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1. Policy

1. 1. This chapter applies to all RCMP members, whether or not the RCMP is the police force of jurisdiction, and should be read in conjunction with [Sec. 18.](#) and [37., RCMP Act](#).

1. 2. In order to protect the public while maintaining their trust and support, the RCMP must be open, transparent, and fully accountable for its actions. While all members of the RCMP enjoy the legal rights and privileges of citizenship, Canadians rightfully expect a higher standard of conduct from police officers in the execution of their duties than they do from other citizens.

1. 3. Police work can be complex and at times require the use of force in the course of duties. This can result in serious injury or death. When an individual is seriously injured or killed as a result of a major police incident, the RCMP has a duty to account to the public for its actions. In the process of accounting to Canadians, the RCMP must continue to preserve the peace, prevent crime, and apprehend offenders while also protecting the rights and well-being of RCMP members.

1. 4. This chapter seeks to fulfill the RCMP's requirement to be accountable to Canadians while respecting the individual rights of RCMP members. In seeking to achieve this balance, this chapter assumes that:

1. 4. 1. in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, a member will have performed his/her duties in good faith and in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards;

1. 4. 2. where a member is suspected of having committed an offence, he/she will have all the legal protections accorded to Canadians;

1. 4. 3. immediate response to a major police incident must first address the public interest, which includes safeguarding the public, securing evidence and preventing the continuation of offences; and

1. 4. 4. being involved in a major police incident can be deleterious to a member.

1. 5. This chapter does not seek to compel a member to provide involuntary statements which may incriminate him/her but rather seeks to compel him/her, to discharge the obligation to report by promptly and diligently preparing and filing reports documenting the circumstances of his/her work.

2. Definitions

2. 1. For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

2. 1. 1. **Responsibility to report** means a member's legal, moral, and professional obligation to provide a prompt written or verbal report describing a police incident, the actions he/she took during the incident, setting out his/her rationale for these actions, and any observations made during the course of his/her duty.

2. 1. 2. **Major police incident** means an incident where there is a serious injury or death of an individual involving an RCMP member, or where it appears that an RCMP member may have contravened a provision of the [Criminal Code](#) or other statute and the matter is of a serious or sensitive nature.

2. 1. 3. **Preliminary report** means a member's basic written or verbal report describing the events surrounding a major police incident and consists of the member's direct knowledge, observations and any other pertinent information related to public safety or security. It is limited to the information required to form an immediate police response for the purpose of safeguarding the public, securing evidence, and preventing the continuation of offences. See [sec. 4.](#)

2. 1. 4. **Detailed report** means a comprehensive written police report, describing a member's actions and rationale for these actions while performing his/her duties in a major police incident, and includes answering any follow-up questions.

2. 1. 5. **Subject witness member** means a member whose duties or other actions, in the opinion of the on-scene supervisor or lead investigator, directly or indirectly contributed to a death or serious injury of a person in a major police incident, or whose conduct is the subject of an investigation under this policy.

2. 1. 6. **Non-subject witness member** means a member involved directly or indirectly in a major police incident under investigation and who may have relevant information but is not a subject witness member.

2. 1. 7. **Suspect member** means a member for whom there are reasonable and articulable grounds to suspect that he/she has contravened a provision of the [Criminal Code](#) or other statute.

2. 1. 8. **Weapon of opportunity** means an object used as a weapon when an approved intervention tool is not available or appropriate. A member may use any reasonable object, not specifically designed or approved as a weapon, to defend himself/herself or others. See [Part 17.](#)

2. 1. 9. **Serious injury** will initially be presumed when the victim is admitted to hospital, suffering from a fractured limb, rib, vertebra, or skull, a gunshot wound, burns to a major portion of the body, loss of any portion of the body or of vision or hearing.

2. 1. 10. **On-scene supervisor** means the ranking or senior RCMP member at the scene of a major police incident who is neither a subject witness member nor a suspect member .

3. Major Police Incident Investigation

3. 1. Investigations of RCMP members will be fair, effective, thorough, impartial, culturally sensitive, and be conducted in a timely and diligent manner that promotes public confidence.

3. 2. For major police incidents, the RCMP will request a provincially or federally established body, an external law enforcement agency or other duly authorized investigative agency to conduct an independent external investigation. See [ch. 54.1.](#)

4. Preliminary Report

4. 1. A preliminary report is a basic account of the events surrounding a major police incident and will focus on the following:

- 4. 1. 1. status, description, and location of the subject(s) and witness(es) involved;
- 4. 1. 2. injuries which require medical attention;
- 4. 1. 3. other potential dangers;
- 4. 1. 4. scene parameters (where does it start and end);
- 4. 1. 5. identification and location of evidence to be protected;
- 4. 1. 6. nature of the event;
- 4. 1. 7. behaviour of the subject(s) involved; and
- 4. 1. 8. identification of intervention tools used, and where a firearm was discharged, the direction of fire.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

5. 1. General

5. 1. 1. It is expected that members will perform their duties in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, and professional standards.

