

SIRT

Serious Incident Response Team

Investigation Summary:

Incident Type: Officer-Involved Shooting (Fatal)

SIRT File No.: 2024-25

Incident Date: September 24, 2024

Agency Involved: Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Civilian Executive Director: Greg Gudelot

Date of Report: March 2, 2026

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Introduction

On Tuesday, September 24, 2024, at approximately 1:52 p.m., the Saskatchewan Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT) received a notification from the Saskatchewan RCMP regarding a serious incident involving police. SIRT's Civilian Executive Director accepted the notification as within SIRT's mandate and directed an investigation by SIRT.

On that day at approximately 11:30 a.m., RCMP received a report that a 34-year-old man, subsequently referred to as the affected person, who was wanted in connection with several recent robberies and had been the subject of recent public bulletins, had been seen on the Fishing Lake First Nation. At approximately 1:00 p.m., police observed a white van and received information that it was being operated by the affected person.

Police attempted a traffic stop on the van, which failed to stop and continued at a high rate of speed. As this was occurring, RCMP received a call from an individual reporting that the affected person had just stolen the white van, which belonged to the local school. The caller also stated they believed the affected person to be armed with a firearm.

The pursuit of the van continued through the Fishing Lake First Nation and surrounding area before the van returned to a residence on the First Nation. The van slowed and RCMP vehicles attempted to intercept. During this encounter, two RCMP members discharged their service firearms, striking the affected person and the vehicle. The van continued around the residence and drove through a wooded area and along a narrow path toward another residential area of the First Nation, where an RCMP vehicle made contact with the van, which came to a stop. The affected person was observed to be inside the van and unresponsive. The affected person was removed from the van by police, who provided first aid until the arrival of EMS, who pronounced him deceased.

Timeline

SIRT was notified of the incident on September 24, 2024, at approximately 1:52 p.m. A SIRT team consisting of the Civilian Executive Director and five SIRT investigators was immediately deployed to begin the investigation. On December 8, 2025, the completed investigation was submitted to the Civilian Executive Director for review.

The Investigation

SIRT's investigation was comprehensive and thorough, conducted using current investigative protocols, and in accordance with the principles of Major Case Management (MCM). During the course of the investigation, all relevant police and civilian witnesses were interviewed, scene examinations were conducted at several relevant locations, and all relevant audio, video, and documentary evidence was seized. Numerous physical exhibits were seized during the scene examinations, with several of those exhibits subsequently submitted for testing.

During the course of SIRT's investigation, numerous witnesses with evidence relevant to the investigation were identified. Twenty-two RCMP members were identified as Witness Officers within the meaning of *The Police Act, 1990*, and pursuant to SIRT's authorities under the *Act*, were compelled to provide their notes and reports relevant to the incident, attend for an interview, or both. Seven civilian witnesses were identified during the investigation and were either interviewed, provided a written statement, or contributed video to assist the investigation. Finally, two RCMP members, both members of the Emergency Response Team (ERT), were designated as Subject Officers within the meaning of *The Police Act, 1990*.

Unlike Witness Officers, Subject Officers are under no legal obligation to participate in SIRT's investigation. While under no legal obligation to do so, both designated Subject Officers voluntarily participated in SIRT's investigation by providing both recorded interviews as well as access to their notes related to the incident. Evidence directly from a Subject Officer, when voluntarily provided, is often invaluable as it can assist with the factual determination of what occurred, and, uniquely, provide evidence of the subjective beliefs and perceptions of the Subject Officer during the incident.

Audio recordings seized during the investigation captured the RCMP radio communications during the incident, as well as the 911 call received by the RCMP prior to the incident. This call described the theft of a white 15-passenger van that belonged to a local school, as well as the caller's belief that the affected person was in possession of a firearm.

Video footage related to the incident was obtained from various sources, including several of the involved RCMP vehicles, social media, as well as civilian-provided video and photo evidence depicting various aspects of the incident. This video footage depicted many aspects of the pursuit of the affected person, as well as the conclusion of the vehicular portion of the incident, the removal of the affected person from the van, and the medical aid provided to the affected person following the incident.

Documentary evidence gathered during the investigation included police occurrence reports, GPS and timestamp data, operational briefings, and prior police records relating to the affected person. These records provided confirmation both of police actions leading up to and during the incident, and of the information previously provided to the RCMP members present during the incident.

