

Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

**Allegations of Political Interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Murder
Investigation**

October 31, 2022

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Tab 1 Opening remarks

- Good afternoon. I am speaking to you from the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg People.
- This is not the first time I've testified on the perception of political interference. The audio recording of the April 28, 2020 meeting that I held with my colleagues in Nova Scotia and Ottawa makes it abundantly clear:
 - I did not, nor did I attempt to interfere in the criminal investigation into the 2020 mass casualty event in Nova Scotia on behalf of Minister Blair or the Prime Minister.
 - There was no political interference.
 - I was neither asked, directed nor pressured by Government officials to release information specific to the firearms used by the perpetrator in these horrific attacks.
 - I will point out that I had the information on the firearms and the authority to release it publicly. I did not. I respected the views of my employees that releasing it at that time could impact the investigation.
 - In all interactions with Government officials, I'm aware of my responsibilities as Commissioner and the importance of ensuring the foundational principals of police independence.
 - This is so important for the RCMP and all police services. I would encourage this committee to consider the difference between law enforcement sharing information versus the perception of political interference.
- As I outlined for this Committee in July – there were requests for information on all aspects of the attacks, including information related to the firearms.
- I am also on the public record, having provided sworn testimony at the Mass Casualty Commission and during my appearance before this Committee that:
 - the requests for information were reasonable and did not raise any concerns of political interference or impact the operational independence of the RCMP.
- As the Commissioner, it is my responsibility to provide accurate, relevant and timely information to Government counterparts, and elected officials and their offices.
- I was attempting to do just that by calling the meeting on April 28th with my colleagues in Nova Scotia.
- As Commissioner, I was not being briefed with the necessary information about the ongoing operation and it was for this reason the meeting was called.
- Those who have listened to the portion of the meeting that was recorded heard that I was frustrated with the information flow from Nova Scotia RCMP, be it related to victims, sites and the supports being provided to RCMP employees. This is in line with my previous testimony before this Committee and the MCC
- In the lead up to the April 28th press conference, I provided Government officials with an overview of information that was to be made public. The sharing of information and briefings with the Minister of Public Safety are necessary, particularly during significant operations or incidents. It is common practice and does not impact the integrity of ongoing investigations or interfere with the independence of the RCMP. It was at this time I was asked if the information about the weapons would be included.
- Following a briefing from my team at National Headquarters confirming the information was to be publically released, I, in turn, advised Government officials of the same.
- There was a miscommunication. This is clear on the recording. Sharon Tessier notes that she had likely told me that Darren Campbell was going to speak to the weapons in

the upcoming press conference, and then acknowledged she had, in fact, misinformed me.

- During the call, you hear me reference pending gun control legislation to help provide context on why it was important to be clear on what we would share.
- I was not inferring that the weapons information was needed to inform or support the pending legislation.
- It was about providing context for my employees. In addition to the legislation, there was considerable public interest in knowing about the firearms used in the attacks. This is something seen following other mass shootings - both here in Canada and in other countries around the world. The desire to keep the public informed was part of the reason why I wanted the information released.
- I also expected my team would be questioned at every press conference on this front. I was also getting these questions from media. Because of this, I wanted to be sure that I was providing clear and accurate information about what we could and would say at different points in the days and weeks following the event.
- As I have already stated, once I was informed by my team that releasing the information would jeopardize the ongoing investigation, the matter was closed. And I passed this along to the Minister's office.
- I know how important today's discussions are but I want to reiterate, and be very clear for the record. I did not interfere in the investigation. I did not receive direction. I was not influenced by elected or government officials as it relates to the direction of the investigation or the release of information to the public.
- I love the RCMP and I'm so honoured to be the Commissioner. I'm incredibly proud of the great work my employees from coast to coast to coast do every day and I'm so thankful to them.
- I would never impact the operational independence of my organization. Maintaining operational integrity is paramount.
- Following today's testimony, it's my hope that we can quickly move past this conversation in order to help the people of Nova Scotia continue to heal and keep the focus on those impacted. These discussions are important but they detract and can be re-traumatizing.
- Thank you.

Tab 2 Questions and answers

Specific to the recording

Timeline

April 28, 2020:	Date of the recorded meeting.
June 24, 2022:	RCMP senior management became aware of the recording. Note: The Regimental Memorial for Cst. Stevenson was held on June 29, 2022 and Canada Day occurred on Friday, July 1 st , 2022.
July 7, 2022:	Justice Canada officials met with the employee who recorded the meeting.
July 7, 2022:	MCC verbally informed of the recording.
July 8, 2022:	MCC formally advised of the recording in writing.
July 15, 2022:	Security Review initiated (still ongoing).
July 28, 2022:	Administrative Review initiated (still ongoing).
Sept 20, 2022:	The employee was interviewed as part of the Security Review (review still ongoing)
September 28, 2022:	The employee was interviewed as part of the Administrative Review (review still ongoing)
October 12, 2022:	The employee who recorded the meeting provided consent to search his personal phone. Note: The RCMP does not have the authority to search, in the absence of the individual's consent or judicial authorization, a personal digital mobile device.
October 13, 2022:	RCMP retrieved the audio files from the employee's personal mobile device
October 14, 2022:	The MCC were advised, via litigation counsel that the April 28, 2020 call had been located.
October 17, 2022:	Copies of the recording were provided to the MCC.
October 20, 2022:	MCC publicly released the recordings.

Questions and Answers on the Recording

When did you first learn that there was a recording of the April 28th, 2020 meeting?

- I was notified that a recording was made of the meeting on June 24th, 2022. I was also told at that time that the recording no longer existed.

Who recorded the meeting?

- The recording was made by Dan Brien, the Director of Issues Management and Media Relations

Why did he record the meeting?

- I have not discussed this issue with Mr. Brien.
- If pressed on why not? There are internal processes that may yield an explanation but they are ongoing and must be respected.

Were you aware the meeting was being recorded?

- Not at the time.

If you knew it was being recorded, would you have said or done anything differently?

- Not going to speculate.

Why did it take four months for the RCMP to recover the recording?

- On learning that a recording had been made of the April 28th meeting, the RCMP began reviewing the matter under applicable privacy and security regimes. These processes began in July and are still ongoing. As part of these internal processes, we were able to retrieve the recording on October 13th, 2022.

When did the RCMP notify the MCC that there was a recording of the meeting?

- The MCC was notified on July 7, 2022 that there was a recording. The RCMP notified the MCC that we were able to retrieve the recording on October 14, 2022 and it was disclosed to them on October 17th, 2022.

Why was there a nearly three-week delay in informing the MCC that there was a potential recording of the meeting on April 28, 2020?

- On the afternoon of Friday, June 24th, 2022 an employee told RCMP Senior Management that she believed another employee had recorded the April 28th, 2020, meeting. RCMP Senior Management contacted the employee in question who confirmed that yes, he had made such a recording. He advised that it was made on a personal device and he believed it was no longer available.
- RCMP Senior Management immediately advised Justice Canada counsel of the matter, who then made efforts to meet with the employee in question. It is noted that MCC public proceedings were ongoing during this period, the Regimental Memorial for Cst Heidi Stevenson was held on Wednesday, June 29, and the Canada Day holiday occurred on Friday, July 1.
- Justice Canada counsel were able to meet virtually with the employee who made the recording on Thursday, July 7, 2022 and informed the MCC about the recording by telephone later that same day. The MCC was further notified by letter the next day (Friday, July 8th, 2022)

Did you notify the Minister's office there was a recording? Have they asked for copies? Have they provided direction?

- As part of regular briefings with the Minister of Public Safety and his office, they were made aware of the recording in July, 2022. Copies of the recording were provided to the Minister after they were made public by the MCC (on October 20th, 2022).

When were you made aware that the recording was retrieved?

- The evening of October 13th, 2022

How was the recording retrieved?

- I'm not in a position to disclose tactics however, I can confirm the recording was retrieving by RCMP personnel.

The RCMP has said the recording represents a portion of the meeting. What was discussed in the portions not recorded?

- The meeting was called to discuss communications and the need to keep the public informed. I do not recall what was covered in the portions of the meeting that were not recorded, but it reflects the nature of the call that day.

Is the employee who recorded the meeting facing disciplinary measures?

- There are internal processes ongoing and as you can imagine, to protect privacy of the individual I'm not in a position to comment.

Specific to Dan Brien

Is Dan still the Director of Issues Management and Media Relations?

- Yes

What is his status? Is he suspended?

- There are internal processes ongoing and as you can imagine, to protect privacy of the individual I'm not in a position to comment.

Tab 3a Notable statements

(Since July 25, 2022)

Alistair MacGregor (New Democratic Party (NDP):

During Question Period on October 24, 2022, MP MacGregor noted, “Mr. Speaker, “it was a request that I got...from the Minister's office”. With those recorded words, the RCMP commissioner directly implicated the former minister of public safety with political interference during an investigation into the worst mass shooting in Canadian history. Canadians expect police investigations to be independent so justice can be done. The government should never be directing the RCMP to divulge sensitive information to push a political agenda. The families of victims deserve answers. The minister claims his office did not interfere. Is he saying the RCMP commissioner is lying to Canadians?”

During Question Period on October 21, 2022, MP MacGregor stated, “Nova Scotians lost loved ones and an entire community was devastated by a mass shooting. People deserve honest answers from the government. Yesterday, in recordings released by the commission, it is clear that the former minister of public safety and the RCMP commissioner's stories do not add up. If the Liberal government interfered with an investigation into the worst mass shooting in Canadian history for its own political gain, Canadians need to know. Who is telling the truth, the minister or the RCMP commissioner?”

During SECU's meeting on July 25, 2022, where the committee heard testimony from Minister Blair, as well as RCMP officials, as part of their study on Allegations of Political Interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Murder Investigation, MP MacGregor stated that looking at “Superintendent Campbell's notes, [the allegations were] not so much operational directives, but more a communication directive” to the RCMP. He noted his desire was to prevent them from happening and again referenced comments from law professor Kent Roach, “that there should be a legislative requirement for ministerial directives to be made public and openly available”.

Before July 25 appearance:

In a media article dated July 6, 2022, MP MacGregor stated, “I think our committee needs to be very respectful of the work” [of the Mass Casualty Commission]. He added, “I use handwritten notes all the time, especially when I'm in committee. When I do refer back to them, I put a lot of stock in their accuracy and truthfulness, so I don't know why Campbell would make a false statement in handwritten notes that he had no idea would be used as evidence in a future inquiry.”

It was noted that, per MP MacGregor, SECU will not be looking into the specifics of the RCMP response or the events that took place, and would focus more on the “political aspects” of the issue. MP MacGregor raised concern with, “Those crucial four pages were held back for some reason. So, again, just more questions, but this time involving the Department of Justice.”

On June 23, 2022, as SECU debated the motion inviting officials to appear on this matter, MP MacGregor stated, “The mass shooting inquiry is dealing with the events that happened on that terrible day two years ago, but we're dealing with allegations that the commissioner of the RCMP became involved in an investigation because it was to make a point for proposed firearms legislation. That's a very serious allegation. We have many more questions than answers at this point. I think it's possible for this committee to proceed in an orderly way that respects what the inquiry is trying to do, but that also allows us, as members of Parliament, to

do our jobs to hold the government to account.” He further noted, “I understand the value that might come from hearing the commissioner's testimony during the inquiry, and I understand that's to be a date around mid-July, but this is an issue that the country is seized with right now. Our interest, as a committee, is going to be quite different from what the inquiry is looking at.”

During Question Period (QP) on June 23, 2022 MP MacGregor asked, “Mr. Speaker, families who lost loved ones in the worst mass shooting in Canadian history want answers. That a government would compromise this investigation is unacceptable. Nova Scotians have suffered enough. There are very serious allegations of interference in the RCMP's investigation for the Liberals' political gain. Yesterday the minister questioned the accuracy of these allegations, but the integrity of the claims is supported by a former RCMP commissioner. Will the minister be transparent in explaining what role the PMO played in this investigation?”

During QP on June 22, 2022, MP MacGregor asked, “Mr. Speaker, there are very disturbing allegations that the government directed interference in an ongoing police investigation. Nova Scotians have suffered and they deserve answers. The idea that any government would compromise an investigation for its own political gain is insulting for families of the victims. Any interference from the Prime Minister's Office is completely unacceptable and breaks Canadians' trust in our institutions. Will the government launch a full investigation into these disturbing allegations to give Canadians the answers they need?”

Pam Damoff (Liberal Party of Canada (LPC):

On June 23, 2022, as part of SECU's debate on the motion related to this appearance, MP Damoff stated, “I would remind everyone that there is the Mass Casualty Commission happening right now, where witnesses are under oath, just as they are in a court of law. We need to be mindful that we don't prejudice what's happening at that commission. Commissioner Lucki will be appearing at the commission over the course of July. That's my understanding.”

On the issue of timing of the appearance, MP Damoff noted, “I continue to stress that she [Commissioner Lucki] should come following her testimony. Even if we moved it to that first week of July, it would be prior to her testimony. We don't have a date. I know Mr. Lloyd and I were having a sort of off-line conversation on that, but my understanding is that there is not a date for the commissioner to testify. It's also my understanding that, when she testifies, there's no time limit on it. It could be a day. It could be two days. It could be three days. It could be a week. It depends on the commissioner and how many questions they want to ask her. If we're having these officials come, I strongly urge colleagues to do this after she has testified and we have all the facts on the table. That would likely be in August.”