5. 1. 2. Members are required to report their actions at all times by documenting events in their notebooks and various police reports. Therefore, unless there is a reasonable and articulable basis to suspect that a member has committed an offence, members will be presumed to be witnesses to the events which occur in the course of their duty, including major police incidents.

5. 1. 3. An RCMP member suspected of a statutory offence will be treated in accordance with all applicable laws and policies. This includes being advised of his/her suspect status, read the Police Caution and, if detained, informed of his/her rights under [Sec. 10.\(a\) and \(b\) Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#).

5. 1. 3. 1. Where a member has been identified as a suspect member, he or she must not be compelled to provide a detailed report. Statements from suspect members may be obtained with the usual regard for voluntariness and Charter compliance.

5. 1. 4. The RCMP recognizes the possibility of deleterious effects on a member engaged in the use of force or other police activities which could result directly or indirectly in the death of, or serious injury to a person.

5. 1. 5. In order to balance the health and well-being of RCMP members with the primary duty to preserve public safety, it is important for the purposes of this chapter to distinguish between a subject witness member and a non-subject witness member when responding to a major police incident.

5. 1. 5. 1. Classifying a member involved in a major police incident as either a subject witness member or a non-subject witness member is the responsibility of the on-scene supervisor/lead investigator of the investigative response to the major police incident.

5. 1. 6. Subject to [sec. 5.1.7.](#), a subject witness member will have a reasonable opportunity to seek legal, medical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual support and advice, if necessary, once the immediate police responsibility of safeguarding the public, securing evidence and preventing the continuation of offences has been discharged. However, a subject witness member may be required to provide a preliminary report as outlined in [sec. 4.](#), immediately or very soon after the major police incident.

5. 1. 7. A subject witness member must provide a detailed report setting out the circumstances of a major police incident within a reasonable time, not to exceed 10 working days, unless prevented from doing so by his/her health or status within the investigation. For each case, the time frame for submitting a report will be determined by the subject witness member's unit or detachment commander based on:

5. 1. 7. 1. availability of legal counsel and the diligence of the member in seeking counsel;

5. 1. 7. 2. the health and emotional well-being of the member; and

5. 1. 7. 3. the availability of other information with which to determine the circumstances of the matter.

NOTE: The period of time will not normally exceed 10 working days. Any request for an extension to this period must be in writing and be submitted through channels to the Cr. Ops. Officer.

5. 1. 8. Unless there are exceptional circumstances as determined by the on-scene supervisor/lead investigator, a non-subject witness member:

5. 1. 8. 1. must immediately provide a preliminary report of a major police incident to the on-scene supervisor/lead investigator;

5. 1. 8. 2. must provide a detailed report at the first reasonable opportunity after the event, unless there are exceptional circumstances before going off duty;

5. 1. 8. 3. may be required to answer questions with respect to his/her detailed report; and

5. 1. 8. 4. will continue to provide detailed reports as required by the investigative team.

5. 1. 9. Where the on-scene supervisor or lead investigator has determined there are exceptional circumstances which would preclude a non-subject witness member from providing a preliminary report, he/she must document those circumstances and through channels, notify the Cr. Ops. Officer before going off duty.

5. 1. 10. The on-scene supervisor/lead investigator must seize and retain all relevant intervention tools and equipment as soon as is practicable and treat them as exhibits.

5. 1. 10. 1. The affected member's detachment/unit commander must arrange for replacement intervention equipment.

5. 1. 11. Members' legal rights and obligations as outlined in [AM ch. VIII.7.](#) must be respected.

5. 2. Member

5. 2. 1. If you are involved in a major police incident:

5. 2. 1. 1. Notify the Operational Communications Centre (OCC) and make appropriate requests for assistance, e.g. ambulance and backup.

5. 2. 1. 2. Notify a supervisor or request OCC to notify a supervisor.

5. 2. 1. 3. Provide first aid to an injured person, as required.

5. 2. 1. 4. Take appropriate steps to prevent the continuation of any offence.

5. 2. 1. 5. Secure the scene, the evidence, including any intervention equipment, and any weapons of opportunity used by member until he/she is relieved. See [ch. 4.1.](#)

5. 2. 1. 6. Make detailed notes concerning the incident at your first opportunity. For directives concerning notebooks, see [ch. 25.2.](#)

5. 2. 1. 7. Refrain from discussing the incident with anyone, except supervisors or investigators duly authorized to conduct the investigation.