Numerous physical exhibits were seized during the course of SIRT's investigation, with some submitted for further analysis as the investigation proceeded. These exhibits included a Mossberg pump-action 20-gauge shotgun recovered from the van occupied by the affected person. The shotgun had a single spent round inside the chamber, and was seized along with a quantity of ammunition.

The shotgun recovered was submitted for testing and was confirmed to be an operable firearm within the meaning of the *Criminal Code*. The two RCMP-issued firearms fired during the incident were also seized during the investigation and included a 9mm pistol and a carbine-style rifle, with testing confirming both to be in proper working condition following function testing and inspection.

An autopsy was conducted, which determined the affected person's cause of death to be a shotgun wound to the head. Plastic wadding and numerous shotgun pellets were removed from the affected person's body during the examination and seized as exhibits by SIRT. The shotgun wound, located between the neck and

chin of the affected person's body, was observed during the examination to have soot and searing present at the site of the wound, as well as an abrasion consistent with a muzzle imprint. These markers are consistent with a short-range or contact discharge of the firearm by the affected person during the incident.

A single 9mm bullet was removed from the left arm of the affected person and was confirmed to have entered the arm and become lodged under the skin without injuring any vital structures. Unlike the shotgun wound, this wound was observed at examination to have no visible evidence of close-range discharge of a firearm surrounding the wound's entrance.

Toxicology results from samples obtained during autopsy noted the presence of several drugs including methamphetamine and synthetic opiates, in quantities within the range that could have contributed to intoxication.

At the outset of the investigation, as required by S.91.12(1) of *The Police Act, 1990*, a Community Liaison was appointed to assist the investigation. The liaison assisted with access to various civilian witnesses and video evidence, and as the investigation progressed, was provided with regular updates on the investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the liaison was provided with the opportunity to review the investigation in its entirety, and to make comments and recommendations as necessary.

Summary

On April 4, 2024, the affected person was granted statutory release after serving a penitentiary sentence and was bound by several conditions of release. On August 13, 2024, Correctional Service Canada issued a Canada-wide warrant for the arrest of the affected person, noting that he was unlawfully at large after having allegedly violated the terms of his release. Shortly after the warrant was issued, a bulletin was circulated to police providing notice of the affected person's warrant and prior convictions. Similar information was released to the public a short time later by way of news release.

In the weeks that followed the issuance of the Canada-wide warrant, additional warrants were issued for the arrest of the affected person in relation to several offences within the area of east-central Saskatchewan. These offences included various theft, robbery, and firearms offences committed between September 2, 2024, and September 23, 2024. Of particular evidentiary significance among these offences was a residential break and enter reported to police on September 23, 2024, during which several firearms were stolen, including the pump-action 20-gauge shotgun subsequently recovered from the incident scene.

The RCMP's Warrant Enforcement Suppression Team (WEST) was initially tasked with the apprehension of the affected person, but as a result of the affected person's pattern of offences and criminal history, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) was engaged for assistance. Briefing information on the affected person was provided by WEST to ERT detailing the basis for his arrest as well as relevant details regarding his background.

On September 24, 2024, the RCMP received information that the affected person was in the area of the Fishing Lake First Nation and assembled resources to attempt to take him into custody. At approximately 1:00 p.m. on that date, RCMP members were conducting a check at a residence on the First Nation and observed a

white van drive by, operated by a person believed to be the affected person. Police attempted a traffic stop on the van, which failed to stop and accelerated away. At approximately 1:05 p.m., the involved RCMP members announced over the radio that they were engaged in a pursuit with the affected person in a white van.

As the pursuit continued, at approximately 1:12 p.m., RCMP received a 911 call reporting that the affected person had just stolen a white 15-passenger van belonging to a local school, from a residence, and that he was believed to be in possession of a firearm. While police were already engaged in pursuing the van, the call provided additional confirmation of the affected person as the driver of the van and of his possible possession of a firearm.

The pursuit of the van continued in the area of the Fishing Lake First Nation for a period of approximately 38 minutes and spanning approximately 67km, with speeds ranging between 100km/h and 140km/h. While the pursuing RCMP members were granted permission to make contact with the van and to use tire deflation devices to end the pursuit, only one opportunity was available to attempt tire deflation and the affected person was able to avoid the device.

