

Form 39.08

2021

Tru No. 498513

Supreme Court of Nova Scotia



Between:

Tyler Edison Blair and Andrew Frederick O'Brien

Representative Plaintiffs

and

Attorney General of Canada in its representative capacity for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Attorney General of Nova Scotia representing Her Majesty the Queen in right of the Province of Nova Scotia

Defendants

Affidavit of Superintendent Darren Campbell

I, Superintendent Darren Campbell, make oath and give evidence as follows:

- 1) I am a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and hold the rank of superintendent. I have been a member of the RCMP for 30 years, 6 months and have been the Support Services Officer of "H" Division (i.e. Nova Scotia) since September 2019. In my role, my responsibilities include the Critical Incident Response program. I have personal knowledge of the evidence sworn to in this affidavit except where otherwise stated to be based on information and belief.
- 2) The information in this affidavit is based on my own personal knowledge, and where the source of any information is not based on my own personal knowledge, I have learned of this information from RCMP records.
- 3) Pursuant to an agreement between Public Safety Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia, the RCMP provides provincial police services throughout the Province. The RCMP also provides policing services to a number of Nova Scotia municipalities under municipal police services agreements. Apart from these agreements, the RCMP also conducts federal policing in Nova Scotia. Ten municipalities within Nova Scotia are policed by other police services.
- 4) RCMP jurisdiction in Nova Scotia is organized into three districts: North East Nova (which includes Colchester Country, where Portapique is located), Halifax, and South West Nova.

There are currently more than 1000 RCMP members in Nova Scotia.

- 5) Colchester County comprises approximately 3,600 square kilometers and has a population of about 50,000 people. There are four RCMP Detachments in Colchester County: Bible Hill (46 kilometers away from Portapique), Millbrook (41 kilometers away), Stewiacke (63 kilometers away) and Tatamagouche (67 kilometers away). Other RCMP detachments in the area include Parrsboro (55 kilometers away from Portapique), Oxford (58 kilometers away), Springhill (67 kilometers away), Pugwash (70 kilometers away), Amherst (94 kilometers away), Stellarton (93 kilometers away), and Pictou (102 kilometers away).
- 6) Portapique is a small rural community bordered by the Portapique River and the Bay of Fundy. It is comprised of approximately 50 residences, many on large rural acreages, some are full-time residences and others are seasonal cottages. The community is accessed from Highway 2, which is a secondary rural highway. The community itself has no paved roads, only gravel roadways with no sidewalks or streetlights. Street names and house numbers are generally not obviously marked. The terrain is heavily wooded.
- 7) On Saturday April 18, 2020 at about 10:01 pm, the first 911 call was received reporting a shooting in Portapique. The caller reported that her husband had been shot by her neighbor. The caller added that her neighbour is a dentist and that there was a police car or police cars in the driveway and that the man had a 'big gun'. RCMP units were dispatched beginning at 10:04 pm and the first RCMP unit arrived in Portapique from Bible Hill Detachment at 10:26 pm.
- 8) The first RCMP member on the scene encountered a survivor who reported he had been shot by an individual he believed to be his neighbour. Further 911 calls suggested the suspect was driving a car like a police car.
- 9) By 10:34 pm, four RCMP units were on the scene, a roadblock had been established at the road into Portapique from Highway 2, the shooting victim had been provided first aid and an ambulance had been requested for the shooting victim.
- 10) Initially, two RCMP members entered Portapique on foot in search of an active shooter, pursuant to their Immediate Action Rapid Deployment ("IARD") training. IARD is the swift and immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to an on-going, life threatening situation, and applies to situations where on-duty members must respond to an active threat. These members encountered a scene involving several structure fires and heard gunshot sounds. A third RCMP member joined the first two members minutes later. The remaining RCMP member maintained the entry and exit point into Portapique and stayed with the shooting victim.
- 11) At about 10:35 pm, a senior member of the North East Nova RCMP management team was made aware of the situation in Portapique. This notification was provided by the on-duty Risk Manager who is a senior non-commissioned officer responsible for monitoring ongoing police operations from the RCMP Communications Centre, which at that time was located in Truro, Nova Scotia. During that conversation, RCMP North East Nova

management requested that all RCMP units be accounted for, that available resources be assigned to the response and containment, that RCMP Air Services be contacted, and that arrangements be made to activate the Nova Scotia RCMP Critical Incident Program.

