of the gunman's plan, if any, and if they assisted him in any way.

We have been focusing on witness interviews, video canvassing, and judicial authorizations that allowed us to obtain search warrants and records. This work has enabled us to gain a much better picture.

To give you a sense of the scope of the investigation, to this point, we have identified over 435 witnesses and at this point and we have interviewed more than half of those. There are many more interviews to come and we expect the witness list to grow. Also, we have completed approximately 20 legal applications and we have obtained authorizations to help us determine the acquisition of the equipment and the gunman's activities and movements.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

227. In his statement on April 28 and during the question-and-answer period with journalists, Supt. Campbell provided information about the RCMP's investigation on topics such as the perpetrator's access to police uniforms and decommissioned police vehicles, his movements during the mass casualty, the firearms in his possession, and the emergency Alert Ready system.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

228. Supt. Campbell's speaking remarks were accompanied by a link to the maps he referenced to explain the perpetrator's movements during the mass casualty, which were posted to the RCMP's website on the same day.

- Accessed online: [Maps - Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/images-speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)
- [Maps – Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058917](#)

Information About Victims

229. At the 4:00 p.m. press briefing on April 28, 2020, Supt. Campbell spoke about Lisa Banfield, though he did not name her. He clarified that the perpetrator's assault on his common-law spouse was the "first significant assault" of the mass casualty. He said she was "the first victim in the series of very horrific events" and emphasized that she did not have "anything to do with the

gunman continuing on with his rampage.” In response to a journalist’s question, Supt. Campbell confirmed that the RCMP had interviewed Ms. Banfield several times. He described her as a “critical witness.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

230. By the time of the 4:00 p.m. press briefing on April 28, the RCMP had interviewed Lisa Banfield three times: on April 19, April 20, and once on the morning of April 28.

- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 19, 2020: COMM0002948](#)
- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 20, 2020: COMM0003436](#)
- [Statement of Lisa Banfield, April 28, 2020: COMM0004070](#)

231. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell to describe “any prior history of domestic abuse by [the perpetrator] against women or his partner.” Supt. Campbell confirmed that the RCMP was investigating this subject and had “spoken to witnesses who have provided information to us about prior assaults,” including the perpetrator’s common-law spouse. The journalist asked Supt. Campbell to clarify whether he meant “domestic” assaults and further asked “what evidence, if any, there was from the investigation that perhaps misogyny or hatred of women was involved in his targeting of women during his rampage.” Supt. Campbell said he was “not aware personally of any information that has come in to the investigative team specific to misogyny or hatred towards women.” He added that the perpetrator killed or injured 11 men and 14 women, and “it doesn’t appear in terms of what we’ve seen that he was purposefully targeting women. It appeared as if he was just targeting people that he knew or individuals for whatever reasons I don’t think any of us will ever understand or comprehend.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

232. By April 28, the RCMP had interviewed several witnesses, including Lisa Banfield and her sisters, who described the perpetrator’s history of intimate partner violence towards Lisa Banfield.

- The information provided to the RCMP by witnesses of the perpetrator’s intimate partner violence towards Lisa Banfield is contained in the *Perpetrator’s Violence Towards His Common-Law Spouse* Foundational Document.

233. Another journalist asked whether Supt. Campbell could provide more details about the relationships between the perpetrator and his victims, including which individuals he knew and targeted, and why he targeted them. The journalist noted there was a history of property disputes between the perpetrator and some of his neighbours, and questioned whether that was the reason the perpetrator killed certain victims. Supt. Campbell replied:

I don't have access to the finer details of that. But I'll agree and confirm with you that there was certainly a fairly sizeable amount of information that there were individuals who had had a number of disputes with the gunman over a certain period of time and it appears to be a lengthy period of time. That included everything from associates, to business partners, to family members. I can't really provide much detail right now. We are trying to understand that. Our investigators are trying to trace back to determine whether or not there was any motivation, but it just appears as if...like it was a completely senseless series of very violent acts, and we're trying to understand that as best as we can.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

234. Supt. Campbell did not provide details about the conflicts between victims and the perpetrator, or other information about their relationships.

Use of Firearms

235. In response to a journalist's question at the April 28, 2020, press briefing, Supt. Campbell said the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) was assisting with the RCMP's investigation into the origin of the perpetrator's firearms and whether any came from another country. Supt. Campbell confirmed that RCMP investigators had spoken to at least one individual in the United States as part of their investigation into the source of the perpetrator's firearms. He did not answer a journalist's request to expand on that answer, noting that the information was "part of the active and ongoing investigation and it's a piece that right now, unfortunately I can't share with you."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

236. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell whether the RCMP had identified all the weapons the perpetrator had used during the mass casualty, whether the perpetrator had a firearms licence outside Canada, and whether the weapons he used came primarily from the "black market." Supt. Campbell replied that he could not "get into the details about those weapons outside of the fact

that, as I stated on Friday, that the gunman was in possession of several semi-automatic handguns and two semi-automatic rifles. In terms of the calibre of those, I can't get into those details because the investigation is still active and ongoing." He added that the RCMP was still working to associate which weapons corresponded to the perpetrator's victims, based on the ammunition used. Supt. Campbell also said the RCMP continued to investigate whether the perpetrator had a firearms licence in the United States or a firearms acquisition certificate, and did not provide details.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

237. Another journalist asked Supt. Campbell whether the perpetrator was in possession of a "military-style assault weapon." Supt. Campbell replied "that there was what would be considered a weapon that could be described that way," but he did not share details. He said the RCMP wanted to establish witness credibility based on the details witnesses could provide that were not widely known. He noted that witnesses to the mass casualty described the perpetrator carrying a "long-barreled weapon" and that Cst. Morrison said the perpetrator shot him with a handgun.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)
- The evidence of witnesses who provided information about the firearms in the perpetrator's possession and the perpetrator's use of firearms during the mass casualty, as well as the firearms recovered by the RCMP after the mass casualty, is contained in the *Firearms Foundational Document*.

Police Paraphernalia

238. In the April 28, 2020, press briefing, Supt. Campbell explained that the RCMP's priority was to determine how the perpetrator obtained the equipment he used during the mass casualty. The RCMP continued to interview witnesses about the perpetrator's access to police paraphernalia and had sought judicial authorizations for search warrants related to that area of investigation.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28\)](#)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

239. With respect to the uniform, Supt. Campbell said the RCMP learned the perpetrator had collected “multiple pieces of police uniforms from a variety of agencies,” including the RCMP. He said the perpetrator wore parts of an authentic RCMP uniform, including a shirt and pants with a yellow stripe, during the mass casualty. The perpetrator also changed clothing as he travelled. Supt. Campbell said the RCMP had yet to confirm where or how the perpetrator obtained the uniform pieces in his possession. He noted that surplus police uniforms are sometimes available to the public through surplus stores, auctions, and online.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)
- Additional information regarding the RCMP’s investigation into the perpetrator’s acquisition of police paraphernalia, including evidence from witness interviews relating to the perpetrator’s acquisition of uniform items, is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

240. The Forensic Identification Occurrence Report prepared by Cpl. Anthony on April 19, 2020, did locate navy pants with a yellow stripe down the leg in Joey Webber’s SUV, which the perpetrator left at ■ Highway 224. A Forensic Science and Identification Services Laboratory Report prepared on April 26, 2021, indicates that the only DNA identified through forensic analysis on the pants belonged to the perpetrator. However, the Commission has not uncovered evidence to suggest that the perpetrator wore these pants during the mass casualty.

