



OFFICE OF THE  
POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSIONER

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British Columbia, Canada

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Public Hearing Arranged for Victoria Police Officer Following Death of Woman**

**Victoria** - The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner has called a Public Hearing into the circumstances involving a member of the Victoria Police Department following the death of a woman in 2019. In this case, the member discharged three rounds from an ARWEN Intermediate Weapon which resulted in death of the affected person.

A mandatory investigation under the *Police Act* into the death resulted in the identification of two allegations of misconduct, *Abuse of Authority* in relation to the use of force by the member and *Neglect of Duty* in relation to a lack of documentation of the incident. The family of the affected person also filed a complaint under the *Police Act* and made a request for a Public Hearing.

Upon recommendation of the Associate Chief Justice of the British Columbia Supreme Court, the Honourable Judge Wally Oppal, K.C., retired Court of Appeal Justice, is appointed to preside as Adjudicator in these proceedings, pursuant to section 142(2) of the *Police Act*.

A date for the Public Hearing will be determined in the future. Updates on the review will be shared on the [OPCC website](#).

**The full notice of review is available [here](#).**

About the OPCC and Public Hearings:

- The Police Complaint commissioner is a civilian, independent Officer of the Legislature overseeing complaints, investigations and discipline involving municipal police in British Columbia. For more on the OPCC, visit <https://opcc.bc.ca/about-us/>

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- The OPCC initiates mandatory *Police Act* investigations whenever death or serious harm results from an incident involving municipal police officers or in instances where someone is in the care or custody of police. These investigations are separate and distinct from investigations by the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) and are not restricted to evidence gathered by the IIO.
- A Public Hearing is not limited to the evidence and issues canvassed at the discipline proceeding. The Police Complaint Commissioner can appoint Commission Counsel to act on his behalf during Public Hearings.
- A retired judge is appointed to sit as the Adjudicator and review the evidence, hear sworn testimony and arrive at a decision of whether there is misconduct and if necessary, determine the corrective and/or disciplinary measures to be imposed. The retired judge's decision at a Public Hearing is final and conclusive.
- The appointed retired judge can also make recommendations to the Chief Constable or Police Board concerning any changes in policy or practice that the retired judge considers advisable.
- This was the first opportunity in the *Police Act* process for a Public Hearing to be arranged. A Special Committee of the Legislature has recommended that the *Police Act* be amended to permit the Commissioner to arrange a Public Hearing much earlier in the process. To date, this recommendation has not been acted upon by Government.

**Note to media:** The OPCC is unable to comment on this review while it is underway. For general queries related to the OPCC's role and processes, please contact:

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