At this June 23 SECU meeting, MP Damoff also noted the sensitivities around those there were being invited to appear before the committee: “The other thing I think we need to be mindful of is that the five individuals who've been asked to testify, and who are now being asked to testify for two hours, are individuals who were deeply traumatized by what happened in Nova Scotia. They have publicly acknowledged that they have had mental health issues following that, and we're asking them to then appear for two hours at our committee. I think we should be mindful of that and give the option of one or two hours in order to be respectful of the mental health challenges they've had.”

Raquel Dancho (Conservative Party of Canada (CPC):

During Question Period on October 27, 2022, MP Dancho noted, “Mr. Speaker, throughout this RCMP political interference scandal, the minister has been using very specific legal words concerning ministerial directives to the RCMP, but whether or not he directed the RCMP

commissioner does not preclude political interference or inappropriate pressure. It does not rule it out. Did he or his staff have any conversations with the commissioner concerning the release of weapons information or the pending Liberal gun control legislation after the massacre and before the April 28 press conference, yes or no?”

Following a response, the Hon Bill Blair, President of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, MP Dancho stated, “Mr. Speaker, we have on the audio recording the commissioner saying the minister’s office requested that she do this. That is irrefutable. I am going to ask him again. Did his office or he have any conversations with the commissioner concerning the Liberal gun control policy after that tragic massacre that killed 22 Canadians? Did his office politicize their deaths, yes or no?”

During Question Period on October 26, 2022, MP Dancho stated, “Mr. Speaker, with this Liberal RCMP political interference scandal, the minister continues to avoid accountability by using very specific legal words concerning ministerial directives to the RCMP. We are not asking about legal directives. We are asking about political interference. Did the minister, his chief of staff or anyone from his office discuss the forthcoming Liberal gun control legislation with the RCMP commissioner or her staff between the dates of the Nova Scotia mass murder and the April 28 press conference? Did they politicize the deaths of 22 people, yes or no?”

Following a response from the Prime Minister, MP Dancho added, “Mr. Speaker, new evidence of this cover-up is coming out every day. We just learned that the RCMP director of media relations, who also happens to be a former Liberal staffer, is being investigated for covering up the audio recording that is at the centre of this entire scandal. That same audio recording has the commissioner directly contradicting the minister. There are lies here. Who is getting fired, the minister, the commissioner or both?”

During Question Period on October 25, 2022, MP Dancho stated, “Mr. Speaker, the former minister of public safety said yesterday that his testimony at committee was entirely accurate, but the commissioner of the RCMP not only directly contradicted his remarks at committee but also in the newly released audio recording of the commissioner during the infamous April 28, 2020, meeting where she reprimanded her deputies. It stands to reason then that the minister is implying that the commissioner lied to her deputies at the April 28 meeting, and she lied to parliamentarians at committee. If that is the case, she should resign. Did the commissioner lie?”

Following a response, the Hon Bill Blair, President of the King’s Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, MP Dancho noted, Mr. Speaker, the minister is expecting us to believe that the commissioner acted solely on her own and that she politicized the tragic deaths of 22 Canadians. She reprimanded her deputies for failing to share the models of the firearms used in those deaths and directly tied this to the Liberals’ gun control policy. Then she told her deputies that it was the minister’s office that asked her to do this. We are supposed to believe that she did this all on her own. It is ridiculous. If that was true, she would be fired, at least by a government with any common decency or integrity. Someone is lying. Who is it?

During Question Period on October 24, 2022, MP Dancho noted, “Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness politicized the criminal investigation of the worst mass killing in Canadian history. The evidence shows he pressured the RCMP commissioner to release sensitive information to further the Liberal political agenda, knowing it could jeopardize the investigation. He then denied it all on the record at committee, and for this reason, he must resign. Will he resign today?”

Following a response, the Hon Bill Blair, President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness, MP Dancho argued, "Mr. Speaker, at committee, the minister said to me, "At no time did I ask Commissioner Lucki to reveal that information." I then went on to ask him if he knew about it, to which he said, "No, I did not." However, on the audio recording released last week, Commissioner Lucki says, "it was a request that I got...from the Minister's office...I shared with the Minister...it was going to be in the...news release". The evidence is clear as day that either the minister or the commissioner is lying. Which one is it?"

During Question Period on October 21, 2022, MP Dancho stated, "Madam Speaker, the newly released audio recordings of the RCMP commissioner confirm that the minister pressured the commissioner to release sensitive information about the ongoing investigation into the worst mass killing in our history. By requesting this information be released to further the Liberal political agenda, the minister politically interfered in the RCMP investigation, and he misled a parliamentary committee about it. For this, the minister must resign. Will he resign today?"

Following a response from MP Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness), MP Dancho added, "Madam Speaker, the former minister of public safety misled a parliamentary committee, on the record. He said he was not aware that the commissioner would release sensitive information, and he said he never asked her to reveal that information, but both claims are now proving to be completely misleading with the new audio recording. Worse yet, the minister knew the release of this information would jeopardize the investigation into the worst mass killing in Canadian history. This was all for Liberal political gain. He must resign today. Will he resign?"

On August 8, 2022, in referencing testimony Chief Superintendent Leather provided at the Mass Casualty Commission, MP Dancho remarked, "As the Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather oversaw all RCMP operations in Nova Scotia. He has 32 years of policing experience. He was on duty during the horrific 2020 mass shooting. He says there was political interference in that investigation."

In response to testimony provided to SECU on July 25, 2022, MP Dancho remarked, "Minister Bill Blair denies knowing sensitive info about the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting was to be released at an April 28th RCMP press conference. He was immediately contradicted by RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki who says he explicitly asked her about it beforehand."

During SECU's June 23, 2022 debate of the motion to invite officials to appear on this issue, MP Dancho stated, "More to what Mr. MacGregor has said, I do agree that this is a breaking development. It is shocking and disturbing. It is certainly regrettable that it is happening during a very sober memorial next week. What I would say is that those responsible for the political interference that is mentioned in the testimony, that is on those people. That is on any individual in the Liberal government who put that political interference.... As mentioned in the notes, that is legal testimony in the Mass Casualty Commission. It is deeply regrettable that they have done that, at least as alleged in this testimony. That is why we are here meeting today, so I would agree with Mr. MacGregor."

Further, during this meeting, MP Dancho argued that officials from the Prime Minister's Office should appear before SECU, "Without having anyone representing the PMO or the other relevant top officials involved in this, we cannot verify or ask questions concerning the testimony that was just released. It is imperative that we have, at minimum, someone from the Prime Minister's Office who was involved at that time to come and testify at committee. Again, the

Liberal government would know who those individuals are, obviously. We would be firm on at least one representative from the PMO in order to ensure that this is a fulsome investigation."

MP Dancho later added, "Obviously we require someone from the Prime Minister's Office to speak because they have been mentioned in two different accounts in the legal witness testimony provided to the Mass Casualty Commission. This investigation at this committee would be incomplete without a representative of the Prime Minister's Office, so that's the second part of my amendment."

MP Dancho further stated, "Just to be clear, we are now looking at a situation in which this meeting is to follow up on the recent testimony from the Mass Casualty Commission that there was political interference from the Liberal government and pressure put on the RCMP to interfere in a criminal investigation. The Liberal position currently is to wait over four, five, maybe six weeks to hear from those witnesses, to take those 10 witnesses—pardon me, nine witnesses—and put them in a three-hour meeting, five to six weeks from now. That's nine witnesses in three hours. Also, they refuse to allow a member of the Prime Minister's Office to attend. They're avoiding accountability on this. I'm actually quite shocked that members of the Liberal Party on this committee are so keen to avoid transparency on this. It's very disappointing, Mr. Chair. The amendment as it stands now is completely unacceptable and certainly does not do justice for the victims' families, who are continuing to be shocked and traumatized by this."

In noting the difference between the Mass Casualty Commission's study and that of SECU, MP Dancho noted, "The inquiry is investigating something separate to what we are investigating at the public safety committee. Our responsibility is to hold the government accountable for their actions in all regards and all departments in public safety. This is an urgent matter, a shocking revelation from the Mass Casualty Commission, that we will be further investigating, which is our duty as opposition members and as members of this public safety committee. I would reiterate that the inquiry is investigating matters separate from what we are investigating. We have an obligation to move forward, and to move forward quickly, frankly, given the revelations that were made and how shocking they are."

To the concerns raised by MP Damoff of the mental health of the RCMP officials, MP Dancho stated, "I do appreciate Ms. Damoff's comments about the mental health of the witnesses, certainly. We do know from the testimony that was reported that they also suffered as a result of the meeting with Commissioner Lucki, who, from the testimony, was seen that to be under significant pressure. To quote the testimony as written by Superintendent Campbell, she was very "upset", and that was stressed consistently in the reporting of the Mass Casualty Commission's findings of the written testimony from Mr. Campbell. Again, I think that some of the responsibility for the impact on these individuals would seem to lie with those who were putting the pressure on them to reveal information and to interfere for political purposes in a criminal investigation. That is why we should be meeting urgently to discuss this matter."

On July 11, 2022, the Globe and Mail published a story in response to the release of several emails from Commissioner Lucki. The article included comments from CPC MP Dancho, "If she flagged that releasing this information would jeopardize the investigation ... how would she change her tune five days later... This puts a lot of pressure on Mr. Blair to explain: 'This was flagged for you. What conversations did you have with Commissioner Lucki? What conversations did your staff have? Who was the point person in the Prime Minister's Office?'"

Also, on July 11, in response to an article from Global News, MP Dancho remarked, “Clearly someone convinced Lucki in the following 4 days to change her professional opinion that releasing sensitive information would jeopardize the investigation. Is this when the no “undue” pressure from, and the “promise” to, the PMO and Blair happened?”

Dane Lloyd (CPC):

During Question Period on October 27, 2022, MP Lloyd stated, “Mr. Speaker, former Liberal insider and RCMP director of issues management Dan Brien recorded the April 28 meeting with Commissioner Lucki. When investigators came for the recording, he claimed that his phone had been stolen and that he had deleted the recording. We now find out that the phone was not stolen and that the recording had not been deleted from his personal phone: an honest mistake, I guess. Did the minister's office communicate with Dan Brien about this recording, and when and how did the minister become aware of its existence?”

During Question Period on October 24, 2022, MP Lloyd noted, “Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness just stated unequivocally in Parliament that there was no interference by him or his office in the ongoing investigation into the Nova Scotia mass shooting, yet on Friday, we received an audio recording with RCMP commissioner Lucki stating that the minister's office had requested that this confidential evidence be released to the public. The commissioner worked directly with the minister against the wishes of investigators, who warned that releasing this confidential evidence could jeopardize an investigation. The minister misled Parliament. When will he resign?”

During Question Period on October 21, 2022, MP Lloyd stated, “Madam Speaker, the Minister of Emergency Preparedness repeatedly told the House that, “At no point did our government pressure or interfere with the operational decisions of the RCMP, including their communications strategy.” Audio recordings of Commissioner Lucki reveal she said, “it was a request that...I got from the minister's office. And I shared with the minister that...it was going to be...in the news releases, and it wasn't.” The minister directly interfered in an RCMP investigation for the purpose of advancing the Liberals' political agenda. When will the minister resign for misleading Parliament?”

Following a response from MP Yasir Naqvi (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the King's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Emergency Preparedness), MP Lloyd added, “Madam Speaker, Commissioner Lucki told Parliament that she, “was not directed to publicly release information about weapons used...to help advance pending gun control legislation.” We now have audio recordings where the Commissioner states, “Does anybody realize what's going on in the world of...guns”. She then continues, “they're...trying to get a legislation going.” The commissioner pressured her subordinates, under direction from the minister, to advance the government's political agenda. In her own words, she didn't “come through for the minister”. The commissioner misled Parliament. When will the government demand her resignation?”

On July 25, 2022, in response to testimony provided during SECU's meeting, MP Lloyd noted, “Commissioner Lucki confirms that Ministers office asked if firearms details would be included in press conference just 5 days after telling the [government] that information should not be disseminated. I asked what changed in those 5 days, Commissioner couldn't say specifically.” He further stated, “The Commissioner claimed that the push to reveal guns was based upon a priority in the Minister's mandate letter and not a pending announcement of the OIC made just days later. This isn't a coincidence.” MP Lloyd also remarked, “Multiple witnesses at SECU today who were at [the] Apr[il] 28 meeting state the Commissioner referred directly to a promise she made to the Minister and pressure from the Minister to release information about the guns.”

As SECU members, on June 23, 2022, debated a motion to invite officials to appear on this topic, MP Lloyd stated, "...Also, I think the point has been made by some of our colleagues around the table that this issue is separate from what the Mass Casualty Commission is talking about. This is about political interference. It's not about the details the Mass Casualty Commission is focused on. I don't think it should be a prerequisite that we wait until the commissioner has testified before we do that."

During QP on June 23, 2022 MP Lloyd asked, "Mr. Speaker, during the April 28 meeting with the RCMP commissioner and Superintendent Campbell, there were notes handwritten that stated that the commissioner promised to release information about an active criminal investigation to support a pending announcement on gun control. The Minister of Emergency Preparedness has been standing in the House saying that there was no interference, but the Prime Minister just said there was no undue interference. The story is changing. The commissioner was working with the government to advance its political agenda. Does the minister deny this?"

During QP on June 22, 2022, MP Lloyd asked, "Mr. Speaker, it is becoming increasingly clear why the government wanted to have a secret inquiry on this. In a statement yesterday, RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki did not deny that she promised the Minister of Emergency Preparedness that she would release information surrounding the Nova Scotia mass shooting. People are not in the habit of making promises unless they are asked to do so. Did the Minister of Emergency Preparedness or his staff, at any time, ask the commissioner to publicly release information regarding the Nova Scotia mass shooting, yes or no?"