- [Forensic Identification Occurrence Report of Cpl. J. Anthony: COMM0002740 at pp. 9, 10](#)
- [Forensic Science and Identification Services Laboratory Report of Florence Célestin, April 26, 2021: COMM0007208](#)

241. Supt. Campbell added that the perpetrator’s collection of police paraphernalia included police cars. Supt. Campbell said this fact was widely known by people who knew the perpetrator, but the RCMP had “not uncovered any information that the police had knowledge that he had possessed these vehicles or that he had possessed a replica police vehicle.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
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242. Possible police awareness of the perpetrator's police vehicles is detailed in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document. Some of that witness information was collected after the April 28, 2020, press briefing, but Csts. Nick Dorrington and Wayne Tingley provided their information to the RCMP prior to April 28.
243. In February 2020, the perpetrator was given a speeding ticket by the RCMP while driving one of the 2013 Tauruses (not the decommissioned replica RCMP cruiser used in the mass casualty). Cst. Dorrington, the officer who ticketed him, also took a picture of his driver's licence. Cst. Dorrington said the perpetrator discussed his affection for Ford Taurus vehicles and told him that he had other RCMP paraphernalia.
- [PROS Occurrence details: COMM0003669; image of ticket: COMM0016908](#)
 - [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Cst. N. Dorrington: COMM0035926 at pp. 11, 15](#)
 - Additional information about the ticketing incident is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.
244. In a Can-Say statement for the RCMP dated April 23, 2020, Cst. Tingley wrote that he recalled having seen a "new looking RCMP police vehicle with a black push bumper on the front and no licence plate on the back of the vehicle in Elmsdale on Friday April 17, 2020." Cst. Tingley wrote that the vehicle was clean and appeared to be new. He did not remember the call number but did see a "B." He did not see the driver or get a good enough look to provide a description.
- [Can-Say statement of Cst. W. Tingley: COMM0008968](#)
245. Supt. Campbell said the RCMP had determined that "all four police cars" in the perpetrator's possession "were former police models" that the perpetrator had acquired through auctions a few years prior to the mass casualty. Supt. Campbell said the RCMP believed the perpetrator acquired the replica police cruiser that he used during the mass casualty in the fall of 2019, and it was at that time that he outfitted the car with the light bar and the RCMP decals.
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q>) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)
 - [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)
246. Supt. Campbell said he could not share details on how the perpetrator obtained the RCMP decals that he used to create the replica police cruiser he used during the mass casualty, or how those decals were produced.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p.51](#)
- Additional information about the decals is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

247. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell if the perpetrator received help in the lead-up to, or during, the mass casualty. Specifically, the journalist wanted to know whether the RCMP was interviewing former RCMP members about their relationship with the perpetrator. Supt. Campbell confirmed that the perpetrator was related to retired RCMP members, who had been interviewed. Supt. Campbell added that “there’s no indication that a former member of the RCMP provided assistance to the gunman or had provided [him] with any police equipment.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

248. On April 28, 2020, the perpetrator’s uncle, Chris Wortman, who was a retired RCMP member, gave his second interview to the RCMP. In that interview, he told the RCMP that he gave the perpetrator his Red Serge jacket and his High Brown boots. The perpetrator did not wear either of these items during the mass casualty.

- [Statement of Chris Wortman, April 28, 2020: COMM0051420 at pp. 42–45](#)
- Note: This interview took place in British Columbia and ended after the press briefing began. The interview ended at 12:06 p.m. PST, which is 4:06 p.m. ADT. The briefing began at 4:00 p.m. ADT.
- Additional information about the perpetrator’s access to and use of police paraphernalia is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

Emergency Alert Ready System

249. During the press briefing on April 28, 2020, a journalist asked Supt. Campbell whether there are “any protocols in place that tell RCMP officers in Nova Scotia when they should request that an Emergency Alert should be issued.” Supt. Campbell replied:

What I can tell you is that, as I had mentioned last Friday, I have been a police officer for almost 30 years. I have, myself, never witnessed or been a part of a critical incident where the Emergency Alert System was used. But what I can tell you is that we’re certainly very aware of that issue and we are conducting a full review of that system and we’re in conversations with not only the province but also the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police on that particular issue.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

250. As noted under this heading for April 20, 2020, Glenn Mason searched RCMP records and concluded that the RCMP did not appear to have a policy for public alerts on file. EMO's executive director, Paul Mason, stated that EMO has kept the RCMP updated on the emergency Alert Ready system through meetings with RCMP representatives.

- [Email – Emergency Broadcast System: COMM0000450](#)
- [EMO Public Alerting System Presentation, June 23, 2016: COMM0001015](#)
- [Memorandum from Paul Mason, executive director of NSEMO, to Deputy Minister Nancy MacLellan, Overview of Alert Ready System, April 29, 2020: COMM0000997, at p. 1](#)

Course of Events

251. During the briefing on April 28, 2020, Supt. Campbell provided information about the perpetrator's movements during the mass casualty, including the locations and vehicles he moved between and when. Supt. Campbell did not name the victims at each scene apart from Cst. Stevenson and Cst. Morrison. He said the investigation continued and that the RCMP was working to determine if anyone had knowledge of the perpetrator's plan and if they assisted him in any way.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren Campbell - April 28, 2020 \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28\)](#)
- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p.51](#)

252. Supt. Campbell said RCMP investigators believed the perpetrator had "left the Portapique area through a field at approximately 10:35." This was in part based on evidence from "a witness that saw a vehicle that was travelling through a field which was not very common." A journalist asked if the perpetrator was able to avoid law enforcement in Portapique by driving through the field and whether he left the Portapique area before the RCMP arrived. Supt. Campbell confirmed that based on witness evidence and video surveillance footage from Debert, Nova Scotia, where the perpetrator travelled to after leaving Portapique on April 18, the RCMP believed he left the area approximately nine minutes after the first responders arrived on scene at 10:26 p.m. on April 18.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – April 28, 2020 | Streamed live on April 28, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FCAIDHkx5Q\)](#) and [Speaking remarks: Supt. Darren](#)

[Campbell - April 28, 2020](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>)

- [Speaking remarks – Supt. D. Campbell – April 28, 2020: COMM0058916](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 51](#)

253. As detailed in the *Containment Points in and Around Portapique* Foundational Document, and as noted above, witnesses Andrew and Kate MacDonald provided information to Cst. Colford on the evening of April 18 about an alternative exit from the Portapique area, which Cst. Colford broadcast over the Colchester radio. On April 20, the RCMP interviewed the Zimmerman family about their observations from their residence in Portapique on the night of April 18, which included seeing a set of headlights driving up the “blueberry field road.” The RCMP had also obtained video surveillance footage of the perpetrator’s mock cruiser entering the Industrial Park in Debert at 11:10 p.m. on April 18.

Discussion Between the Nova Scotia RCMP Strategic Communications Unit and National RCMP Headquarters

254. On April 28, 2020, Nova Scotia RCMP members A/Commr. Bergerman, C/Supt. Leather, Supt. Campbell, and Director Scanlan had a meeting with NHQ Communications regarding the release of information about the mass casualty. Commr. Lucki, Deputy Commissioner (D/Commr.) Brian Brennan, and representatives of NHQ Strategic Communications attended by phone from Ottawa.

- [Handwritten notes of Supt. D. Campbell: COMM0058640 at p. 50](#)

255. At the meeting, Commr. Lucki expressed disappointment in the press briefings carried out by the Nova Scotia RCMP. In particular, Commr. Lucki felt that the Nova Scotia RCMP had disobeyed her instructions to include specific information on the firearms used by the perpetrator. In his notes, Supt. Campbell indicated that he had told the Nova Scotia RCMP Strategic Communications Unit not to release information about the perpetrator’s firearms out of concern that it would jeopardize the ongoing investigation into the perpetrator’s access to firearms, which was being carried out both by the RCMP and United States law enforcement.

- [Handwritten notes of Supt. D. Campbell: COMM0058640 at p. 51](#)

256. According to Supt. Campbell’s notes, Commr. Lucki stated that “she had promised the Minister of Public Safety and the Prime Minister’s Office that the RCMP, (we) would release this information.”