The primary vehicle engaged in the pursuit changed at several points during the event, but mainly consisted of a vehicle operated by a member of ERT, later designated as a Subject Officer in SIRT's investigation. At approximately 1:40 p.m., while the Subject Officer was in the primary pursuit position, the van operated by the affected person turned off the road onto a lane towards a residential area of the First Nation. The van slowed, allowing the Subject Officer's vehicle to close the distance with the van. At approximately 1:41 p.m., the affected person positioned the van perpendicularly to the approaching ERT vehicle and was observed by the Subject Officer to raise a shotgun from within the vehicle and point the barrel out the driver's side window of the van. The Subject Officer drew his service pistol and fired several rounds through the windshield of the ERT vehicle towards the affected person, with one shot striking the affected person in the left arm, causing a non-fatal injury. The Subject Officer attempted to exit his vehicle but was delayed as the door was jammed due to prior contact with the affected person's van. As the Subject Officer kicked the door open and exited his vehicle, the affected person drove away and the Subject Officer voiced "shots away" over the radio and indicated that the affected person had levelled a shotgun at him.

While the Subject Officer had stated "shots away," signaling that police had fired at the affected person, the radio transmissions that followed alternated between "shots away" and the more ambiguous "shots fired," creating confusion about whether the affected person had fired on police.

The affected person's van completed a loop around a residence at the end of the lane and back towards the location of police, specifically a second RCMP vehicle that had stopped at approximately 1:42 p.m. and which was occupied by two members of ERT. As the van emerged from the field behind the residence, the passenger from the second ERT vehicle, also designated as a Subject Officer in SIRT's investigation, exited the vehicle and discharged several rounds from his service carbine, striking the white van but not the affected person.

The van continued through the field and down a rough ATV trail, ultimately leading towards another residential area of the First Nation. As the van approached the main road of the subdivision, it veered off the trail to the right, and the affected person discharged a single round from a 20-gauge shotgun, sustaining a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, though this was, at this point, unknown to the pursuing RCMP

members who had indicated they were maintaining distance due to the presence of the affected person's firearm.

The lead RCMP vehicle approached the van, which at this point was operating at a low speed, and at approximately 1:43 p.m. made contact from the rear. The bumpers of the two vehicles became enmeshed and the RCMP vehicle dragged the van to a stop. Several RCMP vehicles surrounded the van and members issued verbal commands to the affected person to turn off the van and exit the vehicle. There was no response to these commands and members observed no movement within the van.

A drone was deployed to determine the position of the affected person inside the van. At approximately 1:47 p.m., the affected person was observed via the drone to be laying on the floor of the van motionless. It was unknown whether the affected person was injured or had been knocked unconscious during the vehicle contact and, at approximately 1:51 p.m., ERT members approached the van using ballistic shields for cover, opened the doors and backed away. At approximately 1:53 p.m., a police service dog (PSD) was deployed on a long line and made contact with the affected person but did not elicit a reaction from the affected person and did not remove the affected person from the van. At approximately 1:57 p.m., police again approached the van, and this time removed the affected person, who was observed to be unresponsive. A Mossberg pump action 20-gauge shotgun was recovered from beneath the affected person in the van, with a spent shell in the chamber.

Following the removal of the affected person from the van, RCMP members commenced first aid and requested EMS, who were staged nearby. EMS arrived at approximately 2:02 p.m. and assumed responsibility for the affected person's care. At approximately 2:22 p.m., the affected person was pronounced deceased.

Analysis

As outlined in the autopsy report discussed above, the cause of the affected person's death was determined to be the result of a single shotgun wound to the head. A significant volume of evidence gathered during the course of SIRT's investigation assists in the determination that this single shotgun wound was self-inflicted and occurred following the discharge of firearms by police. As described by a civilian witness, a short time before the incident the affected person made comments regarding ending his own life in this manner. The wound in question bore numerous physical markers of having been sustained at either close or contact range, including soot and searing near the entrance wound and an abrasion consistent with a muzzle imprint. Video evidence of the conclusion of the incident captured the van travelling at a low speed with no visible occupant of the driver's seat. The recovery of the affected person from inside the van, laying on top of the shotgun with a spent round in the chamber is again consistent with this conclusion.