- 12) By 10:41 pm, the initial RCMP IARD members located a burning white Ford Taurus decommissioned police cruiser in the driveway of one of the burning buildings. About a minute later, RCMP North East Nova Command contacted the on-call Critical Incident Commander to request activation of the Critical Incident Program.
- 13) A critical incident is an event or series of events which, by their scope and nature, require a specialized and coordinated tactical response. The Critical Incident Program can be scaled to respond to a variety of critical incidents depending on their nature. Critical incidents are commanded by an accredited Critical Incident Commander, who is responsible for the overall command of the incident and all related resources.
- 14) The Critical Incident Program includes Critical Incident Command staff, the Emergency Response Team ("ERT"), police service dogs, crisis negotiation team, emergency medical response team technicians, tactical radio operators, explosive disposal unit and a variety of specialized technicians that support these units.
- 15) The ERT is a highly trained and equipped specialized police tactical unit which is deployed in the most critical and high risk incidents. RCMP ERT members are trained across Canada to the same standards and with the same specialized equipment. This ensures inter operability between RCMP ERT teams.
- 16) I am responsible for approving requests in Nova Scotia to initiate the Critical Incident Program. At 10:46 pm on April 18, 2020, I was contacted by the on-call Critical Incident Commander who provided me with some details pertaining to the incident in Portapique. I approved the full Critical Incident Program to respond in Portapique. The ERT team was directed to travel directly to Portapique from its base at RCMP HQ in Halifax.
- 17) By 10:45 pm, there were five RCMP units on the scene in Portapique and seven more RCMP units were en route to Portapique. At about 10:49 pm, the RCMP members who had formed the IARD team discovered a deceased victim on Orchard Beach Drive in Portapique.
- 18) Shortly thereafter, the IARD RCMP members saw someone approaching in the darkness, carrying a flashlight. When the RCMP members prepared to engage the individual, who they suspected might have been responsible for the fires and gunshots, the individual turned off the light and ran into the woods. A second deceased victim was located shortly thereafter.
- 19) At about 11:10 pm, additional gunshot sounds were heard by the IARD RCMP members. At about the same time, the RCMP operational telecommunications centre initiated call-out procedures to obtain aerial support with forward-looking infrared radar capabilities from RCMP Air Services in Moncton, New Brunswick, where the service is located for the

region. At about 11:16 pm, RCMP Air Services reported that the RCMP helicopter was grounded for maintenance. As a result, additional inquiries to secure air support were made with the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre - Canadian Forces and Canadian Coast Guard as well as the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