- [Handwritten notes of Supt. D. Campbell: COMM0058640 at p. 51](#)

257. Supt. Campbell’s notes indicate that when he attempted to explain the reasoning for not releasing this information, Commr. Lucki stated that “we [the Nova Scotia RCMP] didn’t understand, that this was tied to pending gun control legislation that would make officers and public safer by or through this legislation.”

- [Handwritten notes of Supt. D. Campbell: COMM0058640 at pp. 51–52](#)

MAY 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, May 2020

258. In the aftermath of the mass casualty, as the RCMP's investigation unfolded, periodic briefings from the RCMP continued.
259. On May 11, 2020, the Nova Scotia RCMP issued a news release about their investigation into the mass casualty, which had been named "Operation H-Strong." The statement said the investigation was "being led by the RCMP Major Crimes Unit (MCU) with the assistance of specialized resources from across the country, including crime analysts, digital forensic services, federal policing officers, forensic anthropologist, forensic identification and laboratory services, forensic pathologists, legal application supports, national weapons and enforcement support, special tactical operations, victim services, among many others."
- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
 - [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058918](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)
260. The May 11 statement noted that the RCMP continued to explore many areas of investigation "as we continue to piece together the gunman's movements, possible motivation and whether he received assistance leading up to the incidents." RCMP investigators had already interviewed 500 witnesses and were continuing to conduct interviews. In addition, the statement said "[t]he special tactical operations team has completed its ground searches, and all 17 scenes and search areas have been released."
- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
 - [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, May 11, 2020: COMM0058918](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)
261. The statement said RCMP investigators believed the perpetrator used an accelerant to set fires during the mass casualty and they knew from witness statements the perpetrator had a significant supply of gasoline at his home in Portapique. The statement also noted that forensic identification officers had searched the underground of the perpetrator's property in Portapique and did not recover anything of interest to the investigation.

- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, May 11, 2020: COMM0058918](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)

262. Finally, the statement said the RCMP's Behavioural Analysis Unit was conducting a "psychological autopsy" of the perpetrator "with the intent of gathering insights into why he committed the acts of violence. This includes an analysis of his personality, past behaviour and how he related to others."

- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, May 11, 2020: COMM0058918](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)

Involvement of SiRT

263. The May 11,, 2020, statement noted that three matters related to the RCMP's investigation into the mass casualty had been referred to SiRT and that "[t]wo of those matters are being investigated by SiRT: gunfire by RCMP officers at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall on April 19 and the death of the gunman. The third matter, which is related to whether Cst. Heidi Stevenson fired her weapon at the gunman, continues to be part of Operation H-Strong."

- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19, May 11, 2020: COMM0058918](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)

Use of Firearms

264. In their May 11, 2020, statement, the RCMP said the perpetrator was in possession of two semi-automatic handguns and two semi-automatic rifles. One of the guns had been traced to Canada, and the remaining guns were believed to have been obtained in the United States. The statement said the RCMP was working with the CBSA on cross-border elements of the investigation. It added that "[t]he calibre of the weapons is not being released, because determining where and how the gunman obtained the firearms is a central part of the investigation, and we use this detailed information to verify the credibility of some of the information we receive."

- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058918](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)
- Additional information about the origins of the perpetrator's firearms is contained in the *Firearms* Foundational Document. As detailed in that document, the RCMP recovered five firearms from the Mazda3 in which the perpetrator was killed at the Enfield Big Stop. One of those five firearms was Cst. Stevenson's RCMP-issue handgun; the remaining four belonged to the perpetrator.

Police Paraphernalia

265. In their May 11, 2020, statement, the RCMP said they had identified the supplier of the RCMP decals on the perpetrator's car.

- Accessed online: [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-investigation-the-incidents-april-18-and-19-0>)
- [Update on investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19: COMM0058918](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 62](#)
- Additional information about the perpetrator's decals, including when, how, and which items he sourced or attempted to source from suppliers like eBay, Amazon, ND Graphics, American Vinyl, and Custom Designs, is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

266. On May 4, 2020, the RCMP interviewed Peter Griffon, who did odd jobs for the perpetrator and was an employee of Sid Sells Signs. Mr. Griffon recalled having a conversation with his boss about printing "a couple horses" (RCMP logo horses) because the perpetrator had asked him to make them for him, and his boss told him no. Mr. Griffon said he did not print the decals for the perpetrator but eventually told investigators that he printed "the horses" even though his boss had told him not to. Mr. Griffon said he also printed the "Call 9-1-1" decal, the hazard stripes including the word "Police" on the back tailgate, and the 28B11 decal. Mr. Griffon said the perpetrator paid him "like five bucks" for the decals, and that this occurred in the summer of 2019.

- [Statement of Peter Griffon, May 4, 2020: COMM0009113 at pp. 31, 34–35](#)

JUNE 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, June 2020

267. The Nova Scotia RCMP held a press briefing on June 4, 2020. Cpl. Clarke opened the briefing and introduced A/Commr. Bergerman, C/Supt. Leather, and Supt. Campbell, who she said would

provide an update on the investigation into the events of April 18 and 19, 2020. A/Commr. Bergerman said the RCMP's investigation is ongoing, and she thanked the community for its continued support.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from the Commanding Officer, Assistant Commissioner Lee Bergerman - June 4, 2020](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-commanding-officer-lee-bergerman-june-4-2020) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-commanding-officer-lee-bergerman-june-4-2020>)
- [Remarks from A/Commr. L. Bergerman – June 4, 2020: COMM0058919](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

268. Supt. Campbell opened his statement with an update on the RCMP's investigation to date:

The investigation is being led by the Nova Scotia RCMP Major Crimes Unit. Hundreds of RCMP employees have and continue to be engaged in the investigation and has been supported by specialized RCMP resources from across the country.

To date, investigators have interviewed over 650 different individuals from a variety of provinces, including British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the United States. A number of exhibits have been forensically examined by highly skilled Forensic Identification specialists, RCMP Forensic Scientists from our forensic laboratories and by specialists within the Nova Scotia Medical Examiner's office. It is quite important to highlight the complex, difficult and highly professional work that they continue to provide during this investigation.

Aside from determining the gunman's actions and movements before and during the April 18th and 19th incidents, the investigative objectives remain the same and that includes determining if anyone had any knowledge of the gunman's plans or if anyone provided assistance to him in any way.

Though the gunman cannot be brought before the courts, the investigation must meet the exact standard as if we were in a position to do so. All of our investigative inquiries, our actions and standards are centered on working towards gathering sufficient evidence to determine what role, if any, any individual played in these horrific crimes. Every piece of information that we retrieve and receive is analyzed, it's fact checked and it's corroborated in order to assess the weight, validity and value of this information. There is no room for speculation. To get it right takes time. This is what is expected of us, and this is what we intend to deliver.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Update on Operation H-Strong by Supt. Darren Campbell - June 4, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-h-strong-supt-darren-campbell-june-4-2020>)
 - [Update on Operation H-Strong by Supt. D. Campbell – June 4, 2020: COMM0058920](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)
269. Supt. Campbell provided information about the RCMP's initial response; its communications and request for assistance by other police agencies; witness evidence that the perpetrator did not pull over victims' vehicles during the mass casualty; the interaction between Cst. Stevenson and the perpetrator; the perpetrator's acquisition of RCMP and other police uniforms; the relationship between the perpetrator and the RCMP; the perpetrator's acquisition of police vehicles and emergency equipment; the perpetrator's firearms; previous police interactions with the perpetrator and historical complaints; and the RCMP's attempts to understand the perpetrator's motivations.
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Update on Operation H-Strong by Supt. Darren Campbell - June 4, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/update-h-strong-supt-darren-campbell-june-4-2020>)
 - [Update on Operation H-Strong by Supt. D. Campbell – June 4, 2020: COMM0058920](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)
270. C/Supt. Leather provided an update after Supt. Campbell's remarks. C/Supt. Leather stated that the RCMP's response to the mass casualty was "subject to a number of reviews or independent investigations. The Nova Scotia Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT) is investigating the fatal police-involved shooting of the gunman, as well as, the discharge of firearms on April 19 at the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade hall. Both of these investigations are being led by SiRT and remain ongoing."
- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather - June 4, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020>)
 - [Remarks from C/Supt. C. Leather – June 4, 2020: COMM0058921](#)
 - [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)
271. C/Supt. Leather said there was also "an Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) investigation that is underway and again, that is independent from the RCMP. ESDC investigates any workplace occupational injury or death at federally regulated workplaces. The investigators

will take an in-depth look at overall response including training and equipment, communications, and tactics of the RCMP. We are participating fully with this investigation.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather - June 4, 2020](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020>)
- [Remarks from C/Supt. C. Leather – June 4, 2020: COMM0058921](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