Doug Shipley (CPC):

During SECU's debate on June 23, 2022, of the motion to invite officials to appear on this topic, MP Shipley stated, "I really think this is an extremely important issue for a lot of people, starting with the people who were involved with this incident and the people who lost loved ones in this incident, the residents of Nova Scotia and all Canadians."

Kristina Michaud (Bloc Québécois):

During the SECU meeting of July 25, 2022, MP Michaud stated, "I want to extend my condolences to the loved ones and families of the victims. Although the mass shooting took place in 2020, I think that hearing about it again, given the Mass Casualty Commission and everything that is published daily in the media, reopens wounds that weren't quite closed. So I think a lot about these people, and out of respect for them, I think it's important to be transparent, to give them as much information as possible and to answer their questions to the greatest extent possible. The fact that there are allegations of political interference is quite serious. These people therefore deserve to have their questions answered."

MPs Dancho and Michaud both remarked that the RCMP officials from Nova Scotia had a different perspective on the April 28, 2020 meeting from that of RCMP officials at headquarters. MP Dancho stated, "the four individuals from the RCMP in Nova Scotia have a different recollection from Ms. Tessier and Commissioner Lucki. I find that very interesting." MP Michaud echoed this sentiment, "I agree with my colleague that it is somewhat curious for the Nova Scotia RCMP to remember the meeting on April 28 differently from the national RCMP."

There have been several statements issued by some of CPC members of SECU:

- On October 24, 2022, a statement by Raquel Dancho noted, “From the beginning, Minister Bill Blair and RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki mislead Canadians – and they lied to a parliamentary committee. The newly released recording of RCMP Commissioner Lucki confirms that the Minister’s Office requested that the RCMP release sensitive information about the ongoing investigation into the worst mass killing in our history, and confirmation was given to the Minister this would occur... The Minister and the Commissioner lied and violated the independence of the RCMP and jeopardized the investigation into the worst mass killing in Canadian history. We do not have confidence in this Minister to hold any position in this government and he should resign immediately along with RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki.”
- On September 14, 2022, a statement from Raquel Dancho and Pierre Paul-Hus noted, “...It is becoming clearer that the Trudeau Liberal government doesn’t want Canadians to know the full story about its political interference into the Nova Scotia mass killing RCMP investigation. Now we are learning that a Liberal insider who was present during this scandal has destroyed evidence that implicates his former Liberal bosses. “This is the definition of a coverup. From the beginning of this scandal and like always, the Liberal government has taken the approach of denying, blaming others, blocking witnesses, and covering up their misdeeds. We know the Liberal government doesn’t want Canadians to have more proof that RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki promised her Liberal masters that sensitive information about the ongoing investigation would be released to further the government’s political agenda...”
- On July 12, 2022, three CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “We know that just five days after she wrote this email, the Commissioner directed the Nova Scotia RCMP to do the opposite, telling them she had ‘promised’ the Minister of Public Safety and the Prime Minister’s Office they would publicly release this information to support the government’s pending firearm legislation. This revealing evidence suggests that in those few days something swayed the Commissioner to go against her own professional advice. When the Commissioner of the RCMP tells the government that releasing certain information would compromise an active investigation, that should be the end of the conversation. Clearly, that wasn’t the end of it and somewhere in those five days, the Commissioner was worn down. It is not believable that the Commissioner suddenly changed her mind without influence. The Prime Minister and Minister Bill Blair said no ‘undue’ pressure or ‘direction’ was given to the Commissioner...When the pieces are put together, it appears this Liberal government politically pressured the Commissioner and now they are misleading Canadians and trying to cover their tracks. The Liberal government needs to come forward and tell Canadians the full story, including what happened in those few days that changed Commissioner Lucki’s mind...”
- On July 7, 2022, three CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “The last thing Canadians wanted or expected from their government was for it to leverage a national tragedy for political gain and then cover it up. This spring the Liberal government handed over 132 pages of notes from Nova Scotia RCMP Superintendent Darren Campbell, but initially withheld the four pages that implicate the Liberal government in its political interference scandal. These documents were initially subpoenaed by the MCC when the Liberal government was asked to provide all evidence related to the horrific Nova Scotia mass killing nearly a year ago... The possibility of the Liberal government politically interfering in the worst mass murder in Canadian history erodes public trust in our important institutions. Conservatives are calling on the Liberal government to restore public trust and act swiftly on the MCC’s latest subpoena, provide all evidence without delay, and waive cabinet confidence of all

documents related to this case. We are calling on all who were involved in this scandal...to testify at the Public Safety committee and be held accountable for their actions.”

- On June 29, 2022, three CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “Given the testimony from four senior RCMP officials, it is clear Commissioner Lucki was under orders to release sensitive information about the Nova Scotia mass killings that could have jeopardized the ongoing investigation. It is also clear that the pressure came right from the top, from the offices of the Prime Minister and Minister Bill Blair. All accounts suggest the Commissioner was angry, emotional, and appeared to be acting out in desperation to appease her political bosses. This was no doubt the reaction of someone who was being placed under immense pressure and may have even feared for her job...”
- On June 24, four CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “Canadians were shocked to learn Trudeau’s Liberal government may have politically interfered with the ongoing RCMP investigation into the tragic Nova Scotia mass killings to advance their political agenda... Now we are learning that the Liberal government is covering up that evidence to hide the truth. When Minister David Lametti’s Department of Justice sent 132 pages of RCMP Superintendent Campbell’s written evidence to the inquiry, what was noticeably missing were the 4 crucial pages that implicated the Liberal government. Canadians will find it hard to believe that the Minister’s department just happened to miss those 4 critical pages of evidence. This is no coincidence. This was no accident. This is a cover-up...Canadians demand answers. We cannot get to the truth if the government is being dishonest about its role in these allegations. That is why Conservatives have submitted a motion calling on Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, David Lametti, to appear as a witness at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) as part of its study on the allegations of political interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Murder investigation...”
- On June 23, 2022, three CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “Instead of being transparent and open with Canadians, Trudeau’s Liberal members of the committee are actively and shamefully covering for their boss and blocked the committee from getting answers from the Prime Minister’s Office. Sadly, the NDP and Bloc members of the committee chose to abstain from the vote and allowed the Prime Minister and the Liberal government to hide from accountability. When we learned of these serious allegations of political interference in the RCMP’s investigation of the Nova Scotia mass killing, it was clear that the pressure and interference came right from the top. We cannot get to the truth until Canadians hear directly from those in the Prime Minister’s office with knowledge or involvement in pressuring the RCMP commissioner to advance the Liberal’s political agenda...”
- On June 22, 2022, three CPC MPs, including Raquel Dancho and Dane Lloyd, released a statement: “The separation of political institutions from our law enforcement is crucial. Our police need to be able to do their important work without politicians making attempts to steer or influence them in any way. Not only is this critical to ensuring there is faith and trust in our institutions, but Canadians expect nothing less... These are serious and shocking allegations that deserve answers. That is why we want an immediate investigation in to the matter. We need to hear from the Prime Minister. We need to hear from the former Public Safety Minister. We need to hear from the members of the RCMP who were involved. There must be an investigation to hear the full story...”
 - Appended to the statement was a letter from the CPC members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) requesting that the

Chair immediately convene a meeting so that SECU “can immediately investigate these troubling allegations by inviting RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki, the former Minister of Public Safety Bill Blair, RCMP Deputy Commissioner Brian Brennan, Nova Scotia Superintendent Darren Campbell, Assistant Commander Lee Bergerman, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather, and Nova Scotia Communications director Lia Scanlan, and other relevant individuals to confirm what political pressure was exerted by the Prime Minister, the former Minister Public Safety and their respective offices on the RCMP in Nova Scotia in April and May of 2020.

Tab 3b Twitter scan of SECU members

July 25 – October 27, 2022

Raquel Dancho – October 27

Minister Blair and Commissioner Lucki said there was no political pressure to publicly release sensitive info about the 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Shooting. New audio of a meeting between Lucki and her senior officers contradicts that story. Canadians want the truth. [#cdnpoli](#)
[2:19 clip from QP]

Raquel Dancho – October 26

A newly-released audio recording contradicts the testimony of Minister Blair and Commissioner Lucki. The Liberal government used the Nova Scotia Mass Shooting for political gain. So who is getting fired: The Minister, the Commissioner, or both? [#cdnpoli](#)
[2:15 clip from QP]

Raquel Dancho – October 25

Minister Blair and Commissioner Lucki testified that they did not pressure RCMP officers to publicly release sensitive information to help advance Liberal firearms legislation. Newly released audio contradicts that testimony. So who's lying? [#cdnpoli](#)
[3:38 clip from QP]

Raquel Dancho – October 24

Today all Opposition parties worked together to hold the Liberal Minister and RCMP Commissioner accountable for politically interfering in the 2020 NS mass shooting investigation. Thank you [@krimichaudbg](#) and [@AMacGregor4CML](#). The Liberals voted to let them off the hook.

Raquel Dancho – October 21

New audio proves that Minister Blair asked the RCMP to compromise their investigation of the Nova Scotia mass shooting to advance his government's political agenda. He must resign today.

Raquel Dancho – October 21

Today, we asked Minister Blair to resign.
[Image of Statement]

Raquel Dancho – October 20

Listened to the new audio of Lucki. She says the Ministers office requested the info about guns be released & she confirms to the Minister that it would be. But in committee the Minister denied he made this request and denied knowing about it at all. The Minister lied.

Raquel Dancho – October 20

In the audio, she ties the release of the gun info to the Liberal political agenda. By requesting this info be released (against expert advice) to further the Liberal political agenda, the Minister pressured the Commissioner and politically interfered in the RCMP investigation.

Raquel Dancho – September 14

Read my and [@PierrePaulHus](#)'s statement on the on-going coverup of Liberal political interference in the RCMP:
[Image of Statement]

Raquel Dancho – September 13

RCMP Director of Media Relations made a recording of the infamous April 28 meeting, which he later deleted - why? Was it to protect the Commissioner? Did it prove what the Nova Scotia RCMP have said about political interference? Canadians deserve answers.

[Link to CBC article: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/brenda-lucki-conference-call-recording-brian-brennan-rcmp-1.6581358>]

Raquel Dancho – August 31

Commissioner Lucki acted against the public interest when she shared confidential information about the firearms used and seized in the 2020 Nova Scotia mass murder. She did so against expert advice in order to advance the Liberal Government's political agenda.

[2:28 clip from CPAC]

Raquel Dancho – August 30

Chief Superintendent Darren Campbell blew the whistle on the Liberal government's interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting investigation. In his opening statement to the SECU committee, he explains everything that is at stake, both for the RCMP and for our country:

[3:10 clip from C/Supt Campbell's SECU appearance]

Raquel Dancho – August 17

"She didn't seem to appreciate or recognize the importance of maintaining the integrity of the investigation."

[Link to Toronto Star article: https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2022/08/16/rcmp-commissioner-made-me-feel-as-if-i-was-stupid-mountie-tells-probe-into-allegations-of-political-interference-by-liberals.html?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=SocialMedia&utm_campaign=Federalpolitics&utm_content=rcmpcommish&utm_source=twitter&source=torontostar&utm_medium=SocialMedia&utm_campaign=&utm_campaign_id=&utm_content=]

Raquel Dancho – August 16

RCMP Commissioner acted against expert advice when sharing confidential information of weapons involved in the 2020 Nova Scotia Mass Murder with the Govt. She then "confirmed" when asked by Public Safety Minister's office that the info would be released publicly. 1/3

[1:18 clip from Aug 16 SECU meeting]

She then reprimanded her deputies when that was not done and tied her insistence to leveraging the mass murder to advance the Liberal legislative agenda. We believe the Commissioner was not acting alone, that someone in the Liberal govt was pressuring her. 2/3

It is critical this investigation continues - Canadians deserve the truth. While the Liberals play games and obstruct the process, Conservatives are holding the government to account for their cover ups. 3/3

Raquel Dancho – August 8

As the Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather oversaw all RCMP operations in Nova Scotia. He has 32 years of policing experience. He was on duty during the horrific 2020 mass shooting. He says there was political interference in that investigation:

[1:37 clip from MCC testimony]

Raquel Dancho – July 29

“C/Supt. Leather said the Commissioner had called him directly & pressed him to give her information on the guns just three days after the mass shooting & six days before the conference call. E-mails followed on the same issue...the document will be disclosed to the inquiry soon.”

[Link to Globe and Mail: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-senior-rcmp-officer-tells-nova-scotia-mass-shooting-inquiry-he-was/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter]

Raquel Dancho – July 28

Lee Bergerman, Former Assistant Commissioner and Commanding Officer of the Nova Scotia RCMP, and Chief Superintendent Chris Leather give testimony regarding allegations of government interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting investigation. [#cdnpoli](#)
[5:14 clip from SECU appearance]

Raquel Dancho – July 25

BREAKING: Minister Bill Blair denies knowing sensitive info about the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting was to be released at an April 28th RCMP press conference. He was immediately contradicted by RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki who says he explicitly asked her about it beforehand.

[2:25 clip from SECU appearance]

Raquel Dancho – July 25

Today Minister Blair and RCMP Commissioner Brenda Lucki will respond to allegations they pressured RCMP officers to release sensitive info about the 2020 Nova Scotia shooting to support the government's political agenda. Watch live at 11 AM EST here:

[Link to ParIVu:

<https://parlvu.parl.gc.ca/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20220725/-1/37451>]

Raquel Dancho – July 25

“The Liberals placed political gain above the integrity of the most important RCMP investigation in Canadian history.”

Dane Lloyd – October 20

Very curious to see that the RCMP is currently being represented by acting commissioner Brian Brennan.