- 20) Additional gunshot sounds were heard by RCMP members in Portapique at about 11:20 pm.
- 21) At 11:32 pm, the RCMP issued a message on Twitter advising that the RCMP were in Portapique and asking the public to avoid the area, to stay in their homes and to lock their doors. RCMP Operational Communications Centre staff were also using the "911 map" (a reference that provides phone numbers associated to house addresses) to call residents in the area and advise them to shelter in place. Shortly thereafter, 911 calls reported suspicious activity in the southernmost part of Portapique. RCMP members moved to that area.
- 22) Between 11:40 pm and 11:45 pm, RCMP members reported that they heard more gunshots and encountered another house on fire. At about 11:55 pm, a witness told RCMP members in Portapique that there might be multiple shooters.
- 23) By midnight, there were 23 RCMP units at the Portapique scene. Shortly after midnight on Sunday, April 19, 2020, the RCMP were in contact with Truro Police Services, which advised that the Colchester County Hospital was in lockdown due to the shootings in Portapique. This is a standard procedure when hospitals receive victims of gunshot wounds.
- 24) The RCMP members on the Portapique scene included members who had stopped and issued a summary offence ticket for speeding to Gabriel Wortman (hereinafter "the gunman") on February 12, 2020. At the time of the traffic stop, the gunman was driving a white 2013 Ford Taurus decommissioned police cruiser with reflective tape on the rear bumper. At that time, one of the RCMP members took a photo of the gunman's driver's license, vehicle and the speed radar reading.
- 25) When witnesses described that the gunman was driving a car that resembled a police car, the member recalled the traffic stop, and circulated the photograph of the gunman's license, speed and the rear of his Ford Taurus vehicle. Shortly after midnight, this photo was provided to some RCMP members on scene as well as the Critical Incident Commander.
- 26) Background/criminal record queries were conducted on the gunman. These queries did not reveal any significant information. The RCMP learned that there were no recent entries for the gunman on the Canadian Police Information Centre ("CPIC") database and that he did not have a firearms possession and acquisition license. At approximately 12:45 am, the RCMP requested that Halifax Regional Police conduct a drive-by and surveillance on a Dartmouth dentist business/residence associated to the gunman.
- 27) At approximately 12:49 am, the first RCMP ERT members arrived on the scene in Portapique. At the same time, RCMP "J" Division (New Brunswick) advised that one of its police service dogs and handler teams was also en route to Portapique.

- 28) RCMP learned that the gunman was associated to residences in Portapique and in Dartmouth. The RCMP began to inform other police forces of the gunman's identity and the incidents that were taking place in Portapique. 'Be-on-the-lookout' ("BOLO") notices for the gunman were prepared and disseminated to all police agencies and provincial peace officers. The BOLO included information on the gunman, that he was arrestable, should be considered armed and dangerous and provided information vehicles to which he was associated.

- 29) Efforts to locate the gunman continued throughout the night. By 1:00 am on April 19, the RCMP had established a two kilometre lockdown around Portapique, roadblocks at four locations on Highway 2 and a command post for the Critical Incident Program response. Halifax Regional Police ERT were dispatched to the gunman's Dartmouth residence. The RCMP Critical Incident Commander had arrived at the command post and RCMP ERT had arrived in Portapique and began to search for the gunman using thermal imaging and police service dogs.

- 30) The RCMP Critical Incident Commander assumed overall control of the critical incident at 1:24 am.

- 31) At about the same time, as a result of a 911 call of reported suspicious activity, the RCMP ERT was redirected to the western side of the Portapique river across from Portapique. The ERT attended this call and cleared the area of the gunman or any suspects by approximately 2:07 am and returned to the Portapique area.

- 32) At about 1:58 am, RCMP were advised that the Halifax Regional Police had located a white Ford Taurus decommissioned police cruiser at the gunman's Dartmouth residence but they believed that the vehicle had not moved for some time as it had snow on it.

- 33) At about 2:19 am, more sounds of gunshot were reported in Portapique. Shortly thereafter, the person with the flashlight who had fled into the woods earlier in the evening was found by RCMP ERT and cleared as a suspect. At approximately 2:50 am, ERT in Portapique reported hearing a single shot from small arms fire. By this time, the RCMP had identified the gunman's home and warehouse in Portapique and two decommissioned Ford Taurus police cruisers, all of which had been destroyed by fire.

- 34) At approximately 3:23 am, the RCMP received reports of suspicious activity west of Portapique and west of the Portapique River. ERT was dispatched and after about thirty minutes, cleared it as a false alarm and returned to Portapique. Shortly after 4:00 am, an updated BOLO was sent which included additional information on vehicles associated to the gunman.

- 35) Shortly after 5:00 am, ERT located two more deceased individuals. Further BOLOs were issued to all police agencies in Nova Scotia including the Truro and Amherst Police Services. Shortly after 6:00 am, the RCMP drone was in the air over Portapique.