5. 2. 1. 8. Provide a preliminary report to a supervisor or investigator at the scene when requested.

5. 2. 1. 9. If you are a non-subject witness member, immediately provide a preliminary report to the on-scene supervisor/lead investigator and provide a detailed report as soon as is practicable. Answer any follow-up questions as required and continue to provide detailed reports when required by the investigative team.

5. 2. 1. 10. If you are a subject witness member, you may wish to consult with Employee Assistance Services (EAS) by calling 1-800-268-7708/TB number 1-800-567-5803, from anywhere in Canada, or with the Staff Relations Representative (SRR) and/or seek legal, medical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual support and advice if necessary.

NOTE: As a subject witness member, you may be required to provide a preliminary report before consulting anyone.

5. 2. 1. 11. If you are a subject witness member, you must be diligent in seeking advice and/or counselling within a reasonable period of time, which in any case should be within 10 days, at which point you will be required to provide a detailed report.

5. 3. On-Scene Supervisor

5. 3. 1. When a member under your command or supervision has been involved in a major police incident:

5. 3. 1. 1. Verbally notify the detachment/unit commander.
5. 3. 1. 2. Attend the scene, and in conjunction and consultation with the police of jurisdiction, ensure the scene is put under control.
5. 3. 1. 3. Assess, if appropriate, with the police of jurisdiction, the circumstances to determine the threat to public safety, the need to prevent the possible continuation of the offence, the need to preserve evidence, and the availability of sources of information to determine what happened.
5. 3. 1. 4. Identify subject and non-subject witness members involved and notify them of your determination.
5. 3. 1. 5. Direct subject and non-subject witness members to refrain from discussing the incident with anyone, except supervisors and investigators duly authorized to conduct the investigation.
5. 3. 1. 6. Direct the non-subject witness members to provide an immediate preliminary report to you, and if appropriate, to the police of jurisdiction. Should the non-subject witness member decline to do so without a reasonable excuse, ensure the member understands your direction to be an order, record the circumstances, and initiate disciplinary procedures.
5. 3. 1. 7. If appropriate, assess, with the police of local jurisdiction, the need for an immediate preliminary report from a subject witness member.
 5. 3. 1. 7. 1. If an immediate preliminary report is required to safeguard the public, prevent the continuation of an offence, or preserve evidence, direct the subject witness member to provide an immediate preliminary report to you and, if appropriate, to the police of local jurisdiction.
 5. 3. 1. 7. 2. If the subject witness member declines to do so without a reasonable excuse, ensure the member understands your direction to be an order, record the circumstances, and initiate disciplinary procedures.
 5. 3. 1. 7. 3. Document the reports, your rationale, and your direction in your notebook.
5. 3. 1. 8. If no immediate preliminary report is required from the subject witness member:
 5. 3. 1. 8. 1. secure the scene, secure and preserve evidence, including the availability of potential witnesses;
 5. 3. 1. 8. 2. seize all intervention equipment and treat as exhibits;
 5. 3. 1. 8. 3. tend to the subject witness member's immediate medical, psychological, and emotional needs, which includes alerting a divisional Peer-to-Peer Coordinator and SRRs of the incidents;
 5. 3. 1. 8. 4. where possible, separate and remove subject and non-subject witness members from the scene; and
 5. 3. 1. 8. 5. make detailed notes of your observations of the scene and actions taken.
5. 3. 1. 9. Direct non-subject witness members to provide a detailed report before going off duty and advise them to be available for follow-up interviews with the investigative team when required. See [sec. 4.](#)

5. 3. 1. 10. Document your questions and responses received relating to the preliminary report.
5. 3. 1. 11. If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a member has committed a statutory offence, treat the member in accordance with all applicable laws and policies. This includes reading the Police Caution and if detained, informing him/her of his/her rights under [Sec. 10.\(a\) and \(b\) Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#).
5. 3. 1. 12. Complete [form 3414](#) and make appropriate notifications, e.g. Occupational Safety Officers, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). See [OSM ch. 3](#).
5. 3. 1. 13. Submit copies of your notes and reports to your immediate supervisor before going off duty.
5. 3. 1. 14. Where exceptional circumstances preclude the provision of a preliminary report by a non-subject witness member, document these circumstances and the associated rationale and submit them through channels to your Cr. Ops. Officer.
5. 3. 1. 15. Where there are reasonable impediments to having the non-subject witness member provide a detailed report, document these and submit them through channels to your Cr. Ops. Officer.

5. 4. Detachment/Unit Commander

5. 4. 1. When a major police incident occurs:

5. 4. 1. 1. Advise your divisional Cr. Ops. Officer through channels.