272. Finally, C/Supt. Leather noted “[a]nother investigation taking place is the internal Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Team (HOIT) that has been created to investigate the incident from a *Canada Labour Code* perspective. The Hazardous Occurrence Investigative Team will also identify any occupational causal factors and corrective measures that can be implemented.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather - June 4, 2020](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020>)
- [Remarks from C/Supt. C. Leather – June 4, 2020: COMM0058921](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

273. In addition to those investigations, C/Supt. Leather said there were “discussions underway to determine the best approach regarding a formal comprehensive review.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather - June 4, 2020](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020>)
- [Remarks from C/Supt. C. Leather – June 4, 2020: COMM0058921](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

274. He discussed the 2011 officer safety bulletin regarding the perpetrator, noting that he was “mindful that questions have been raised around the level of information or intelligence sharing that has, or currently takes place in Nova Scotia.” He added that the RCMP was re-assessing the provincial Alert Ready system and creating a national policy for its use.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>) and [Remarks from Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather - June 4, 2020](#) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/remarks-criminal-operations-officer-chief-superintendent-chris-leather-june-4-2020>)
- [Remarks from C/Supt. C. Leather – June 4, 2020: COMM0058921](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

275. Cpl. Clarke then opened the floor to questions. Journalists asked C/Supt. Leather and Supt. Campbell questions about the 2011 officer safety bulletin relating to the perpetrator, and the 2013 complaint by his former neighbour in Portapique alleging the perpetrator had assaulted his common-law partner, Lisa Banfield, and that he possessed illegal firearms. Journalists also asked questions about the RCMP's response to the mass casualty, the perpetrator's motive and actions on April 18 and 19, 2020, and the registration of his former police vehicles.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

Information About Victims

276. At the June 4, 2020, press briefing, Supt. Campbell addressed questions regarding “survivors who stayed on the line with 911 operators for a significant period of time during the initial response” to the mass casualty. He noted: “It is true that survivors remained on the line with 911 operators. While they remained on the line and in contact with RCMP dispatchers, they were instructed to shelter in place and to hide while the IARD [Immediate Action Rapid Deployment] team members continued their search for the threat. IARD members set up containment around the survivors' residences while other first responders set up containment around the community of Portapique.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

277. With respect to other victims, Supt. Campbell said RCMP investigators had confirmed through witness interviews that the perpetrator did not use his replica police cruiser to pull over victims' vehicles during the mass casualty. A journalist asked for clarification on this comment, because at the press briefing on April 24, Supt. Campbell had said, “A witness described that the suspect had pulled over one of the vehicles and then shot one of the drivers.” Supt. Campbell answered that in an investigation, “people give us information and that information is interpreted and that

was the interpretation of the information at that time. Since that time, it's been confirmed, through the investigative team, that the eyewitnesses at the scene do not describe that the gunman was pulling over any vehicles." He added: "We do know what the details...what those details are that surround those interactions between the gunman and the victims in that area. Again, for the sake of not traumatizing the families, to be able to describe that would not be appropriate."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

Information About the Perpetrator

278. At the June 2020 press briefing, Supt. Campbell said the perpetrator "was never associated to the RCMP as a volunteer or an Auxiliary RCMP police officer, nor did the RCMP ever have any special relationship with the gunman of any kind."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

279. Supt. Campbell also discussed the topic of previous police interactions with the perpetrator and historical complaints. He said the RCMP continued to investigate the perpetrator's previous behaviour, including his interactions with the police. Supt. Campbell said "[a] number of individuals interviewed have indicated that they had observed the gunman in possession of weapons, and police uniform items, and the fully marked, replica RCMP vehicle. None of these witnesses have indicated that they notified the RCMP of their observations."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

280. As detailed in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document, RCMP member Cst. Dorrington observed the perpetrator driving an unmarked Ford Taurus (one of the perpetrator's decommissioned police vehicles) in February 2020, prior to the mass casualty. The perpetrator also told Cst. Dorrington he had other RCMP paraphernalia. Another RCMP member, Cst. Tingley, wrote in a Can-Say statement for the RCMP dated April 23, 2020, that he recalled seeing a "new looking RCMP police vehicle with a black push bumper on the front and no licence plate on the back of the vehicle in Elmsdale on Friday April 17, 2020." Cst. Tingley did not see the driver. The *Firearms* Foundational Document and the *Perpetrator's Violence and Aggression Towards Others* Foundational Document describe and confirm that witnesses reported the

perpetrator's firearms to the RCMP in 2010 and 2011 in relation to the perpetrator's threat to kill his parents and threat to kill a police officer.

- [PROS Occurrence details: COMM0003669; image of ticket: COMM0016908](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Cst. N. Dorrington: COMM0035926 at pp. 11, 15](#)
- Additional information about the ticketing incident is contained in the *Confirmation of Decommissioned Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.
- [Can-Say statement of Cst. W. Tingley: COMM0008968](#)

281. Supt. Campbell added that “[o]ther witnesses have since come forward and expressed that they did notify the RCMP regarding intimate partner violence claims and firearms complaints against the gunman. This component of the investigation remains active.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

282. A journalist then asked about “the complaints made about [the perpetrator] abusing his partner, and also raising concerns about a stash of weapons. The complaint was made in 2013 and I’m just looking for some clarification on what action was taken in regards to that complaint.” Supt. Campbell replied:

Well, the first thing I’m going to say about that is that we appreciate and we value every piece of information that comes in from the public. And I need the public to understand that when you call us, we believe you. So, I don’t want to leave anyone with any impression that the police don’t believe anyone because that’s exactly what we do. When we receive information, we follow that information up and we try to determine whether or not we can track back and find out where that information came from.

So, as of yesterday, we’ve identified two officers that did have contact with the individual that you mentioned, and we’re working through determining what records or notes that they may have, or recollection with respect to that actionable incident. But I think what’s fair is to explain that when the police receive a call from an individual, and if we open a file and investigate that file, we take their information, and it’s helpful to get information that comes from a firsthand source. So, in that particular case, as I understand it, through the claims that were being made, is that the information came in through a second party in terms of the intimate partner violence. And it’s imperative that if an individual does call the police and they’re providing information that comes from another source that we receive the cooperation from individuals who are actually possess the firsthand knowledge or who have witnessed that type of activity. In terms of

the firearms, again right now it's early to say exactly what information was passed on to two of those officers, and we're working through that at this time.

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283. After the mass casualty, Brenda Forbes, the perpetrator's former neighbour in Portapique, recounted calling the RCMP in 2013 to report an incident of intimate partner violence committed by the perpetrator against Lisa Banfield. She also recounted that she had told the RCMP in 2013 that the perpetrator was in possession of illegal weapons. These events, including the 2013 notes of responding RCMP member Cst. Troy Maxwell and the RCMP's internal investigation in 2020 to locate a record of the original complaint, are outlined in the *Perpetrator's Violence Towards His Common-Law Spouse* Foundational Document. In his interview with the Mass Casualty Commission in April 2022, Cst. Maxwell recalled that Ms. Forbes told him her neighbour was driving around the neighbourhood in an "old, decommissioned police car" in an unsafe manner. Cst. Maxwell's notes from 2013 do not record that Ms. Forbes reported intimate partner violence or possession of firearms to the RCMP.