- 36) At 6:28 am, a 911 call reported that the gunman's common law spouse, Lisa Banfield, had

emerged from hiding in the woods overnight. In addition to providing details regarding the gunman, she reported that he had loaded several firearms into the front seat of a replica RCMP vehicle, had assaulted her and that her sister may be a target. When Halifax Regional Police contacted her sister, members of Banfield's extended family shared a photo of the gunman's fully-marked replica RCMP Ford Taurus. This photo was provided to the RCMP Critical Incident Command at about 7:22 am.

- 37) Shortly before 7:30 am, RCMP ERT confirmed that there were no signs of firearms in the two burned out Ford Taurus former police cruisers in the driveway of the gunman's Portapique cottage and at his warehouse.
- 38) Up to this point, through computer record queries, the RCMP were aware of three decommissioned police Ford Taurus cars associated to the gunman and all three had been accounted for: two burned in Portapique and a third parked at his Dartmouth residence.
- 39) At 8:02 am, RCMP released another Twitter message of an active shooter situation in Portapique. Residents were asked to stay inside their homes and to lock their doors. At 8:33 am, a 911 call again reported suspicious activity on the western side of the Portapique River across from Portapique. The ERT investigated and cleared the call by about 8:52 am. At about the same time, the RCMP "J" Division (New Brunswick) ERT was entering Nova Scotia.
- 40) At 8:54 am, RCMP released another Twitter message of an active shooter situation in Portapique advising the public there were several victims. The message named the gunman, and included his photo and physical description. The message also alerted the public that he was armed and dangerous, and included a warning not to approach and to call 911 if seen.
- 41) By 9:05 am, the RCMP ERT was engaged in an evacuation of Portapique residents. At 9:29 am, RCMP "J" Division ERT resources were on scene in Portapique.
- 42) A few minutes later, the RCMP received a 911 call reporting a woman deceased on the road near Wentworth and that an RCMP car was seen leaving the scene, heading towards Truro. This incident occurred more than 60 kilometers away from Portapique. Within minutes, multiple 911 callers reported a house fire in Wentworth, further north. Some 911 callers reported hearing what they believed to be gunshots earlier and at the time of their call but did not call 911 until they saw the fire.
- 43) By about 9:42 am, RCMP general duty officers, and ERT members from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were en route to the Wentworth locations. The Truro Police Service was notified that the replica RCMP vehicle driven by the gunman was possibly heading to Truro.
- 44) At about 9:47 am, an RCMP member in the Glenholme area passed a marked RCMP vehicle which he believed to be the gunman, who was wearing a high visibility vest. The RCMP member turned around in an effort to catch up to the gunman, but could not locate the vehicle.