Dane Lloyd – October 20

Recordings released today contradict RCMP Commissioner Lucki's testimony at Committee. Lucki pressured her subordinates to release information on an active investigation to help advance Liberal gun legislation. She received a request to do this from the Ministers office.

Dane Lloyd – October 20

At Committee she stated: "I was not directed to publicly release information about weapons...to help advance pending gun control legislation". This is absolutely false. The recording confirms she needed to apologize to PM and Minister for failing to release that information.

Dane Lloyd – October 20

This was not just about "keeping the Government informed" This was about politicizing the RCMP to advance the Liberals partisan political agenda. RCMP Comms were being overseen a

by the Ministers Office. The politicization of the RCMP under this Commissioner is unacceptable.

Dane Lloyd – August 17

Those on the call specifically remember the Commissioner talking about legislation related to gun control, however the commissioner told committee earlier that it wasn't related to specific legislation, but to the ministers mandate letter. Not adding up.

[Link to Globe and Mail article: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-nova-scotia-mass-shooting-inquiry-interference/>]

Dane Lloyd – July 25

Multiple witnesses at #SECU today who were at Apr 28 meeting state the Commissioner referred directly to a promise she made to the Minister and pressure from the Minister to release information about the guns.

Dane Lloyd – July 25

The Commissioner claimed that the push to reveal guns was based upon a priority in the Minister's mandate letter and not a pending announcement of the OIC made just days later. This isn't a coincidence.

Dane Lloyd – July 25

Commissioner Lucki confirms that Ministers office asked if firearms details would be included in press conference just 5 days after telling the Govt that information should not be disseminated. I asked what changed in those 5 days, Commissioner couldn't say specifically.

Dane Lloyd – July 25

Today #SECU is examining allegations of political interference into the investigation following the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting. Deputy Minister for PS confirms that Commissioner expected information about firearms to be publicly released on April 28.

Tab 4 SECU members bios

House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU)

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security reviews the policies, programs and expenditure plans of government departments and agencies responsible for public safety and national security, policing and law enforcement, corrections and conditional release of federal offenders, emergency management, crime prevention and the protection of Canada's borders.

Chair	Ron McKinnon	Liberal
Vice Chairs	Raquel Dancho Kristina Michaud	Conservative Bloc Québécois
Members	Paul Chiang Pam Damoff Dane Lloyd Alistair MacGregor Glen Motz Taleeb Noormohamed Peter Schiefke Doug Shipley Tony Van Bynen	Liberal Liberal Conservative NDP Conservative Liberal Liberal Conservative Liberal

Ron McKinnon- Liberal

Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam, British Columbia

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015.

Education and Background

- Earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Alberta and an honours diploma in Computer Technology from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology.
- Prior to entering federal politics, he was a business owner and a computer systems analyst.

Points of Note

- Chair and member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Member of the Liaison Committee (LIAI), the Standing Committee on Science and Research (SRSR).
- Previously served as Chair of the Standing Committee on Health (HESA), Chair of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Health (SHES), Member of Liaison Committee (LIAI), and Member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights (JUST).
- In the 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, he sponsored Bill C-224, *An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (assistance – drug overdose)*, which received Royal Assent in 2017.

Raquel Dancho- Conservative

Kilonan-St. Paul, Manitoba

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and Background

- Obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at McGill University.

Points of Note

- Vice-Chair and Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Member of the Special Committee on Canada-People's Republic of China Relationship (CACN) and the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SSEC).
- Previous member of Standing Committee on the status of Women (FEWO).
- Previously had a career with the Manitoba Government.
- Advocate for small business and Canadian farmers.
- Ms. Dancho served in the senior role of Special Assistant to the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage and was instrumental in facilitating critical relationships between the Minister and historic arts and culture institutions across Manitoba.

Kristina Michaud- Bloc Québécois

Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Québec

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and Background

- Holds a Master's degree in international relations from the Université Laval.
- Worked as a political advisor to interim Parti Québécois leader Pascal Bérubé.

Points of Note

- Vice-Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and member of its Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (SSEC).
- Member of the Following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association (CAAF), Canada-China Legislative Association (CACN), Canada-Germany Interparliamentary Group (CADE), Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU), Canada-France Inter-Parliamentary Association (CAFR), Canada-Ireland Interparliamentary Group (CAIE), Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group (CAIL), Canada-Italy Interparliamentary Group (CAIT), Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP), Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canadian Branch of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (CAPF), Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CCOM), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS), Canadian Section of ParlAmericas (CPAM), Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association (RUUK), Canadian Delegation to the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (SECO) and Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIPU).
- Bloc Québécois Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Critic.
- MP Michaud was critical of the RCMP's initial response to the Wet'suwet'en crisis. She supported the RCMP's withdrawal from the Wet'suwet'en area and has expressed support for the creation of Indigenous police services as one way to rebuild trust between Indigenous people and law enforcement.
- Since November 2021, MP Michaud has been particularly interested in illegal firearms smuggling and the presence of firearms on Quebec. Her interest is a result of the ongoing gun violence amongst youth in the Greater Montreal Region.

Paul Chiang- Liberal

Markham—Unionville, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2021.

Education and Background

- Prior to entering federal politics, he had a career in policing that spanned 28 years. He retired as a sergeant with the York Regional Police Service, but also served with the London Police Service and Durham Regional Police.
- In 2013, he was awarded the Police Exemplary Service Medal.

Points of Note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Diversity and Inclusion).
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-China Legislative Association (CACN), Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU), Canada-France Inter-Parliamentary Association (CAFR), Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP), Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CCOM), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS), Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association (RUUK) and Canadian Delegation to the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (SECO).

Pam Damoff- Liberal

Oakville North—Burlington, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015.

Education and Background

- Has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Western Ontario.
- Oakville Town Councillor from 2010 to 2015.
- Worked in financial and investment banking positions for 27 years.

Points of Note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU), its Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (SSEC) and the Special Committee on Afghanistan (AFGH).
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety.
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association (CAAF), Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU), Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CCOM), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS), Canadian Delegation to the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (SECO) and Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIPU).
- Served previously as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services and as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.
- Recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and a number of other awards for her community service.
- She has expressed concern about the length of time it is taking for the RCMP to review and respond to the CRCC's report related to the death of Colton Boushie.
- She has also advocated for better protection for sexual assault victims.

Dane Lloyd- Conservative

Sturgeon River—Parkland, Alberta

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2017.

Education and Background

- Graduated from Trinity Western University with a degree in History and Political Studies.
- Before being elected as a Member of Parliament, he worked as a Parliamentary Advisor to St. Albert-Edmonton MP Michael Cooper, the Honourable Ed Fast who served as the Minister of International Trade, and the Honourable Jason Kenney.
- Serve as a Canadian Army reservist in the Governor General's Foot Guards.

Points of Note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Conservative Shadow Minister for Emergency Preparedness.
- Served previously on several committees, including the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology (INDU), the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs (ACVA), the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates (OGGO), and the Standing Committee on Natural Resources (RNNR).
- In June 2021, he introduced Private Member's Bill C-316, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and the Prisons and Reformatories Act*. The bill sought to amend the *Criminal Code* to add as an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes and as a reason to delay parole the fact that a person who is convicted of certain offences refuses to provide persons in authority with information respecting the location of bodies or remains.

Alistair MacGregor- NDP

Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, British Columbia

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015.

Education and Background

- Graduate of the University of Victoria and Royal Roads University.
- Previously worked in British Columbia's forestry sector.
- Prior to being elected to Parliament, worked as a constituency assistant for an NDP MP in British Columbia.

Points of Note

- Currently serving as Critic for Public Safety, Agriculture and Food, and as Deputy Critic for Justice. He has previously served as the NDP's Critic for Senior and Justice and Human Rights.
- Vice-Chair of the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying (AMAD).
- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU), the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food (AGRI), the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Special Joint Committee on Medical Assistance in Dying (SAMA), Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food (SAGR) and the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SSEC).
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary groups: Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canadian Branch of the

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CCOM), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS) and Canadian Section of ParlAmericas (CPAM).

- Has served previously on several Standing Committees including the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights (JUST).
- In November 2021, called for RCMP reform and offered to form an alliance with the LPC to do so.
- Introduced a Private Member's Bill seeking to prohibit investments of Canada Pension Plan in entities that produce weapons or commissioned of human, labour or environmental rights violations. The bill was defeated by both the CP and LPC.

Glen Motz- Conservative

Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, Alberta

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2016.

Education and Background

- Served for 35 years with the Medicine Hat Police Service and retired as Inspector in 2015.
- Holds a Bachelor of Religious Education Degree from the Hillcrest Christian College.

Points of Note

- Vice-Chair of the Special Joint Committee on the Declaration of Emergency (DEDC) and Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Previous member of the Standing Committee on National Defence (NDDN).
- Served as a Member of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) from February 2020 to June 2021.
- Served as the Opposition Associate Shadow Minister for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness from 2019 to 2020.
- Opposed to gun control measures and sponsored e-petition 2341, which calls for any new firearms laws, bans, buyback programs or changes to licencing be put before the House of Commons for debate.
- MP Motz has raised concerns about a perceived erosion of border security, noting his concerns are “not just with respect to the crisis of illegal border crossers, but also with drugs, handgun smuggling, human trafficking by many of the gangs running drugs, and the massive backlogs in the monitoring and deportation of known terrorists, criminals and national security risks”.
- He has expressed concern about rural crime and has suggested that RCMP resources in rural areas are insufficient.
- Expressed concern about the privacy of Canadians related to the Equifax hack, and co-wrote (with MP Paul-Hus) a letter to the Prime Minister to this effect
- Called for the Minister of Public Safety to direct the RCMP to dismantle the rail blockades that were set up in support of Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs while decrying the economic costs of the disruption.
- Has called in the House of Commons for the Government to “ban Huawei”.

Taleeb Noormohamed- Liberal

Vancouver Granville, British Columbia

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2021.

Education and Background

- Graduated from Princeton University with BA, attended the University of Oxford for Graduate/Doctoral Studies, and completed his Master's at Harvard University.
- Prior to entering federal politics, he served as a senior official in the federal government from 2002 to 2007. During his time with the federal government, he was involved with establishing the Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security. He also served as Director of the Air India Review Secretariat and Special Advisor to the Hon. Bob Rae.
- He was an executive in the technology sector and was a member of the Board of Directors for the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA).

Points of Note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations (REGS).
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association (CAAF), Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP), Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS) and Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIPU).

Peter Schiefke- Liberal

Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Québec

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2015.

Education and Background

- Holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Concordia University as well as a Master of Science in Renewable Resources from McGill University.
- Prior to entering into politics, worked in numerous capacities in sustainable development for domestic and international causes.

Points of Note

- Chair of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities (TRAN) and its Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure, and Communities (STRA).
- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and the Liaison Committee (LIAI).
- Has held several Parliamentary Secretary positions: served as a Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth) from 2015 to 2019; served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction from 2018 to 2019; served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change from 2019 to 2021; finally, served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship from March 2021 to August 2021.

- In February 2022, MP Schiefke delivered a speech in the House of Commons where he argued in favour of the government invoking the *Emergencies Act*. He noted, “What we are doing is giving the RCMP the power to enforce local laws and work quickly and efficiently with local law enforcement. We are not putting the RCMP or any other police force under the direct control of the government. Policing operational decisions remain independent under this act, as they should and must in any strong democracy.”

Doug Shipley- Conservative

Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and Background

- City Councillor in Barrie from 2010 to 2019.
- Small business owner.
- Former Vice-Chair of the Barrie Police Services Board.

Points of Note

- Member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU).
- Also previously served on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities (TRAN).
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association (CAAF), Canada-Germany Interparliamentary Group (CADE), Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU), Canada-France Inter-Parliamentary Association (CAFR), Canada-Ireland Interparliamentary Group (CAIE), Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group (CAIL), Canada-Italy Interparliamentary Group (CAIT), Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP), Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canadian Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CCOM), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS), Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association (RUUK) and Canadian Delegation to the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (SECO).
- When SECU was studying Systemic Racism in Policing Services in Canada, he expressed interest in strategies that could be easily and quickly put in place by the RCMP to recruit more members, specifically women, from first nations communities.

Tony Van Bynen- Liberal

Newmarket-Aurora, Ontario

Election

- Elected to the House of Commons in 2019.

Education and Background

- Served as the Mayor of Newmarket (Ontario) for 12 years.
- Prior to entering politics, spent 30 years in banking.

- In 2013, received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his community service and leadership.

Points of Note

- Member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (SECU) and the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA).
- Previous member of the Standing Committee on Health (HESA)
- Member of the following Parliamentary Associations and Interparliamentary Groups: Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association (CAEU), Canada-Italy Interparliamentary Group (CAIT), Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association (CANA), Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group (CEUS), Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association (RUUK), Canadian Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (SECO) and Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIPU).