- [Statement of Brenda Forbes, April 22, 2020: COMM0004004 at lines 40–51](#)
- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Cst. T. Maxwell: COMM0057751, at p. 6](#)
- [Handwritten notes of Cst. T. Maxwell, July 6, 2013: COMM0011709](#)

284. In addition to Brenda Forbes's 2013 complaint, Supt. Campbell noted that "[i]nformation of an officer safety bulletin prepared in 2011 by the Truro Police Service and the Criminal Intelligence Service of Nova Scotia recently became publicly available." He said the officer safety bulletin included information that the perpetrator "was a dentist who lived and worked in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia; that he had a cottage in the Portapique area; he was experiencing a mental health crisis; and was in possession of a handgun and rifles; that he disliked the police; and that he wanted to kill a police officer." Supt. Campbell said "all but one of the firearms found in the gunman's possession on April 19th were acquired after the 2011 bulletin and are thus not those described in the bulletin itself."

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285. Supt. Campbell added: "The bulletin was not available to Critical Incident Commanders or responding police officers as the events were unfolding on April 18th and 19th. The bulletin was brought forward days after the incident and existed in the archives of another Nova Scotia police

agency. Generally, officer safety bulletins are purged from the searchable police databases after two years.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM)
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286. In relation to the 2011 bulletin, C/Supt. Leather addressed questions regarding “the level of information or intelligence sharing that has, or currently takes place in Nova Scotia.” He noted that after the mass casualty, “a member from another police service within Nova Scotia brought forward a historical police bulletin that dates back to May 2011. It was authored by another police service and distributed by the Criminal Intelligence Service of Nova Scotia (CISNS) in 2011.” However, C/Supt. Leather said that “[w]hile a bulletin existed from 2011, it likely would not have changed the response of April 18 and 19. It was not searchable or available to our responding officers on the 18th and 19th. The more we learn about the events that took place on April 18th and 19th, as Supt. Campbell says, ‘with the benefit of hindsight.’”

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287. A journalist asked “what action would have been taken at the time of that bulletin, in terms of investigating the individual involved and the things he was doing and saying?” C/Supt. Leather and Supt. Campbell answered as follows:

[C/Supt. Leather:] At the time, the information, as you’ve learned from Supt. Campbell and I, was broadcasted by CISNS to all of the police services in Nova Scotia, based on information that was received from Truro Police. The two jurisdictions that were...clearly had a role in following up, whether it was the RCMP in terms of Portapique, because that, as you heard, was identified in the bulletin, and where the gunman resided at the time and right up until his death in Dartmouth, in Halifax Region. And so, investigations...or an investigation was initiated and some follow-up work was done at the time in 2011, and perhaps Darren you have some more information on that.

[Supt. Campbell:] Yeah, really I...I did speak of purging of information. So, you know, we do have in our holdings some file material from another police agency that does speak to some of the actions that were undertaken. Of course, it’s not our information, so I can’t, you know, speak about that. And in terms of...we have interviewed another RCMP officer, that we know had stopped into the gunman’s residence on several occasions and we’ve since interviewed that officer and that

officer was looking for signs and having conversations with the gunman, however he didn't see anything that would have caused him any concern, or allowed him to take any further action. However, again, you know, the investigation is still underway and we are looking for every possible piece of information that we can from our officers that were serving during that particular period of time. We're looking at a nine year lapse in time, and of course people retire, so we're trying to track down those officers that may have had some involvement right now.

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288. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell how the RCMP decides “which records to purge after, I believe you said two years, is that a review of information that potentially could or should be kept because a potential threat presumably might not disappear after two years?” Supt. Campbell replied:

[Supt. Campbell:] I spoke to the two year purging date. There's several different purging dates, depending upon the type of information that are within police holdings. For example, my understanding is that for records related to a homicide investigation it's more than 70 years that we'll keep that information. But, you know, we're obviously guided by the *Privacy Act* and also by the *Libraries and Archives Act* and there's other Acts that determine how long we have to keep information. There's an element of that where we have to physically keep information for two years, so that individuals...if it's private information they can access that information. And then based on the type of investigation, the status of that investigation whether it's concluded or not, there's a determination and a timing that's placed on a variety of investigative information. So those purge dates coincide with the particular type of investigation and in terms of the officer safety bulletin, my understanding was, is that the purge date was a two-year period of time.

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289. In follow-up, the journalist asked: “Does that make sense to you, that it should be purged after three [*sic*] years, or would that perhaps be best kept for a longer period of time or indefinitely?” C/Supt. Leather answered:

[C/Supt. Leather:] I'll just speak to that. In terms of one of the issues that certainly we've identified pursuant to the criminal investigation is just that, the retention of

reports, records. The officer safety bulletin would certainly be one that we are looking at internally. Neighbour disputes or other complaints that may have made in the early 2000's, mid 2000's in the Portapique area we'll certainly be looking at that as well. Because as Supt. Campbell alluded to there is that balance between privacy and public safety and the need to retain that information and know for circumstances such as this, and unfortunately, I don't know about many, but certainly some information is lost to us because it has been deleted from the various systems.

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- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

290. In his interview with the Mass Casualty Commission on August 3, 2021, Chief David MacNeil of the Truro Police Service recalled that the 2011 officer safety bulletin surfaced in the days following the mass casualty. Chief MacNeil believed an Amherst police officer recalled that he had heard the perpetrator's name before, searched his email, found the bulletin, and forwarded via email.

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Chief D. MacNeil: COMM0003767 at p. 111](#)
- Additional information about the 2011 officer safety bulletin is contained in the *Perpetrator's Violence and Aggression Towards Others* and *Firearms* Foundational Documents.

291. As for the perpetrator's motive, Supt. Campbell said RCMP profilers and an RCMP forensic psychologist from the RCMP National Headquarters Behavioural Analysis Unit were assisting with the investigation. Their assistance included compiling a psychological autopsy of the perpetrator. Supt. Campbell said the behavioural analysts had shared their preliminary findings with RCMP investigators. They described the perpetrator as an "Injustice Collector" who held on to conflict with others internally until it "boiled over in rage." Supt. Campbell said that "[s]ome recipients of [the perpetrator's] wrath of violence were targeted for perceived injustices of the past, others were reactive targets of his rage, and some were just random targets."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)

Use of Firearms

292. Supt. Campbell said the RCMP's investigation into the perpetrator's firearms was ongoing, and involved other domestic and international law enforcement partner agencies. He said: "At this time, I can only provide limited details. What can be confirmed is that the gunman had acquired all of these firearms illegally. Of the five firearms found in the gunman's possession on April 19th,

three were obtained illegally from the United States, one was obtained illegally in Canada through the estate of a deceased associate of the gunman. And these are the four firearms that we have previously indicated the gunman had on April 18th. The fifth firearm was Cst. Stevenson's."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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293. A journalist asked: "I believe Campbell said that most of the weapons used in the April 18th and 19th incidents were acquired after the 2011 bulletin was issued. And I was just wondering if he could confirm that if so, would keeping that bulletin published at all have prevented the gunman from being able to, I know they were illegally obtained, but to obtain these weapons?" In response, Supt. Campbell confirmed that "three of the weapons that were in the gunman's possession on April 19th were certainly acquired well after the 2011 bulletin." He said "it appears . . . that the gunman was in possession of one of those weapons" at the time of the 2011 bulletin. Supt. Campbell added: "In terms of whether or not that would have hindered the ability of the gunman to possess or obtain any of those weapons, again it's part of that ongoing investigation and it's not that we're trying to withhold that information, but that's a critical component of our investigation right now."