The single police-fired shot that struck the affected person was noted at autopsy to have entered the affected person's left arm and become lodged under his skin of his arm without causing injury to any vital structures. Notably, this wound bore none of the markers of close-range discharge listed above.

While the shots fired by both Subject Officers neither caused nor contributed to the affected person's death, in accordance with SIRT's mandate pursuant to *The Police Act, 1990*, the lawfulness of both must still be evaluated.

Under S. 25 of the *Criminal Code*, a police officer is authorized to use as much force as necessary in the lawful execution of their duties. This can include force that is intended or likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm, when the officer reasonably believes that such force is necessary to defend themselves or someone under their protection from death or grievous bodily harm. Further, under S. 34 of the *Criminal Code*, any person, including a police officer, is entitled to the use of reasonable force in defence of themselves or another. Factors in assessing the reasonableness of force used can include the use or threatened use of a weapon, the imminence of the threat, other options available, and the nature of the force or threat of force itself.

SIRT's investigation gathered significant evidence which documented the information in the possession of the RCMP in advance of the incident. This information included a documented history of firearms use by the affected person during the commission of offences. While many of these incidents included simply the display of firearms, at least one, on September 22, 2024, was alleged to have involved the discharge of a firearm within a commercial establishment. The recent thefts and recoveries of various firearms during the time leading up to the incident, as well as the 911 call received at the outset of the incident, would have reasonably created a heightened awareness on the part of police of the possibility of a firearm present during any encounter with the affected person, and materially affected the assessment of risk by police while dealing with the affected person.

While some evidence gathered during the investigation, such as a statement by the affected person to a civilian witness prior to the incident, raised the suggestion that the affected person intended to take his own life rather than return to jail, set against the backdrop of the above-noted information and risk perception, the act of the affected person raising a firearm towards the first Subject Officer, regardless of the affected person's intentions, created a reasonably perceived risk of death or grievous bodily harm on the part of the Subject Officer, who was lawfully entitled to take action responsive to that danger.

The proximity in time between the incident involving the first Subject Officer and the discharge of the carbine by the second Subject Officer engages analysis under both S.25(1) and S.25(4) of the *Criminal Code*. In light of the previously-discussed confusion on the part of several members present regarding whether the affected person had fired at police during that encounter, and the affected person's immediate attempt to flee following that encounter, the discharge of the carbine by the second Subject Officer, though it did not strike the affected person, can be said to be justified under both subsections noted. During that encounter, the second Subject Officer acted in response both to the risk presented by the affected person raising the firearm towards the first Subject Officer, and the reasonably-apprehended future risk both to police and the community should the affected person have been able to continue the incident, particularly in light of the (now known to be) misapprehension that the affected person had fired at the first Subject Officer.

In these circumstances, the second Subject Officer was aware of the earlier firearm presentation by the affected person and reasonably believed based on both his own observations and radio transmissions, that gunfire may have been exchanged. When the second Subject Officer observed the affected person driving

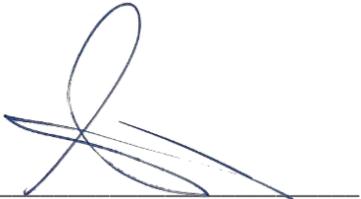
toward another populated area of the First Nation, the second Subject Officer reasonably believed that the safety of the public and other officers required that the risk be addressed.

In this case, following a comprehensive review of the evidence gathered during the course of SIRT's investigation, it is clear that the affected person took his own life by way of a self-inflicted gunshot while alone in the van. While police may not have caused the death of the affected person, when force was used or attempted by police against the affected person earlier in the incident, it occurred at a time when the affected person was lawfully arrestable based on both police observations and numerous outstanding warrants. The force was used or attempted in circumstances that, based on the evidence gathered, both subjectively and objectively gave rise to a reasonable apprehension of risk on the part of both Subject Officers, who were thus legally protected in their actions responsive to that risk.

With all factors, including the nature of the threat presented by the affected person taken into account, the force applied or attempted by the Subject Officer during the incident falls within the range protected by law, and provides no reasonable grounds to believe that an offence was committed by any police officer during the incident. As a result of the application of the facts established by the evidence to the standard established by law, no charges will be laid.

Decision

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



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

March 2, 2026

Date of Report