Tab 5 Signed Beaulac affidavit

In the Matter of

The Joint Public Inquiry into the Nova Scotia April 2020 Tragedy established by the Federal and Provincial Orders-in-Council P.C. 2020-822 and 2020-293

(The "Mass Casualty Commission")

AFFIDAVIT OF SUPERINTENDENT JEFFREY BEAULAC

I, Supt. Jeffrey Beaulac, of the City of Ottawa, in the Province of Ontario, DO SWEAR as follows:

1. I have been employed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as a regular member since January 21, 1991. I am currently the RCMP's Deputy Chief Security Officer at the RCMP National Headquarters. As part of my duties, I am responsible for the RCMP's National Personnel Security Program. As such, I have personal knowledge of the facts and matters deposed herein, except where based on information and belief.
2. On April 28, 2020 a call took place between the RCMP Commissioner and some employees from "H" Division (the RCMP Division in Nova Scotia) and from the RCMP's National Headquarters in Ottawa. On or around June 24, 2022, RCMP senior management learned that Dan Brien, the RCMP's Director of Media Relations, Issues Management, and Social Media, had recorded at least a part of the call. Mr. Brien had been one of the participants on the call.
3. I am informed that on June 24, 2022, C/Supt. Michael O'Malley was told by Mr. Brien that the recording was done on a personal device and it was no longer available as it was on an old phone that had been stolen. C/Supt. O'Malley is the Officer-in-Charge of the H-Strong II team within the RCMP that is responsible for coordinating the RCMP's involvement with the Mass Casualty Commission.
4. I am informed that Jolene Bradley also discussed the recording with Mr. Brien and another National Communication Services manager on June 24, 2022. Ms. Bradley is the Director General of the RCMP's National Communication Services and is Mr. Brien's direct manager. She was told by Mr. Brien that the recording was done in error and it was not his common practice to record meetings. He stated the call had been recorded on a personal device that he no longer had use of.
5. I am informed that on July 7, 2022, Mr. Brien went on sick leave from his employment and as of today's date, he has not returned to the workplace.

RCMP Reviews

6. In the absence of someone being lawfully authorized to record a meeting or notifying other participants in a meeting that it is being recorded, video- or audio-recording a meeting can result in an unlawful collection of personal information contrary to the *Privacy Act*. As such, on learning that a recording had been made of the April 28, 2020 call, the RCMP began reviewing the matter under the applicable privacy and security regimes.

a. Security Review

7. On July 15, 2022, Ms. Bradley submitted a Security Incident Report to the RCMP's Central Region Departmental Security Section (CDSS). On July 22, 2022, Ms. Bradley advised me of the matters involving Mr. Brien. On July 26, 2022, a security review for cause investigation was launched into the Security Incident Report to CDSS related to the unauthorized recording of an RCMP operational meeting on an employee's personal mobile device and stored outside of the RCMP's information technology infrastructure. The review for cause investigation was assigned to a security investigator with the CDSS.
8. On August 22, 2022, the CDSS requested to schedule an interview with Mr. Brien. He advised that he needed to consult with his personal physician as he was currently off-duty sick. Mr. Brien told the security investigator that the doctor would not be available until September 6, 2022 or later.
9. On September 2, 2022, I spoke with Ms. Bradley about the status of Mr. Brien's RCMP-issued laptop(s) and mobile device(s). Ms. Bradley contacted Mr. Brien on or around that date to obtain them from him. On September 7, 2022, National Communication Services personnel retrieved two RCMP-issued laptops and one RCMP-issued mobile device from Mr. Brien. The following day these were provided to me. Although the RCMP believed from Mr. Brien that the recording was on a personal device that was no longer in his possession, efforts began to review his RCMP-issued devices and the RCMP's technological infrastructure for the recording. On September 12, 2022 Ms. Bradley submitted an Access Request to Departmental Security to search the RCMP-issued devices and its technological infrastructure.
10. Beginning on September 13, 2022, searches have been conducted of the RCMP-issued devices and RCMP networks, shared drives, and work email. As of today's date, the recording of the April 28, 2020 call has not been located during these searches of the RCMP's technological infrastructure.
11. On September 20, 2022, the security investigator conducted an interview with Mr. Brien. I am informed that during the interview, Mr. Brien advised the investigator that at some point after the April 28, 2020 call, he had realized that he had recorded parts of the call, but that he had no need to record the call, had done so inadvertently, and did not recall making the recording.
12. During the interview, Mr. Brien advised the investigator that he was still in possession of the device upon which the April 28, 2020 call was recorded. He confirmed that he had deleted the app that was used to record the call sometime between the April 28, 2020 call and the Spring of 2022 due to space limitations on his phone. Mr. Brien indicated that he had not tried to restore the recording to his phone. He agreed to having the phone forensically examined.

13. Mr. Brien also said that he had confirmed that the recording was not made on a phone that was later stolen, but that in June 2022 he may have thought so, as he did not remember the specific date on which another phone he owned had been stolen.
14. On September 27, 2022, the security investigation confirmed with the RCMP's National Division Digital Forensic Services (DFS) that the unit would be able to assist with a search and consent forms were prepared. On September 29, 2022, the security investigator contacted Mr. Brien to arrange a data extraction from his personal phone; however, Mr. Brien advised that he was elsewhere in Ontario at that time. While the security investigator began making arrangements for RCMP personnel closer to Mr. Brien's location to facilitate the data extraction, on October 4, 2022, Mr. Brien notified the security investigator that he would be back in Ottawa the week of October 10, 2022.
15. The RCMP does not have the authority to search, in the absence of the individual's consent or judicial authorization, a personal digital mobile device.
16. On October 12, 2022, Mr. Brien met with the security investigator and provided consent for the RCMP to search his personal mobile device for the recording of the April 28, 2020 call. That same day, the security investigator provided the personal device to the DFS. An image of the device was taken and the phone was returned to Mr. Brien that day.
17. On October 13, 2022, the DFS advised me that three audio files had been retrieved from Mr. Brien's personal mobile device. I confirmed that the files appeared to concern the April 28, 2020 call and obtained a copy of the files from the DFS.
18. Later that day, I advised A/Commr. Paul Brown, who is the RCMP Chief Security Officer and who was acting as Deputy Commissioner of the RCMP's Specialized Policing Services, that the recordings had been retrieved and I provided him with copies of them. On October 14, 2022, arrangements were made to advise the Mass Casualty Commission via litigation counsel that recordings of the April 28, 2020 call had been located, which I am informed was done that evening. Copies of the recordings were provided to the Mass Casualty Commission on October 17, 2022.
19. As of today's date, the Security Investigation remains ongoing.

b. Administrative Review

20. On July 28, 2022, Ms. Bradley requested an Administrative Investigation be conducted with respect to Mr. Brien and the recording of the April 28, 2020 call. The original mandate for the Administrative Investigation was approved on August 2, 2022 but amended on or around September 2, 2022 to avoid potential overlap with the Security Investigation.
21. On or around September 28, 2022, the administrative investigator conducted an interview with Mr. Brien. I am informed that during this interview, Mr. Brien said that he did not recall recording the April 28, 2020 call and had done so inadvertently. He was not able to recall if he had stopped and restarted the recording or whether the app had broken it into multiple files. He also said during this interview that he had confirmed that the recording had not been on a phone that was stolen.
22. As of today's date, I am informed that the Administrative Investigation remains ongoing.

Audio Recordings

23. The three audio files that were recovered of the April 28, 2020 call are the following:

File Name	Length of File
20200428 163451.m4a	7 minutes, 47 seconds
20200428 164248.m4a	6 minutes, 6 seconds
20200428 164857.m4a	10 minutes, 2 seconds

24. Although technical analysis of the files has not been undertaken by the DFS, if the name of the file is taken to be the start time of the recording on April 28, 2020, the times that could be covered by the three files are (Eastern Daylight Time):

(a) 4:34:51 pm to 4:42:38 pm

(b) 4:42:48 pm to 4:48:54 pm

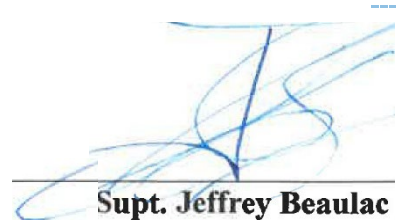
(c) 4:48:57 pm to 4:58:59 pm

25. While the files do not cover the entirety of the meeting, they are a complete capture of what the DFS extracted from Mr. Brien's phone.

SWORN before me in the City of Ottawa, in the Province of Ontario, this 21st day of October 2022. .



A Commissioner of Oaths



Supt. Jeffrey Beaulac

Lindsey Catherine Mercer, a Commissioner etc., Province of Ontario, for the Government of Canada,
 Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.
 Expires November 25, 2022.

Tab 6 Transcript highlights- Minister Blair July 25th 2022

(1100)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Jim Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.)): Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 31 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. I am in Treaty 1 territory and also the homeland of the Métis people. Today's meeting is taking place in a hybrid format pursuant to the House order of June 23, 2022.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Thursday, June 23, 2022, the committee is commencing its study of allegations of political interference in the 2020 Nova Scotia mass murder investigation.

With us today on the first panel is the Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of Emergency Preparedness, and Mr. Rob Stewart, deputy minister of the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. Up to five minutes will be given for opening remarks, after which we will proceed with rounds of questions.

Welcome to all.

I now invite Minister Blair to make an opening statement of up to five minutes.

Minister, whenever you're ready, the floor is yours.

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Emergency Preparedness): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Colleagues, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I'd also like to acknowledge that I'm speaking to you today from the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

On April 18 and 19 of 2020, an unthinkable tragedy unfolded in Nova Scotia. All Canadians were shaken by these horrific deaths and mourned alongside the affected communities. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my support for and condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in these violent attacks and our commitment to ensure that they get the answers they need.

We know that Canadians deserve a full accounting of what happened over those 13 hours on April 18 and 19 in 2020. That is why we established an independent inquiry, the Mass Casualty Commission, which is mandated to look into some of the most pressing questions that were raised into how this occurred and how future tragedies can be prevented. We are all looking forward to the inquiry's fact-based findings, which I understand are due to be released later this year.

As the commission conducts its work, (begin highlight) I remain committed to the fundamental principle of operational independence for law enforcement in this country. I want to make it very clear: At no point did I direct the RCMP in any operational matter, including on public

communications. I did not ask them to release any specific information, nor did I receive a promise for them to do so. As you will find in all of my public statements from that time, I confirmed that identifying the weapons used was a decision wholly within the purview of the RCMP. (end highlight)

What I would like to emphasize for you all today, however, is that during the years I've had the honour to serve as Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, one of my top priorities has been addressing gun violence in Canada. This was a key item in my mandate letter, which directed me to keep our communities safe by implementing new gun control measures, including a ban on assault-style firearms. Work on this issue had been under way for quite some time. We first made a commitment to get assault-style weapons off our streets in the very first Speech from the Throne in 2015. We repeated that commitment in both our platform and our throne speech in 2019. As part of that work, while I was Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, I supported Minister Goodale in public consultations on reducing violent crime that involved both handguns and assault-style weapons.

Just within these few years, we have seen far too many examples of the kinds of harms these firearms can cause, such as at the shooting at the Quebec City mosque. Another gunman killed two police officers and two civilians in Fredericton. Within our neighbour to the south, the AR-15 alone has been used in mass shootings at the Pulse nightclub; in Sutherland Springs; at Stoneman Douglas High School; and, perhaps most tragically, at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

From the outset, we understood the importance of preventing assault-style firearms from getting into the hands of people who do Canadians harm. The tragedy that occurred in Nova Scotia only deepened our resolve to move forward with this critically important work. That is why on May 1, 2020, we announced an OIC prohibiting over 1,500 models of assault-style firearms and their variants. Firearms affected by this order in council cannot be legally used, sold or imported into Canada. We created a time-limited amnesty order to give law-abiding gun owners time to come into compliance.

The OIC on May 1 was the result of many years of hard work on the part of government, including public servants, and was developed based on public consultations that were open to all Canadians. Let me be very clear: These are weapons designed for the battlefield, intended to kill the maximum number of people in the least amount of time. They have no place in Canada.

The measure is, and continues to be, an incredibly important part of our overall approach to combatting gun violence, but it is not the only step we have taken. We have introduced expanded background checks and enhanced screening for those seeking a firearms licence, and we've made significant investments in helping provinces and territories tackle gang violence. Earlier this year, my colleague Minister Mendicino tabled further relevant legislation that I believe will be coming before this committee in short order. Combatting gun violence is a complex and continual process, an issue that requires a multi-faceted approach, and we will continue to keep Canadians safe by implementing stronger gun controls.

(begin highlight) Mr. Chair, I would conclude, if I may, by reiterating that at no time have I ever interfered operationally or given operational direction to the RCMP in my role as the Minister of Public Safety. (end highlight)

I thank you all. I look forward to the questions that you may have.

(1105)

The Chair: Thank you, Minister. You won't have to wait long for those questions, because they're going to start right now.

Opening up this first round, I would now call on Ms. Dancho.

You have six minutes, Ms. Dancho. The floor is yours whenever you're ready to take it.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for being with us today.

You or someone from your office was in daily contact with Commissioner Lucki in the immediate days following the Nova Scotia attacks on April 18 and 19. Correct?

Hon. Bill Blair: I was not in contact with her on a daily basis, but frequently in the days afterward I was briefed by Commissioner Lucki.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: As well, your chief of staff and your deputy minister were in relatively daily contact with Commissioner Lucki in some capacity...?

Hon. Bill Blair: Yes, I assume so.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Would you be comfortable tabling for the committee your calendar, your deputy minister's calendar and your chief of staff's calendar and phone logs that are relevant to your communication with Commissioner Lucki prior to our next committee meeting, specifically from the dates of April 18 to April 28 and including April 28? That would be for the reason of full transparency of your communications and your office's communications with her.

Hon. Bill Blair: I actually have a timeline with me, and I'm quite comfortable sharing that and when I personally had conversations. There are a number of different things in that timeline—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Minister, does that include the communication from your deputy minister and from your chief of staff with Commissioner Lucki as well?

Hon. Bill Blair: Again, I'm more than happy to provide you with a timeline of all my communications on this matter, with Commissioner Lucki and with others.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Does that include the deputy minister's communications and the chief of staff Zita Astravas's communications?

Hon. Bill Blair: I don't know if the deputy minister has that information available, so I don't want to make a commitment to it, but that's a question certainly you can pose to him.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Certainly there would be phone logs of all of the calls they made. Can you commit to tabling those with the committee before our next meeting: yours, the deputy minister's and the chief of staff Zita Astravas's?