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294. Supt. Campbell noted that RCMP investigators knew who provided weapons to the perpetrator and, since the investigation was ongoing, "it's quite important that we protect that component of the investigation at this time." A journalist asked Supt. Campbell whether the RCMP was considering laying charges against individuals who provided weapons to the perpetrator. Supt. Campbell replied that the RCMP's job is "to uncover evidence and to gather sufficient evidence to present to Public Prosecution Services, so that they may be in a position to prosecute anyone that may have committed any illegal acts." He emphasized that "there's a domestic component to this investigation, as well as an international one. And when it comes to the international aspects of this investigation, we have to work with our justice partners from other countries. And what I can say is that we are actively engaged and having dialogue with them with respect to what charges, if any, will result from that."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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Police Paraphernalia

295. With respect to the perpetrator's acquisition of RCMP and other police uniforms, Supt. Campbell said RCMP investigators had "uncovered a familial association between the gunman and two retired members of the RCMP. Both of these retired members were estranged from the gunman and both have fully cooperated with the investigation."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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296. Supt. Campbell said RCMP investigators did not believe "either of these retired RCMP members provided operational duty uniforms to the gunman, such as the items that were in his possession and discarded at one of the murder scenes." He added that "the investigation has determined that the gunman had been associated to a police officer from another Nova Scotia police agency. This officer has also been interviewed and has cooperated with the investigation and we also believe that this officer was not responsible for providing any of the uniform items to the gunman." He noted that "[t]he investigation into how the gunman acquired the RCMP uniform pieces is still ongoing."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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297. As discussed above, by the time of the June 2020 press briefing the perpetrator's uncle, Chris Wortman, had told the RCMP in his interview on April 28, 2020, that he gave the perpetrator his Red Serge jacket and High Brown boots. Those items are not part of the RCMP's operational duty uniform.

- [Statement of Chris Wortman, April 28, 2020: COMM0051420 at pp. 42–45](#)
- Additional information about the perpetrator's access to police uniforms is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

298. Supt. Campbell also provided information about the perpetrator's acquisition of police vehicles and emergency equipment. He said, "with respect to the retired police vehicles, which were purchased and in possession of the gunman, the investigation has confirmed that the gunman had purchased four Ford Taurus, former police vehicles through local auctions." RCMP investigators had also determined that the perpetrator purchased the emergency equipment installed on these vehicles through online auctions. Supt. Campbell said that "[t]he installation of some of this equipment was carried out by the gunman and by some of his associates, including Portapique area neighbours and residents."

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299. Supt. Campbell reiterated that “the decals installed on the gunman’s replica RCMP vehicle were not actual RCMP police vehicle decals, however, they were realistic reproductions printed by a local printer/manufacturer. Management of the local printer/manufacturer was not aware that this has taken place and they continue to cooperate with the investigation.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)
- Additional information about the perpetrator’s access to police decals is contained in the *Police Paraphernalia* Foundational Document.

300. A journalist asked Supt. Campbell why RCMP investigators believe the perpetrator used his New Brunswick company, Berkshire Broman Corporation, to register the four former police vehicles. Supt. Campbell replied that “registering those vehicles under a corporation name made it difficult for us to determine exactly which vehicles he actually had registered to him. Whether he did that by design or whether there was a benefit for him to register them under a business name, that’s a question that more than likely only the gunman can answer. But again, as I stated, it did make it more difficult for us. Although we were aware, on the evening of the 18th, we were able to determine that there were vehicles associated to him through that company name.”

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 64](#)
- Additional information about the perpetrator’s former police vehicles and the RCMP’s efforts to identify and account for those vehicles during the mass casualty is contained in the *Confirmation of Replica RCMP Cruiser* Foundational Document.

Emergency Alert Ready System

301. During the press briefing on June 4, 2020, C/Supt. Leather spoke about the emergency Alert Ready system. He said that “[t]o the best of our knowledge the Alert Ready has never been used for an Active Shooter situation by police in Canada.” C/Supt. Leather added that the RCMP was working on a national policy on the use of the emergency Alert Ready system.

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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Course of Events

302. During the press briefing on June 4, 2020, Supt. Campbell provided information about the RCMP's initial response to the mass casualty. He said that when the Emergency Response Team members arrived, the perpetrator "was still believed to be in the area, and if alive, he was lying in wait, meaning that he would be hiding, ready to engage anyone at any time." Supt. Campbell said "[t]his contributed to a decision to instruct area residents to shelter in place as opposed to evacuate," while ERT continued to search for the perpetrator. Supt. Campbell noted that, "[a]s previously reported, we now know the gunman had escaped from the area shortly after the first officers had arrived. He fled to the Debert area where he hid and he remained there for several hours before beginning to move again in the early morning hours of the following day."

- Accessed online: [RCMP update on investigation into Nova Scotia attacks – June 4, 2020 | Streamed live on June 4, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clazRdQz7QM\)](#)
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303. A journalist asked C/Supt. Leather why he communicated at 10:00 a.m. on April 19 that he believed the perpetrator was "pinned down in Wentworth."

[C/Supt. Leather:] I recall sending that email out, I think it was to Chief MacNeil at the time. He and I had some brief email exchanges and that was an update I had received is that the belief existed that the suspect was pinned down at the time. Of course, we learned later that that was not correct, but that's the information I had at the time.

[Supt. Campbell:] So I might be able to add to that, C/Supt. Leather. So, I've had direct conversations with the Critical Incident Command, as well as, some of our Emergency Response Team members, and you know, my understanding of that was is that at that particular time, there was a 911 call that was received, that 911 call...and I had provided details about that call in a previous press conference, and it was in the Wentworth area. And the responding ERT officers and those that had containment on that residence, we actually did believe that we had the gunman pinned down in a residence...or on that property, and it was a large property, which is very important to note as well. Through the timings of the video canvass that we did, we actually missed that gunman by minutes, but at that particular time, the information that was being passed over to you, sir, was

that we truly believed that we actually had the gunman on that property and that we had him contained.

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304. In a subsequent exchange with journalists, C/Supt. Leather and Supt. Campbell clarified that they meant Glenholme and not Wentworth:

[CBC National News:] question to C/Supt. Chris Leather. Just to remind you that was about you believing the suspect was pinned down at 10:00 a.m. on April 19th in Wentworth, I just want to clarify it seemed that you were talking about the home in Glenholme where the gunman was believed to have knocked on a couple's door and they didn't answer and they were safe and that was not in Wentworth. So, can you clarify is that in fact where you believed you had him pinned down as you say? Was it Glenholme or Wentworth and either way, how did believing you had him pinned down impact the RCMP's response?

[C/Supt. Leather:] Well, I'll briefly respond to that and then ask Darren to sort of follow up is that one line email was based on information I received at that time and I think Supt. Campbell did a fairly decent job, frankly, in describing how that information came to us and our response. I don't have anything more to add to that.

[Supt. Campbell:] Yeah, what I'd add is that you're correct. It actually was Glenholme and it wasn't Wentworth. Previous to that 911 call sorry in Glenholme there was the incident in Wentworth. However, in terms of the timing of when those calls were coming in they were very close in terms of time, however we knew that the gunman was actually in the Wentworth area much earlier, after the fact, through the course of our video canvassed in part of the investigation. You did ask why we thought the suspect, or the gunman was pinned down at the time. Again, as I mentioned earlier, in terms of the timing, it was very, very tight. We were on the line with those individuals of that residence and they were describing the police vehicle, they were describing the gunman carrying a gun and our officers were en route and in fact there was one of our officers that had seen a police vehicle pass him, and by the time that he got turned around, the gunman had actually entered that large property, and unbeknownst to the officer that had actually turned around to try to pursue the gunman. So there was clear indications and information that we had the gunman pinned down in that Glenholme area at the time.