5. 4. 1. 2. Identify the on-scene supervisor and validate his/her identification of subject and non-subject witness members and the decisions around any immediate need for preliminary reports to safeguard the public, prevent the continuation of an offence, or preserve evidence.

5. 4. 1. 3. Confirm that all non-subject witness members have provided detailed reports as soon as practicable and continue to provide detailed reports as required by the investigative team.

5. 4. 1. 4. In areas where the RCMP is not the police of local jurisdiction, monitor the interactions between the on-scene supervisor and the police force of jurisdiction.

5. 4. 1. 5. If a pre-existing investigation led to the major police incident, make appropriate resources available to continue the original investigation.

5. 4. 1. 6. In consultation with the appropriate investigative body and taking into consideration jurisdictional issues:

5. 4. 1. 6. 1. maintain control of the scene and evidence until the investigative body assumes control; and

5. 4. 1. 6. 2. consider establishing a police liaison for the injured subject or family of deceased.

5. 4. 1. 7. Contact a divisional Peer-to-Peer Coordinator and the SRR to provide support and assistance to involved members.

5. 4. 1. 8. Assess and consider the duty status of affected members and monitor throughout the investigation.

5. 4. 1. 8. 1. Follow the progress of all subject witness members and provide appropriate support.
5. 4. 1. 9. In instances where the subject witness member is seeking advice or counselling, allow a reasonable period of time, which should not exceed 10 working days except in extraordinary circumstances, before ordering the subject witness member to provide a detailed report.
5. 4. 1. 10. Where non-subject witness members or subject witness members do not provide a preliminary or detailed report when directed to do so, ensure follow-up disciplinary action is undertaken.
5. 4. 1. 11. Comply with the directives on hazardous occurrence investigation recording and reporting outlined in [OSM ch. 3](#).
5. 4. 1. 12. Contact a Health Services Officer (HSO) and advise him/her of the member's involvement in the major police incident.
5. 4. 1. 13. Monitor the progress of the investigation.
5. 4. 1. 14. Continue to update the divisional Cr. Ops. Officer.
5. 4. 1. 15. Document your involvement, decisions, and rationale and submit copies on a regular basis to the investigative body for disclosure. This includes notes, emails, briefing notes, and administrative processes associated with the major police incident.

5. 5. Cr. Ops. Officer

5. 5. 1. When a member has been involved in a major police incident:
 5. 5. 1. 1. In consultation with the CO/delegate, initiate an independent external investigation, independent investigation by a different RCMP division, independent external review, or independent observation. See [ch. 54.1](#).
 5. 5. 1. 2. When appropriate, and in consultation with the CO/delegate, notify the relevant federal, provincial, or territorial minister responsible for policing, and advise the Commr./delegate.
 5. 5. 1. 3. Document your involvement, decisions, and rationale and submit copies of such documentation on a regular basis to the investigative body for disclosure. This includes notes, emails, briefing notes, and administrative processes associated with the major police incident.
 5. 5. 1. 4. Ensure that non-subject witness members provide preliminary and detailed reports when required and, if reports are not provided due to exceptional circumstances, verify the reason for not providing reports.
 5. 5. 1. 4. 1. Once the exceptional circumstances preventing reports from being completed have been addressed, ensure that non-subject and subject witness members are directed to provide reports and that follow-up disciplinary action is taken where warranted.
 5. 5. 1. 5. Ensure the subject witness member has access to legal, medical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual support as required.

5. 5. 1. 6. Secure detailed reports from the subject witness member within a reasonable period, not to exceed 10 working days, except in extraordinary circumstances. Personally approve or deny requests for extensions.

5. 6. Commanding Officer

5. 6. 1. Facilitate transparency and public confidence in all investigations of major police incidents. See [ch. 54.1.](#)

5. 6. 2. Document your involvement, decisions, and rationale and submit copies of such documentation on a regular basis to the investigative body for disclosure. This includes notes, emails, briefing notes, and administrative processes associated with the major police incident.

5. 6. 3. Oversee the compliance with this chapter and specifically ensure that members are being properly and reasonably directed to provide preliminary and detailed reports, as the case may be, and that appropriate follow-up disciplinary action is being taken where warranted.

5. 6. 4. Apply the provisions of [ch. 54.1.](#), notify the relevant federal, provincial, or territorial minister responsible for policing in all appropriate circumstances, and advise the Commr./delegate.

5. 7. Health Services Officer

5. 7. 1. Order an immediate medical assessment of involved members to determine fitness for duty. See [HSM](#).

5. 7. 2. Provide continuous follow-up to meet the medical needs of the members involved, as required.

5. 8. Media Relations Officer

5. 8. 1. Before providing media releases and interviews, consult with the assigned investigative body. See [ch. 27.2.](#)

References

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