Hon. Bill Blair: Again, I don't have direct access to those logs, but if they exist, I think it's very important—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: If they exist, do you commit to it?

Hon. Bill Blair: If I may, I think it's very important that this committee have all the information that it requires to make an accurate assessment of what transpired.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Great. Thank you very much.

Moving on, in a June 28, 2020, Globe and Mail article, you were quoted confirming that you spoke to the RCMP about the upcoming OIC ban.

When was Commissioner Lucki informed of the May 1 announcement date?

Hon. Bill Blair: Commissioner Lucki had been working with us. Commissioner Lucki, as the commissioner of the RCMP, is responsible for the Canadian firearms program. The Canadian firearms program was integral in the work that we had—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Blair, when was she informed of the May 1 date of that announcement?

Hon. Bill Blair: That's a question that would have to be posed to—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: When was the May 1 date determined for that announcement? Was it before or after the Nova Scotia attacks?

Hon. Bill Blair: The date of release was determined after the Nova Scotia shooting.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you.

You're aware of the email sent by Commissioner Lucki on April 23, four days after the attacks, to your chief of staff Zita Astravas, containing information that your government had requested concerning weapons used in the attacks, correct?

Hon. Bill Blair: Yes, I'm aware of it.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You're also aware that the commissioner's email contained a strong warning that the information must not be shared beyond you and the Prime Minister because it could jeopardize the active investigation, correct?

Hon. Bill Blair: I'm not only aware of it, but I respected that throughout.

(1110)

(begin highlight) **Ms. Raquel Dancho:** You are aware of the meeting that the commissioner called for her and her Nova Scotia officials immediately following the Nova Scotia press conference on April 28.

Hon. Bill Blair: I was not aware of that. I've subsequently become aware of it through media reports.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You're aware that during that meeting the commissioner reprimanded her Nova Scotia deputies for not sharing the information she warned you not to share, correct?

Hon. Bill Blair: I'm not aware of that. I was not a party to that conversation, and I've only read media reports. I've not discussed that in any way with the commissioner.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Your office obtained assurances from Commissioner Lucki that the type of weapons used in the shooting would be released to the public at the April 28 press conference, correct?

Hon. Bill Blair: No, that's incorrect.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So it was not assured. You had no idea that was Commissioner Lucki's expectation at that press conference.

Hon. Bill Blair: Let me be very clear. At no time did I ask Commissioner Lucki to reveal that information. At no time did I direct her in any way on communications. She did not make any promise to me. (end highlight)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Minister, you're miscommunicating a bit. I'm not asking if you had asked her, but I'm asking if you were aware of the commissioner's expectation that on that April 28 press conference that information would be released.

Were you aware that was Commissioner Lucki's expectation?

Hon. Bill Blair: No, I was not.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You were not aware.

(begin highlight) Following the meeting and the press conference, in a late-night email from Commissioner Lucki to your chief of staff and your deputy minister on April 28, she said, without any context whatsoever, that the press conference was, to quote Commissioner Lucki, "not the execution I was expecting". Again, she said in her email, without further context, that the press conference was "not the execution I was expecting." That's in reference to the media questions on the types of weapons used.

The lack of context provided in Commissioner Lucki's— (end highlight)

Hon. Bill Blair: I can't comment on the context of that. I wasn't aware of it, and I have no knowledge of what the commissioner was referring to.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: It seems that your deputy minister and your chief of staff were fully aware of the expectation of Commissioner Lucki of that press conference.

(begin highlight) To the deputy minister, were you aware of the context of this email, because it was not listed in the email and it was written that you would have been aware?

Hon. Bill Blair: I have no idea—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: That question is to the deputy minister, please. Thank you.

Were you aware of the context of the email?

Mr. Rob Stewart (Deputy Minister, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness): Not in the sense that you are posing the question. I was aware that the commissioner expected there to be full disclosure of what the RCMP knew for the sake of the public.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: That's what I'm asking. So you were aware of the context of the email—the context of the email being that the commissioner's expectation of the April 28 press conference was that that information on the weapons would be released.

Thank you for confirming that you were aware of the context.

Hon. Bill Blair: Ms. Dancho, if I may, that's simply not correct. I don't believe there's anything in that email that makes reference to any information about firearms.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: I would just read it again. There is no context in this email, but Commissioner Lucki said, in reference to the press conference, that it was not the execution she was expecting. She then went on to provide comment from media and from Darren Campbell, when he was asked about the weapons used.

I appreciate that you were aware of the context of that email— even though it was not listed—which would mean that you were aware a bit earlier in the day.

Mr. Rob Stewart: I'd like to just make sure you're clear on my point here.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Please go ahead.

The Chair: You have 10 seconds to be clear.

Mr. Rob Stewart: To the best of my recollection, the commissioner had provided some assurance that the RCMP would provide the public with a full story of what had happened and what they knew. That was what I understood. (end highlight)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Of the weapons used—

The Chair: Thank you. The time is up.

Now I will move to Mr. Noormohamed.

Sir, you have the next slot for six minutes. The floor is yours.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed (Vancouver Granville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister and Deputy, for joining us today.

(begin highlight) Minister, perhaps you could take a minute and describe the nature of the relationship between the Minister of Public Safety and the commissioner of the RCMP and how

that relationship actually works operationally, how it is supposed to work and how it worked in this particular situation. (end highlight)

Hon. Bill Blair: Thanks very much. I think it's an important question and I appreciate it.

As Minister of Public Safety, I am responsible for a number of different agencies and departments that report to Public Safety and to the Minister of Public Safety. In that reporting relationship, I think there's a very clear and important line of delineation. (begin highlight) Under no circumstances can the minister offer or direct operational activities of the RCMP in any way. The minister cannot tell them, for example, who to investigate, what to investigate, what charges should be laid or any aspect of their operational duties. It's a line that I'm quite familiar with. I spent many years as a police chief and I understand the difference between governance and the management and operation of a police service. It's a line I have always respected and continued to respect throughout my entire tenure as the Minister of Public Safety.

The RCMP have a responsibility to be accountable to the people of Canada through the Government of Canada. As the Minister of Public Safety, I am regularly and routinely briefed by the RCMP commissioner on matters of significant national concern, but at no time am I able—nor would I ever—give her any operational direction on any investigative matter. That includes information that would be communicated with the public. Those are decisions that are quite appropriately made independently by the police of jurisdiction—in this case, the RCMP—and they are not something that I would ever interfere with. (end highlight)

(1115)

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Just to further clarify, in this situation, during this awful tragedy, was there a time when the commissioner of the RCMP sought your direction or was she also very clear about that line? How would you have handled this had she even asked you for direction?

Hon. Bill Blair: No. (begin highlight) The commissioner did not seek, and has never in my experience in the over two years I've worked with her as the public safety minister sought, my direction on any operational matter.

In the aftermath of this tragic event, the commissioner was providing the Government of Canada, through me, very comprehensive briefings on what had transpired. She was providing us with information about the sequence of events, the number of casualties and some of the challenges they were facing. At the same time, she was very clear on what information was classified and not to be released. I respected that at all times. I think you'll see that I spoke publicly a number of times and was asked very explicit questions about the investigation and certain aspects of the communication. I was clear in every one of those communications that this was an operational matter for the RCMP and that I would not, in any way, interfere.

I think the commissioner is well aware of her responsibilities and her job. It's an awareness that I also possess. I think the two of us had, and continue to have, a very respectful relationship in how we have worked together, understanding where that very bright line is between the role of government and the role of our operational manager—the commissioner of the RCMP. (end highlight)

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Speaking very briefly about the briefings you received, was anything out of the ordinary or abnormal— of course, the entire tragedy and horrific incident was abnormal— about the briefings you received, or were these the types of briefings that, in an incident like this, would be part of the normal course of the commissioner's briefings to the minister?

Hon. Bill Blair: This was an extraordinary event, to be very clear. It was without precedent in the number of casualties and the horrific impact it had on that community. A number of concerns were being expressed from within the victims' families, by my counterparts in the province of Nova Scotia, by the media and by the community about the lack of information people were receiving about what had transpired. A number of very important questions were arising. I know that this was one of the challenges the commissioner had, on the one hand ensuring and protecting the integrity of their ongoing criminal investigation, and on the other hand ensuring that peoples' questions were answered.

I heard from many of my colleagues on both sides of the House expressing real concern, and understandable concern, about the lack of information and how desperately the families needed that information. So almost from the outset, and this is somewhat unique, there was a discussion taking place within my department, between myself and the deputy minister, as well as my counterpart in the province of Nova Scotia, to review the shootings and to propose terms of reference on a number of matters for a broad review of the mass shooting that had taken place, including the response of the police and steps taken to inform and support affected citizens.

I have that information with me today. I'm happy to share the proposed terms of reference that were developed on April 27. In the very earliest days and hours of this event, we recognized the importance of more fulsome and effective communications with the people impacted by this tragedy.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Minister, with 30 seconds left, I have one very brief question for you.

A lot has been made about timeline and the speed with which an OIC was issued to ban particular weapons after this tragedy. Can you tell this committee very quickly when the work actually started on this and whether or not this tragedy was actually the catalyst or whether this work had been done long before to put those rules into place?

The Chair: You have 10 seconds, Minister.

Hon. Bill Blair: Very quickly, the list that we produced in the OIC, which contained over 1,500 military-style assault weapons, was a list that took several months to compile. We worked very closely and consulted with the Canadian firearms program to compile that list.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I will now turn to Madame Michaud for a six-minute slot.

Madame Michaud, it's good to see you, as always. The floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

To the Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Deputy Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, thank you for being with us today.

I want to extend my condolences to the loved ones and families of the victims. Although the mass shooting took place in 2020, I think that hearing about it again, given the Mass Casualty Commission and everything that is published daily in the media, reopens wounds that weren't quite closed. So I think a lot about these people, and out of respect for them, I think it's important to be transparent, to give them as much information as possible and to answer their questions to the greatest extent possible. (begin highlight) The fact that there are allegations of political interference is quite serious. These people therefore deserve to have their questions answered. (end highlight)

I'll get right to the point.

Minister, you said some interesting things earlier in response to questions from my Conservative colleagues. According to the report on the mass shooting and to (begin highlight) the account by Superintendent Darren Campbell, at a meeting on April 28, 2020, RCMP commissioner Brenda Lucki allegedly said she promised you and the Prime Minister that she would release information about the weapons used in the mass shooting, even if it could compromise the investigation. (end highlight) As Mr. Campbell stated, she knew that you would issue a regulation two days later and revealing the weapons used would help your government.

Did you actually have these conversations with Ms. Lucki, during which you would have asked her to publicly disclose the type of weapons used?

(1120)

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair: Thank you for the question.

No, I did not. (begin highlight) I did not ask her to release that information. It wasn't required. (end highlight) The list of weapons that were being prohibited by the order in council that we brought forward on May 1 had taken months to prepare. (begin highlight) I did not ask the commissioner to release that information, and nor did she promise me that she would. (end highlight)

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: You already gave us this answer in the House. We've also read it in the media.

One thing is troubling me, though. According to the other version, the RCMP version, and based on what we can understand from Ms. Lucki's emails and Mr. Campbell's testimony, this is not the case.

How do you explain the different versions? Essentially, who is telling the truth? What were the discussions about the regulations enacted a few days later?

[English]

(begin highlight) **Hon. Bill Blair:** There's only one set of facts. I did not ask the commissioner to reveal that information. She did not promise me that she would.

(begin highlight) You're also referring to a conversation that the commissioner had with her subordinates in Nova Scotia, and there's some information that's come forward with that. I was not a party to that discussion and have no knowledge of that discussion. Those questions about that discussion are better put to the participants.

(begin highlight) However, I can say unequivocally and with absolute certainty that I did not direct the RCMP commissioner to reveal that information, nor did she promise me that she would do so. In fact, every time I was asked in every media event.... There are many recorded media interviews with me when questions were put to me, including the day we announced the order in council. I was very explicit that day that we were not going to release that information. The decision on when it should be released is entirely up to the RCMP. Subsequently, in the House—and if you go through Hansard you'll see it—many times members of the Conservative Party asked me about information related to that. I said the RCMP is conducting their investigation, and when they're concluded they'll release the information as they see fit.

(begin highlight) As I was doing then, I continue to strongly defend the operational independence of the RCMP in making operational decisions regarding their investigations. (end highlight)

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Earlier, in response to a question from my colleague, you said that the release date for the regulations, May 1, 2020, was chosen after the Portapique mass shooting.

Did that influence the decisions you made, including what ended up in the regulations? Quite honestly, I get the impression they were drafted on the back of a napkin. They do include the very weapons used in mass murders, but similar models are still on the market and aren't on this list.

After the Portapique mass shooting, what discussions followed about the regulations, which were enacted on May 1, 2020, and about their content?

Did they influence your decisions and policy action on gun control?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair: I think it's important to remind us all that this is a commitment we made. Frankly, the banning and prohibition of assault-style weapons is something I have worked on for many years. We actually campaigned on it in the 2019 election, as you may recall. It was in the throne speech when we became the government. It was also in my mandate letter that we would ban these assault style weapons. We went right to work. In fact, the work had actually begun in 2019, when I did cross-country consultations and we did surveys and other things to talk about what weapons should be prohibited.

As to the compiling of the list, that's a very interesting characterization. You suggest it was done on the back of a napkin—but it took several months of very hard work to compile that list of over 1,500 weapons. Very clear criteria were established for which weapons would make that list, and that list was compiled over many months.