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305. Supt. Campbell also addressed media reports questioning the level of communications between the RCMP and other Nova Scotia police agencies during the mass casualty, including “an apparent lack of requests from the RCMP to other Nova Scotia police agencies for assistance on April 18th and the 19th.” Supt. Campbell said:

There is detailed information that refutes these claims. I can confirm that the RCMP was in contact with other Nova Scotia police agencies several times throughout the incident and that information was communicated to all Nova Scotia police agencies as it became known. These updates and communications originated from the Risk Manager of our Operational Communication Centre, the Critical Incident Commander, from RCMP management, as well through members who were actually involved in the incident. Other Nova Scotia police agencies also contacted the RCMP directly for information and the information was provided to those agencies in those cases as well.

With respect to requests for assistance, other Nova Scotia police agencies were asked to assist the RCMP in a variety of ways, and in fact, they offered assistance as well. This included agreements by other Nova Scotia police agencies to cover calls for service in RCMP jurisdictions, while our officers were occupied in the response; providing investigative assistance as well; with priority witness interviews while the situation was unfolding; evacuating potential victims from residences known to the gunman; as well as, providing lockdown security to an area hospital, where some of the injured victims were being treated.

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JULY 2020

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty, July 2020

306. On July 23, 2020, Minister Blair and Nova Scotia justice minister and attorney general Mark Furey announced a joint review into the events of April 18 and 19, 2020.

- Accessed online: [Governments announce joint review of April Nova Scotia attack – July 23, 2020 | Streamed live on July 23, 2020 | cpac YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX2PLlozz-k) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX2PLlozz-k>)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 79](#)

307. On July 23, 2020, the RCMP issued a news release on behalf of A/Commr. Bergerman, regarding the announcement of a joint review:

The RCMP welcomes today's announcement of a joint review into the devastating incidents of April 18 and 19, 2020. We support the independent review and will cooperate fully.

What took place in Northeast Nova Scotia was unprecedented and has forever affected victims' families foremost, but also RCMP employees across Nova Scotia, particularly those who were involved in the incident, community members and Nova Scotians from one end of our province to the other. We owe it to the memory of those we lost to learn as much as we can from this terrible tragedy.

The confirmation of a joint review does not shift our focus in relation to the ongoing H-Strong investigation. Our priorities will continue to be the victims' families and learning more about why the gunman did what he did and what help the gunman received leading up to the incidents.

The Nova Scotia RCMP will work closely with Public Safety and the Department of Justice to ensure that the review has all available information required.

- Accessed online: [Statement from Nova Scotia RCMP Commanding Officer regarding announcement of joint review](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-nova-scotia-rcmp-commanding-officer-announcement-joint-review) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-nova-scotia-rcmp-commanding-officer-announcement-joint-review>)
- [Statement from A/Commr. L. Bergerman, July 23, 2020: COMM0058922](#)

308. Shortly after this announcement, the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia announced their intent to convert the joint review into a joint federal/provincial public inquiry into the mass casualty.

- Accessed online: [Joint Public Inquiry into the Nova Scotia April 2020 Tragedy](https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/plcng/2020-nsir-en.aspx) (<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/plcng/2020-nsir-en.aspx>)
- [Joint public inquiry into the Nova Scotia April 2020 tragedy: COMM0059012](#)

309. On July 30, 2020, the RCMP published a statement by the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide context to information relating to the H-Strong investigation that had been recently released to the media in an unredacted form. It noted:

The release of previously redacted or sealed information contained in Operation H-Strong Informations to Obtain, (ITOs) has resulted in a number of questions. Some of the unsealed and released Information is being interpreted as corroborated facts without full context, which is resulting in confusion and speculation. We wish to clarify that information with context and facts.

The RCMP stands by its public comments that have been made based on corroborated facts and evidence and is committed to continue sharing information first with the families as has been our priority throughout the investigation.

- Accessed online: [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide context to recently unsealed information](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information>)
- [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP, July 30, 2020: COMM0058923](#)
- [Appendix of Press Briefing Transcripts: COMM0057762 at p. 79](#)

310. The statement explained what ITOs are used for and addressed recently released information that was previously redacted. The statement then outlined information about the perpetrator that RCMP investigators believed to be true as of July 30, 2020, including on the topics of whether the perpetrator had committed prior murders or participated in organized criminal activity; the source of the perpetrator's funds; the perpetrator's associates in Maine; and whether the perpetrator had hidden rooms or compartments in his residences in Portapique and Dartmouth.

- Accessed online: [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide context to recently unsealed information](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information>)
- [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP, July 30, 2020: COMM0058923](#)

Information About the Perpetrator

311. In their July 30, 2020, statement, the RCMP noted that “[s]ome of the information that was unsealed and released from the ITOs on July 27, 2020, is from one individual who was interviewed and provided information which described the gunman as someone who was involved in the importation and trafficking of illicit drugs and firearms.” The statement explained:

As Part of H-Strong, investigators have conducted close to 700 witness interviews and only this one witness has come forward with information that the gunman was actively and recently involved in the importation and trafficking of illegal drugs. No other persons interviewed of the close to 700, including those closest to the gunman, have provided similar information that proves the gunman was an illegal drug smuggler and or drug trafficker. Therefore we cannot corroborate this information.

- Accessed online: [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide context to recently unsealed information](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information>)
- [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP, July 30, 2020: COMM0058923](#)

312. The statement noted that, as of July 30, 2020, RCMP investigators believed the following information about the perpetrator:

Information/evidence that supports the gunman's involvement in any other murders prior to April 18, 2020:

· The one same witness is the only witness who described the gunman as having been involved in other murders and the disposal of bodies prior to April 18, 2020. The RCMP has not received any credible or actionable information that the gunman was involved in any other murders outside the murders committed by him on April 18 and 19, 2020. This belief is based on:

· Investigators have confirmed that prior to becoming a certified dentist, the gunman worked as a licenced embalmer at a funeral service provider. In terms of any involvement that the gunman had in previous murders or of unlawful body disposal, the RCMP has not uncovered any additional information or evidence to support this claim.

· Forensic Identification Specialists have conducted a thorough examination of the gunman's residence and surrounding properties. This examination included the sifting of surface debris as well as sub-surface excavation and sub-surface examinations using ground penetrating radar equipment. The searches and forensic examinations did not uncover any evidence to support the theory that the gunman had committed previous murders or the disposal of human remains on his property.

Information/evidence that supports organized criminal activity or involvement by the gunman in an organized crime group:

· Witnesses have described that while attending university in New Brunswick in the mid to late 1980s, the gunman was involved in the smuggling and illegal sale of cigarettes and liquor as a means to make money during that period of his life. There has been no further information to suggest that the gunman remained involved in the smuggling or illegal sale of cigarettes or liquor after that time or in the recent past.

· The gunman was involved in procuring firearms illegally. In terms of the firearms, at this time we can confirm that this took place predominantly in the

United States and that one firearm had been illegally obtained in Canada. Any transactions of firearms on the part of the gunman or anyone else remains part of the active investigation. As such, no further details in relation to this can or will be provided at this time.

- The investigation has not uncovered any evidence that the gunman was involved in organized crime. Outside of one uncorroborated statement, the remainder of witness interviews have not revealed any corroborated or actionable information that the gunman was involved in organized importation or sale of illegal drugs with any other single person or that the gunman was part of any type of criminal organization or organized crime group.

- Organized crime or a criminal organization is defined under section 467.1(1) of the Criminal Code which states that a criminal organization consists of a group, however organized that, a) is composed of three or more persons in or outside Canada; and, b) has as one of its main purposes or main activities the facilitation or commission of one or more serious offences, that, if committed, would likely result in the direct or indirect receipt of a material benefit, including a financial benefit, by the group or by any one of the persons who constitute the group.