- 45) At about the same time, a 911 call reported that the gunman was at the door of a residence in Glenholme. This residence was about 37 kilometers south from the Wentworth house fire scene. By about 9:52 am, RCMP members were at the Glenholme scene.
- 46) Beginning at 10:02 am, multiple 911 calls reported two women had been killed in the Debert area, about ten kilometers from Glenholme. At 10:04 am, RCMP tweeted that the gunman was in the Glenholme area and directed people to stay inside and lock their doors. The RCMP ERT was redirected to Debert and was on the scene by about 10:14 am.
- 47) At 10:17 am, the RCMP tweeted a photo of the gunman's replica RCMP vehicle with identifying call sign of 28811.
- 48) At 10:21, the RCMP tweeted the gunman's last known location was in the Central Onslow/Debert area. At 10:37, the RCMP called Truro Police Service to advise them to secure the perimeter of Truro. The RCMP Critical Incident Commander directed RCMP resources to secure the entry and exit points to Truro along Highway 102.
- 49) At about 10:42 am, a 911 call reported that an RCMP car with the number '11' on it was travelling south on Highway 2 towards Stewiacke. RCMP general duty members and ERT mobilized to set up a checkpoint on Highway 2, north of Stewiacke towards Brookfield and along Highway 102. About three minutes later, another 911 call reported that an RCMP vehicle with markings '28811' on its side was seen on Highway 101, between Kentville and Sackville, heading towards Halifax.
- 50) RCMP members were positioned at strategic locations along Nova Scotia highways in the Colchester area in an effort to locate the gunman. Shortly before 11:00 am, RCMP Cst. Chad Morrison was positioned at Highway 2 and Highway 224 in Shubenacadie and encountered the gunman while RCMP Cst. Heidi Stevenson was en route to Cst. Morrison's location. The gunman shot and wounded Cst. Morrison while he was positioned in his cruiser beside the highway.
- 51) Shortly thereafter, the gunman purposely targeted the police vehicle being driven by Cst. Stevenson, which was approaching his location from a highway off ramp beneath the overpass on which he was travelling. The gunman drove across the oncoming lane of traffic and entered the off ramp in the wrong way direction. Cst. Stevenson's vehicle and the gunman's mock police cruiser collided. Cst. Stevenson engaged the gunman and discharged her firearm prior to being killed. The gunman also killed a passer-by who it appears had stopped to provide assistance, set fire to the replica RCMP vehicle, and stole the passer-by's SUV.
- 52) The RCMP updated the public via a tweet at 11:04 am that the gunman was last seen travelling southbound on Highway 102 from Brookfield, and again at 11:06 am that the gunman was now believed to be driving an SUV.
- 53) The gunman then travelled on Highway 224 to the home of a person known to him, broke into the residence, shot a dog, killed the resident, changed his clothes and stole the victim's vehicle.

- 54) Numerous RCMP and Halifax Regional Police Services vehicles were positioned in the area along the Highway 102/ Highway 2 corridor during this time.
- 55) Shortly after 11:10 am, a 911 call reported the gunman was in a grocery store in Truro. RCMP members attended with Truro Police assistance, however this was a false report and the gunman was not located at the store.
- 56) RCMP members encountered the gunman at a gas station in Enfield, 23 kilometers south from the collision and murders scene in Shubenacadie. One of the RCMP members recognized the gunman, who was then shot and killed by the RCMP members shortly before 11:30 am on April 19, 2020.
- 57) Based on previous experience, particularly with respect to the 2014 Moncton mass shooting during which three RCMP members were killed and another two members were shot, social media posts or 'tweets' have been considered an effective way to communicate quickly with the public. This determination has been based on the direct access to social media by the police, and the fact that RCMP social media is monitored by and rebroadcast or reported on by news media.
- 58) I am aware that, shortly before the gunman was killed, Nova Scotia provincial Emergency Management Office officials contacted the RCMP to offer the use of the province's Alert Ready system. To my knowledge, at the time of these events, no police force in Canada had used a provincial emergency alert in relation to an active shooter event. The RCMP accepted the offer and were in the process of preparing the alert when the gunman was shot and killed by RCMP members.
- 59) At the time the gunman was stopped, the RCMP were able to confirm nine people had been killed. In total, he killed 22 people and one of the victim's unborn child, and I believe he intended to kill at least five others. Of these 27 people, it appears that 18 of them were known to the gunman, while the remaining persons were strangers.
- 60) For those victims who were known to the gunman, some were acquaintances and some were neighbours. His motivation remains unclear in several cases. For those who were strangers, it appears that some appear to have been randomly chosen by the gunman and some were targeted by the gunman because they tried to help others.
- 61) Some of the victims were travelling when they were killed or injured by the gunman. Fourteen of the victims were killed in their homes. Some of the victims were aware of the gunman's identity and that police were searching for him. In other cases, it is not possible to determine what the victims knew.
- 62) Thirteen people were killed in Portapique on April 18, 2020. On April 19, 2020, four people were killed in Wentworth, two people were killed in and around Debert, and three people were killed in the Shubenacadie area.
- 63) Between 10:01 pm on Saturday April 18 and 11:30 am on Sunday April 19, there were