Let me also be clear, Ms. Michaud, that the terrible tragedy that took place in Nova Scotia, the worst mass casualty shooting event in our country's history, was for me very impactful. All of the work that we had been doing for months and years leading up to that moment certainly had the effect of deepening my resolve to move forward as quickly as possible to keep the promise that we had made to Canadians. We made that to Canadians some time before. I remind myself that we're not alone in this. For example—

(1125)

The Chair: You have 10 seconds.

Hon. Bill Blair: —the leader of the NDP, on April 20, urged us to take some action in response to this terrible tragedy. That action was well entrained and we're working very hard on it going forward. Certainly, the terrible events of that event were highly motivating for me to get the job done and to keep—

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: I would now like to invite Mr. MacGregor to begin his six-minute slot.

Mr. MacGregor, whenever you're ready, the floor is yours.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the committee, Minister Blair.

I'd also like to echo my colleague Madame Michaud's comment that our thoughts are with the families in Nova Scotia. I truly want our committee's work today to be respectful of the commission's process and to not really interfere with the important work the commission is doing.

Minister Blair, my first question for you is, do you believe that handwritten notes, especially as they're written during the course of a certain action, are something you can put a lot of stock in? Do you use them personally?

Hon. Bill Blair: Actually, in confidential briefings I don't personally take notes, but I have previously as a police officer maintained a memo book, for example, which is an *aide-mémoire*. If it's done contemporaneously with events, it can provide good evidence.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Good, because (begin highlight) I guess the reason we're here today is from what has come to light from the handwritten notes of Superintendent Darren Campbell, which make specific reference to the commissioner having said that she had made a promise and that this was tied to impending gun control legislation.

Now you have very clearly stated on the record that no such promise was made and no direction was given. Why, then, do you think, in your opinion, Superintendent Campbell would have written that specifically in his notes, written during or shortly after a conference call with the commissioner?

Hon. Bill Blair: I think that's a question better put to the participants in that conversation. I was not a party to it. I had no knowledge of that conversation. I can tell you, and I'll repeat very clearly, I hope for all of you, that at no time did I give that operational direction to the RCMP commissioner to release that information, nor did she promise me that she would. But, with respect to the conversation she had with her team in Nova Scotia, that's a question that.... I was not a party to those conversations. It's a question best put to those who were a party to it. (end highlight)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Okay, we'll leave it at that.

(begin highlight) In response to previous questions on this topic, the Prime Minister publicly stated that his government did not put any undue influence or pressure on the RCMP. But that was kind of an evasive answer to the question because, while he makes specific reference to undue influence or pressure, it may leave it open to other types of influence and pressure.

How would you interpret the Prime Minister's answer to those specific questions?

Hon. Bill Blair: With respect, I'm not really feeling that it's appropriate for me to start interpreting that, but let me explain the conversations that were taking place in the immediate aftermath of this terrible tragedy. We were hearing from people right across the country. Most importantly, we were hearing from the families of the victims that there was a great deal of questions and concerns about what had taken place. (end highlight)

I do have notes from the proposed terms of reference for what became the Mass Casualty Commission, where we talked about the need to deal with the absence of red flags prior to the event; the police actions, taking into account the COVID environment; communications with the public during and after the event; policies with respect to the disposal of RCMP kit and vehicles; training and RCMP preparedness for active shooter complaints and, very importantly, support for the families and the victims.

(1130)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you, Minister. I'm sorry, but my time is running out shortly and I do want to change tack here. I don't want to repeat many of the questions that were asked.

(begin highlight) Mr. Noormohamed asked you to carefully explain the relationship between the Minister of Public Safety and the RCMP. You gave a very clear answer. The problem is, Minister, that other governments— previous governments, both Conservative and Liberal— have had ministers who have given operational direction to the RCMP. We saw it with the Chrétien government back in the 1990s with the APEC summit. Direction was also given back in the 1950s by the Diefenbaker government with an incident in Newfoundland.

I think the problem, Minister, lies with the interpretation of the *RCMP Act*, specifically subsection 5(1), which provides basically for the appointment of the commissioner, “who, under the direction of the Minister, has control and management of the Force”.

I'm paraphrasing that, but it basically leaves it quite vague. Would you agree that's quite a vague statement in the act that governs the RCMP?

Hon. Bill Blair: I'll explain that I think it's crystal clear. The Minister of Public Safety has the ability—

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: You say that despite the fact that other governments have overstepped their bounds.

Hon. Bill Blair: I can just tell you that for me, when I was Minister of Public Safety, it was a very bright line. The Minister of Public Safety has the ability to issue ministerial directives with respect to certain policy matters for the RCMP, but the line between having government or a politician direct the investigation or any of the operational activities of the RCMP, for me, is a bright line and one I have never crossed. (end highlight)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: I don't doubt that you find it crystal clear, but I'm trying to find ways so that we don't again get into this kind of situation in the future. So, (begin highlight) Minister, my question for you is how can we possibly amend this section of the act to make it crystal clear for successors in other governments so that we don't have meetings in the future where we're questioning a minister of public safety for alleged interference in ongoing RCMP investigations? Are there amendments that you think could be used to strengthen this act so it is crystal clear for everyone who holds that office? (end highlight)

Hon. Bill Blair: Mr. MacGregor, I would just point out to you that, in my experience as the public safety minister, there were a number of instances where some of my colleagues in the House were insisting that the police be directed in their activities in response to blockades, investigations and other matters.

The Chair: You have 10 seconds, Minister.

Hon. Bill Blair: (begin highlight) At all times I have maintained the principle that we will never interfere with the operations of the RCMP. (end highlight)

The Chair: Thank you.

We now move to a second round of questions, beginning with Mr. Ellis.

Mr. Ellis, welcome to the committee. I'm glad you're here this morning. You have five minutes for this round. The floor is yours.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a great pleasure to be here representing the great people of Cumberland—Colchester, of course, where this unfortunate incident took place for the most part.

Thank you, Minister, for being here.

I'll start with a quote: "Nova Scotians told us they needed this process to be independent, thorough and transparent, and we agree."

Minister Blair, do you know who said that, sir?

Hon. Bill Blair: I suspect it was me.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: It was you. That's very correct, sir.

Hon. Bill Blair: By the way, I believe that.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Great. Oddly enough, though, sir, from the very beginning you did not want an inquiry. Is that true?

Hon. Bill Blair: No, let me be very clear. Thank you for the opportunity to clarify that concern—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: I don't really need any clarification, sir. I just need a simple yes or no.

Hon. Bill Blair: In fact, in the immediate days following the shooting, I reached out to the Province of Nova Scotia. I had proposed terms of reference to conduct a broad review of the mass shooting in Nova Scotia, and—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Yes, sir. We understand that. Thank you. I know that we're tight on time, so let's get to the matter. (begin highlight) You wanted a review, not an inquiry. Then when the inquiry came around, you took the opportunity, sir, to actually appoint some very interesting commissioners—oddly enough, Mr. MacDonald, first cousin to one of the individuals who was shot, and a well-known Liberal, who stayed charges against Gerry Regan; Ms. Fitch, whose father was a Mountie, a five-year chief of police who was on a board of the RCMP; and Ms. Stanton, who actually wrote a book in 2021, released before the commission's start, to change the way public inquiries are held.

Is that not political interference from the very beginning, sir? (end highlight)

Hon. Bill Blair: Absolutely not, sir. In fact, I spoke to the attorney general in Nova Scotia, and he recommended former Chief Justice MacDonald as the commission chair. Chief Fitch had been the chief in Fredericton—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Yes—

Hon. Bill Blair: —when two of her officers and two citizens were killed in another mass shooting in that location—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Thank you, sir. Those facts are well known. I really appreciate that.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): On a point of order, Chair, can we allow the minister to answer the question asked of him?

The Chair: Yes. I think we have to have a little smoother flow here.

Minister, you have the floor.

(1135)

Hon. Bill Blair: Thank you.

We worked very carefully to ensure that when we established initially what was to be a review, but we heard very clearly from the families that they were very concerned about the ability of the commission of inquiry to subpoena witnesses, in response to that we did declare a public inquiry to give them those tools. But from the very beginning, in the immediate days following, it was very clear to us....

I'll happily provide the committee with the proposed terms of reference that were developed on April 27, 2020, only a week after this terrible tragic event, recognizing that the people of Nova Scotia, the people of your community, needed answers. We wanted to make sure they got those answers as quickly as possible.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Thank you, sir. It's obvious that we see the choices made politically somewhat differently. I would suggest to you, sir, that the members of the families who are affected, the grieving families of people like Lisa McCully and Greg and Jamie Blair and Kristen Beaton and Heather O'Brien, see this very, very differently from what you do, sir.

(begin highlight) One of the other things that I think is important is that quite clearly, with the back-and forth we've had now with our NDP member, our Bloc member and our team here as well, sir, someone is not telling the truth here. That's the unusual thing. There's a conflicting level of evidence that my Bloc colleague clearly pointed out. There's a contrary nature to what was said through the notes of Mr. Campbell, who you said is also an exemplary officer. (end highlight)

That being said, sir, who from the PMO was your staff communicating with in the days following the attacks?

Hon. Bill Blair: Sorry. Who...?

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Who from the PMO was your staff, or you, communicating with during the days after the attack?

Hon. Bill Blair: I don't know. I can tell you that there were regular briefings taking place between the RCMP, and I was also briefing my cabinet colleagues on the events—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Did you speak directly to the Prime Minister, sir?

Hon. Bill Blair: Again, I was briefing the entire cabinet on the events—

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Did you speak directly to the Prime Minister, sir? I think it's a pretty simple question.

Hon. Bill Blair: And I've just said that I was speaking to the entire cabinet on that matter.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Did you speak directly to the Prime Minister, sir? Please answer a simple yes or no.

Hon. Bill Blair: The Prime Minister is president in the cabinet. He's the head of our government.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Did you have a direct conversation with him, sir?

Hon. Bill Blair: Not a separate conversation on these events; it was in the context of a cabinet discussion.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Very good, sir.

Mr. Stewart, do you remember any meetings with the Prime Minister that you, the chief of staff or the minister may have had?

Mr. Rob Stewart: I did not attend any meetings with the Prime Minister, and I'm not sure.... I'd have to check my schedule. As Ms. Dancho has asked, we will give you the schedules.

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Sir, obviously you were present at multiple briefings during all of this. Someone's not telling the truth again, sir. Do you have an opinion on that?

Mr. Rob Stewart: You're asking me?

Mr. Stephen Ellis: Yes, sir.

The Chair: You have 10 seconds, please.

Mr. Rob Stewart: I don't believe that to be the case. I'm sorry, I think this answer will take more than 10 seconds.

There was a great deal of desire to have the RCMP tell the public what happened, because in the days following the tragic event the story was very unclear. There was a great deal of desire for that to be the case, and that—in the commissioner's mind, I believe—included the guns.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I would now call upon Mr. Hardie to take his five-minute slot. Whenever you're ready, Mr. Hardie, the floor is yours.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's almost impossible to get your mind around what happened in Nova Scotia and the impact on the families and on the force.

I spent a short time as the director of communication for the Vancouver police department, and I know full well that the police quite often have seconds—milliseconds—to make a decision, and everybody else has the rest of time to second-guess what they decided to do.

In your case, Minister Blair, you had a mandate letter from December 13, 2019, directing you to implement the government's firearms policy. First on the list was to deal with military-style assault weapons. Does this item in your mandate reflect the will of Canadians, do you think, as expressed in the 2019 election?

Hon. Bill Blair: I believe there is overwhelming support for the prohibition of assault-style weapons. I also understand...because I've heard very clearly from those representing the gun industry, for example, who have been strongly opposed to it.

Mr. Ken Hardie: (begin highlight) Would releasing the specific details of the weapons used in the Nova Scotia shootings have been necessary to justify the ban to Canadians?

(1140)

Hon. Bill Blair: I don't think it's in any way relevant, to be frank. (end highlight)

There are many documented instances where this style of weapons has been used in mass shootings in Canada and around the world. I personally believe that there is no place in a civil and safe society for such weapons. They were designed for military use and not for recreational use, and there have just been far too many tragedies where they have been used.

I still do not have all the particulars on what weapons were used, and in what circumstances, in the Nova Scotia shooting, but I also believe that a mass shooting was symptomatic of a greater problem.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Basically, the release of the information, as was alleged that somebody asked for, really wasn't necessary in the context of the OIC's coming up.

Five days after the shooting, Superintendent Campbell disclosed at a news conference that the gunman had two semi-automatic handguns and two semi-automatic rifles—although the government had received a briefing document dated that same day that provided many more details.

In your opinion, for purposes of informing the public, was Superintendent Campbell's disclosure sufficient to give the media and Canadians the essential information about the weapons used?

Hon. Bill Blair: Yes. In fact, it was more than sufficient, and I certainly didn't require or seek to have more released.

By that time, and when we brought forward the order in council, I was aware of what weapons were used, but the RCMP had been very clear, as had Superintendent Campbell.

I'd also comment that I watched the press conference by Superintendent Campbell on April 24, and, quite frankly, I thought that his delivery and the information shared in that press conference was outstanding. I was particularly respectful of the fact that he stood and answered every question that was put to him. I also heard later that morning from the attorney general in Nova Scotia who was equally relieved by the information that the superintendent shared on April 24.

Mr. Ken Hardie: (begin highlight) I will be asking the commissioner about preparation for these briefings that Superintendent Campbell conducted, but were you privy to any details or preparation for the superintendent's April 24 or April 28 media briefings?

Hon. Bill Blair: No, I was not.