- With the exception of the previously disclosed Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia (CISNS) bulletin from 2011, a search for any other intelligence bulletins naming the gunman has not resulted in any information or bulletins within the RCMP's holdings.

Information/evidence that supports the source of funds available and accessed by the gunman prior to April 18, 2020:

- Production Order records obtained for the gunman's email communications details the reason and source of withdrawal of personal funds from the gunman's personal investments and bank accounts. These email communications from the gunman to financial institutions and others detail his intent to liquidate personal assets and convert those into cash. The purpose of those conversions and withdrawals was based on the gunman's belief that his assets were safer in his possession as it related to the current pandemic. A significant amount of currency has been recovered from the gunman's burned out property in Portapique which supports the pre April 18 withdrawal of funds previously disclosed. A forensic audit of the gunman's accounts remains underway and no further details can be disclosed until this task has been completed.

Information/evidence that supports an association between the gunman and individuals from the State of Maine:

· The gunman was associated to US citizens who currently reside in the state of Maine. The nature of those relationships appear to be based on friendship and mutual interests. Investigators have confirmed that the gunman did communicate with these individuals frequently and visited them on a frequent basis. The full nature and extent of those relationships remain under investigation and as such, no additional information will be provided at this time.

Information/evidence that supports information that the gunman had hidden rooms or compartments in his residence in Portapique and Dartmouth:

· Witnesses described hiding areas constructed at both the gunman's Portapique and Dartmouth residences. The Portapique residence was destroyed by fire so investigators did not have the opportunity to examine and confirm the existence of those spaces.

· Investigators have confirmed that the gunman had constructed areas in his Dartmouth residence which appear to be designed to hide items. Information also suggested that the purpose for constructing these spaces was designed to hide firearms. Given that, investigators have no reason to doubt the existence of hiding spaces constructed at both the Dartmouth and Portapique residences and believe that the purpose of constructing these spaces was for hiding illegal firearms.

The RCMP and members of the H-Strong investigative team are committed to completing a thorough and objective investigation that will continue to be based on corroborated facts, not assumptions or speculation.

Again, it is important to ensure that the families who lost loved ones as well as the survivors receive timely updates based [*sic*] facts known by those directly involved in the investigation, not assumptions made by any other individual who does not have all of the information available to them.

- Accessed online: [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP to provide context to recently unsealed information](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-the-nova-scotia-rcmp-provide-context-recently-unsealed-information>)
- [Statement from the Nova Scotia RCMP, July 30, 2020: COMM0058923](#)

DECEMBER 2020 TO 2021

Overview of Public Communications from the RCMP and Governments After the Mass Casualty from December 2020 to 2021

313. On December 4, 2020, the RCMP published a statement by Supt. Campbell on its website. The statement announced new criminal charges against three individuals (James Blair Banfield, Lisa Diana Banfield, and Brian Brewster) accused of providing ammunition to the perpetrator, and noted that, to “ensure a fair trial for those who have been charged and with the public inquiry now ongoing,” the “RCMP will respectfully refrain from further commenting on these matters outside of the inquiry.”

- Accessed online: [Statement from Supt. Darren Campbell re: H-Strong](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-supt-darren-campbell-re-h-strong) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-supt-darren-campbell-re-h-strong>)
- [Statement from Supt. D. Campbell re: H-Strong, December 4, 2020: COMM0058924](#)

314. In her second interview with the Mass Casualty Commission, in February 2022, Director Scanlan explained that “December was the conclusion of the investigation” because:

. . . there was only so much more you could say at that time. We did our investigation. The Inquiry had been announced at that point in time. So you’re really – yeah, like you’re significantly impacted by that, in my opinion, on what you can and cannot say because you really have to – you have to be very mindful of, like, not influencing anything in any sort of way. Like, truthfully. Like, we were super mindful of it. And Ottawa was very mindful of it. So once an Inquiry was announced, like, you know, we pretty much – like, we’re so thrilled to know that something was going to take place that was going to, you know, do this justice eventually.

...

Lia SCANLAN [00:41:35] So you have to be super mindful of that when you’re dealing with the Courts and, like, ITOs, and you’re arguing about protecting the integrity of the investigation and keeping things sealed, and then you just go and say something?

So you, A, should not put any speaker in that position. Like -- and there was really nothing more to say at that point. If there was no Inquiry, totally different story.

Krista SMITH [00:41:55] M’hm.

Lia SCANLAN [00:41:57] If there was no Inquiry or there was no investigation of any sort on this, like, yeah. Like, I would do a full-on press conference and look at doing an after -- look at doing a report. Like, look at doing -- we had that -- we had that conversation. Me, Darren Campbell, the whole H-Strong command, the command triangle, we all sat in a room and for the hell of it, I even said it, just to

see. I was like, “Can we do a report?” Like, everyone looked at me and were like, “There’s an inquiry, Lia. Pump your brakes.”

- [Mass Casualty Commission interview of Lia Scanlan, February 2, 2022: COMM0058826 at pp. 84–85](#)

315. Following Supt. Campbell’s statement on December 4, 2020, the RCMP did not share further updates with the public about their investigation into the events of April 18 and 19, 2020. They published other official statements in 2021, including memorial statements by Commr. Lucki and A/Commr. Bergerman on April 19, 2021, honouring the victims of the mass casualty.

- Accessed online: [Statement from Assistant Commissioner Lee Bergerman, Commanding Officer, Nova Scotia RCMP](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/statement-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman-commanding-officer-nova-scotia-rcmp) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/statement-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman-commanding-officer-nova-scotia-rcmp>)
- [Statement from A/Commr. L. Bergerman, April 18, 2021: COMM0059010](#)
- Accessed online: [April 2020: A tragedy that shook the country](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/april-2020-a-tragedy-shook-the-country) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/april-2020-a-tragedy-shook-the-country>)
- [April 2020: A tragedy that shook the country: COMM0059011](#)

316. On June 3, 2021, the RCMP published a statement by A/Commr. Bergerman addressing the release of audio recordings of 911 calls from some of the victims by a local magazine in Nova Scotia. She said the RCMP “will be investigating the source of the recordings and any related offences that may have occurred with respect to unauthorized release, possession and subsequent publishing.” She added that although the RCMP “would not generally comment on matters that are the subject of a public inquiry and ongoing litigation, given the heartbreaking effect on victims’ families and on our employees, we are publicly condemning the publication of the audio recordings.”

- Accessed online: [Statement from the Commanding Officer](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/statement-the-commanding-officer) (<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/statement-the-commanding-officer>)
- [Statement from A/Commr. L. Bergerman, June 2, 2021: COMM0058899](#)

317. On July 2, 2021, the RCMP issued a news release on the unauthorized release of 911 audio recordings from the mass casualty. The statement said: “The Nova Scotia RCMP has approached the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) to conduct an independent criminal investigation into the unauthorized release of the 911 recordings and whether any charges would be warranted. The RCMP will support the OPP investigation as required. . . . Given that the OPP is the lead investigating agency, any further updates on the investigation will be provided by the OPP.” The statement concluded:

The public inquiry into the incidents of April 2020 is currently underway. The RCMP is cooperating fully and supports the independent Mass Casualty Commission in its mandate to provide a full accounting of the incidents in a

manner that is compassionate towards victims' families. To review all of the information the RCMP has released publicly about the incidents on April 18 and 19, 2020, visit <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/ns/operation-h-strong>.

- Accessed online: [Investigation related to unauthorized release of 911 recordings \(https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/investigation-related-unauthorized-release-911-recordings\)](https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2021/investigation-related-unauthorized-release-911-recordings)
- [Investigation related to unauthorized release of 911 recordings: COMM0058926](#)