(begin highlight) I was receiving information from the RCMP commissioner on what had transpired, but I was not involved in any of the briefings with the Nova Scotia officers or detachment on their response, and I had no information on what was being told to them or what they were going to say. (end highlight)

The information that I was receiving was also relevant to briefings that were being provided. As I alluded to earlier, there was a Prime Minister's briefing on the Nova Scotia tragedy that took place on Thursday, April 23, and it was based on information that the commissioner had shared with us.

Mr. Ken Hardie: After the shootings in Christchurch, New Zealand, the Prime Minister of New Zealand acted very quickly to institute a ban. It's very clear from your earlier testimony that the work to do so in Canada had been under way, given what had been promised in the 2015 election, the 2019 election, your mandate letter, etc. The tracks were already laid toward a ban.

You mentioned earlier today that the incident in Nova Scotia accelerated the release of the OIC and the ban. What response did you get from the Canadian public when that announcement was made on May 1?

Hon. Bill Blair: It was overwhelmingly positive.

The Chair: Mr. Hardie, you're out of time, but I want to give the minister 15 seconds to answer that question.

Hon. Bill Blair: There was a very strong response from the medical community, police chief associations across the country and the Canadian Police Association, which is the police union. There was strong support for the OIC that was brought forward prohibiting those assault weapons.

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

Madame Michaud, I now turn to you. You have two and a half minutes in this round, whenever you're ready.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, the director of strategic communications in Halifax, Lia Scanlan, said that government officials, including you, when you were the Minister of Public Safety, and Prime Minister Trudeau, were evaluating what they could and could not say. Now, this is a mass shooting, a tragedy where—I think you'll agree with me—the police are in the best position to determine what to say.

(begin highlight) One of the things you talked about was transparency and independence of the national police force, and as Mr. Hardie was saying earlier, police officers often only have a few minutes, a few seconds, before they make a decision. Obviously, they are in the best position to explain the decisions they made.

Hearing that the government wanted to control the message gives the impression that, instead of thinking about the victims, they were thinking about their political agenda. I wonder if you are aware of the public's perception. (end highlight)

(1145)

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair: First of all, I have never ever met or had a conversation with that individual. At no time have I ever given her, nor did my government give her, any direction on what she could or could not say. I have no understanding of that and no facts upon which to make a determination as to why that would be said, because it's simply not true.

As well, I think it's important to understand the context that the deputy minister referred to. There was, in the immediate days following this shooting, a tremendous amount of public concern about what had taken place and a great need, among the families, the community, Nova Scotians and people right across Canada, to understand what had happened and why it had happened. It was very important for information that could be shared to be shared with the public.

I had a number of conversations with my counterpart in Nova Scotia, and we were hearing from the families. I was hearing from a number of my counterparts too. In fact, the member for West Nova rose in the House, and another member, Mr. Barrett, rose in the House, expressing very real concern that the RCMP was not being forthcoming with information and urging us to make information public. In response to those questions in the House, I answered that it is the decision of the RCMP and that only the RCMP could determine what information would be released. I understood, as I understand now, their very sincere concern that more information needed to be shared.

The Chair: Thank you. We're out of time.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: I now move to Mr. MacGregor.

Sir, you have a two-and-a-half-minute slot. Whenever you're ready, the clock will go.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Minister Blair, I want to return to the subject of what I view as the vagueness of the *RCMP Act*, specifically subsection 5(1). Now, in my previous exchange with you, I cited two examples: the Diefenbaker government with the situation in Newfoundland, and the Chrétien government in the 1990s with the APEC summit. While I appreciate that for you this subsection is crystal clear, those are two very clear and demonstrated cases where the government of the day did give operational directives to the RCMP.

(begin highlight) I think what's being alleged here, if we look at Superintendent Campbell's notes, is not so much operational directives but more a communication directive. You've been very clear in saying that the line for what a minister can say to the RCMP when it comes to operational matters is very clear. I think there's a bit of wiggle room here, a bit of a different interpretation.

My interest going forward is how we prevent this from happening again. Law professor Kent Roach has suggested in the media that there should be a legislative requirement for ministerial directives to be made public and openly available so that any kind of directive given by the minister to the RCMP is there, it's open and people can read into it what they will. It would help satisfy the public's need to know whenever a minister is giving a directive under subsection 5(1). (end highlight)

Minister, would you support such a requirement, and if not, can you explain why?

Hon. Bill Blair: (begin highlight) In my experience, I use the ministerial directives fairly sparingly, but I do recall—and I just confirmed the with the deputy minister—that I issued a ministerial directive to the RCMP to improve their compliance with ATI requests. I believe that was made public. (end highlight)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Would you support a legislative requirement to do so?

Hon. Bill Blair: (begin highlight) Again, in my experience, I believe in transparency and I did do my very best to try to be as open and transparent as possible, recognizing that in the course of their investigations, if the police—the RCMP in this case—believe that the disclosure of certain information could be detrimental to their investigation, it's entirely up to them to make the determination of when and if that information should be released. Under no circumstances—

Hon. Bill Blair: I consider those types of communications to be operational in their nature as well and therefore it's something I would not interfere with. (end highlight)

The Chair: You have 10 seconds, Minister.

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

I now move to Mr. Lloyd.

Sir, you have five minutes in this round. The floor is yours.

(1150)

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for being here, Minister.

(begin highlight) My questions are going to be for the deputy minister. In response to earlier questions by my colleague regarding the April 28 email from Commissioner Lucki to you and the chief of staff and the public safety minister, you said that in response to her line that this was “not the execution that I was expecting”, you understood that to mean that she was expecting

the nature of the firearms to be disclosed at the press conference earlier that day. Is that correct? (end highlight)

Mr. Rob Stewart: No.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Can you please clarify what you said earlier to my colleague?

Mr. Rob Stewart: (begin highlight) I said that my understanding and recollection is that the commissioner, following the event and including the press conferences of April 24 and April 28, was making a promise in the general sense to the minister that information—the full amount of information that she thought appropriate—would be disclosed. (end highlight)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You believe that she believed she was making a promise to the minister to disclose this information?

Mr. Rob Stewart: (begin highlight) I think she had a conversation—not with me in the room, but I talk to her periodically. I think she was making a commitment that, as the investigation proceeded they would—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: This was a meeting with the commissioner and the minister, but you were not in the room? (end highlight)

Mr. Rob Stewart: Correct.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Was the minister in the room?

Mr. Rob Stewart: To be honest, I don't know when the commissioner and the minister talk.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You were aware of a meeting that took place and the minister would have been in that meeting.

Mr. Rob Stewart: I believe there were a number of conversations, as the minister has said.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You were not involved in these conversations

Mr. Rob Stewart: In the aftermath of that event there was.... I don't recall. The schedules will obviously tell you the truth here—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I just find it very interesting that as the deputy minister in a case like this, you were not involved in all conversations taking place between the commissioner and the minister on this matter.

Mr. Rob Stewart: (begin highlight) The heads of these organizations, including Brenda Lucki and the heads of CSIS and CBSA, are independently accountable to the minister. (end highlight) I'm not in every conversation.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I understand.

You had said earlier in the meeting that when she sent that email, you were aware that it was regarding information about the guns. Was that the execution she was talking about?

Mr. Rob Stewart: No, I don't—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You had no idea what the email was about.

Mr. Rob Stewart: I think the commitment was that the situation and what was happening with the investigation would be fulsome and forthcoming.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: When you got an email like that and you didn't really understand exactly what she's talking about, did you send a follow-up to ask, "What are you talking about, Commissioner? What execution are you referencing?"

Mr. Rob Stewart: No.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You didn't send any follow-up email?

Mr. Rob Stewart: No.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Are you aware of any meetings with the minister's chief of staff and the commissioner of the RCMP prior to the press conference to discuss whether or not information about the firearms would be disclosed?

Mr. Rob Stewart: No, I'm not aware.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You weren't in any of those meetings.

Mr. Rob Stewart: No.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Okay.

(begin highlight) The RCMP commissioner—and you would agree—had an expectation, as you had said earlier, that the firearms would be disclosed at the press conference.

Mr. Rob Stewart: You keep saying it that way and that's not what I'm saying.

What I'm saying is that there was an expectation on her part that there would be a full disclosure, and in her mind the guns would be included. That's what that email reveals.

I don't believe it's a result. And I agree with the minister: I was never witness to any commitment or promise made that information would be provided about the guns. (end highlight)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: But you said earlier that you believed that the commissioner believed that she was making a promise.

Mr. Rob Stewart: It was to be fulsome about the investigation. What that meant is a question you will have to ask her.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Yes. That's something that we'll definitely be asking.

(begin highlight) Were you aware of the April 23 email from the commissioner to the minister's chief of staff saying that the information about the firearms used should not be disseminated beyond the Prime Minister's Office and the minister's office? (end highlight)

Mr. Rob Stewart: Yes, I was.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: (begin highlight) Were you aware of any reason that directive would have changed in the five days following? Was there any discussion about why the minister believed that that should be the case and why that might have changed? (end highlight)

Mr. Rob Stewart: Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: (begin highlight) The commissioner appears to have made a complete 180 turn from what she said on April 23, that the information should not be disseminated, as five days later, based on the witness testimonies of Lia Scanlan and Superintendent Campbell, she was quite upset that the information was not revealed, and you're not aware of any conversations that took place in those five days with either you or the minister's office regarding why the decision would have been made to reverse that decision? (end highlight)

Mr. Rob Stewart: That's correct.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Mr. Chair, I'll cede the rest of my time.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll move to Mr. Anandasangaree, who will take us through to the end of this round of questioning.

The floor is yours, sir. You have five minutes starting now.

(1155)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister. It's good to see you, and my deepest condolences to the families impacted by this tragedy.

Minister, I want to just get on the record a couple of very important facts.

Would you be the first Minister of Public Safety who has had a very long and distinguished career in policing?

Hon. Bill Blair: I believe so.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Could you give us a sense of what you did prior to becoming Minister of Public Safety?

Hon. Bill Blair: Yes, sir. I was a police officer for 39 years in Toronto, and from 2005 to 2015, I was the chief of police in the city of Toronto.

I also served as the president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and a vice-president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. I also served on the board of the Police Executive Research Forum and on the executive board of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: (begin highlight) In that context, have you come across the issue of operational independence; and if so, could you give us a sense of how important that is to you as a principle of policing, especially in the context of the democratic space in which we operate in Canada? (end highlight)

Hon. Bill Blair: Yes, thank you very much.

(begin highlight) I think it's a very important principle of policing. As a police chief, I was governed by a police services board, and I think that's a very important relationship in governance. I think police services and police chiefs must be accountable to a governance authority and, in my case, as a police chief, it was my police services board, but there was always a very clear understanding between the police chief and those who governed us as to where that bright line was.

They dealt with issues of policy and issues of directives with respect to certain matters but not with operational matters, and it is a line that I think is a critically important one in Canadian society in how the police operate independently, but in their independence, they are not without accountability. They are accountable, and the RCMP is accountable to the people of Canada through the Government of Canada and the Minister of Public Safety. (end highlight)

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Minister, I want to quote you from back in 2012, and this is with respect to the shooting on Danzig in my community 10 years ago last week, as you're aware. You were quoted as saying the following:

I've been a cop for 35 years, and this is the worst incident of gun violence, in my memory, anywhere in North America. It's very shocking. A lot of innocent people were injured tonight.

In this context, would it be safe to say that the issue of gun violence and guns on our streets was something that you've thought about for many years?

Hon. Bill Blair: Prior to becoming the chief of police, I was the head of the detective branch involved in very many gun and gang investigations. I had also been responsible for uniform policing in the city for a number of years. When I became the chief, it was what they called the "summer of the gun".

Dealing with gun violence was a very important part of my mandate, and I did everything in my power to reduce gun violence and to keep the people of my city safe, and, frankly, I brought much of that experience and motivation. If I may, December 2012 was also the Sandy Hook shooting in which 26 people died, 20 of them ages six and seven, and, for me, that was perhaps a moment that forever steeled my resolve to do everything possible to keep our communities safe and ban weapons that were the weapon of choice for people who would commit such terrible atrocities.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Would it be inaccurate for me to say that, when you sought the nomination in 2014, ran in 2015, again in 2019 and again in 2021, the issue of gun violence was one of the top priorities for you and, given the opportunity, that you would ensure that many guns would be off our streets?

Hon. Bill Blair: Personally and politically, it is something that motivated me to continue in public service beyond my career in policing and to come to Ottawa. Strengthening gun control and keeping people safe I think is the highest of callings.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: (begin highlight) Minister, in conclusion, what do you have to say to this committee when this allegation of political interference is before you?

Hon. Bill Blair: Again, I'll reiterate that at no time did I cross that line. I did not direct the commissioner of the RCMP, and I did not have any private conversation with her in which that was done. The commissioner did not promise me that she would do this.

I think the commissioner understood her job, and her job was to serve the people of Canada and the people of Nova Scotia, to give them information that they desperately needed and wanted with respect to the terrible tragedy that had taken place there. I believe the commissioner was highly motivated to do so and was working with her people in order to make sure that information was provided to the people who had been impacted by this terrible tragedy.

For me, I want to be very clear. I did not direct the RCMP. I did not direct them in their operations or in their communications and throughout. (end highlight) There were a number of questions—

(1200)

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

Hon. Bill Blair: —put to me in the House and in the media in which I was asked...and in every single case, (begin highlight) I reiterated my commitment that the responsibility for disclosure of that information lies solely with the RCMP, and— (end highlight)

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

Hon. Bill Blair: (begin highlight) —at no time did I interfere with that. (end highlight)

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree: Thank you.

The Chair: I'm sorry, but we're out of time. That's always the big challenge and the curse of these meetings: We always run out of time. We've run out of time for this section and for this panel.

Deputy and Minister, thank you very much for the generosity of your time.

Members, thank you for keeping within your time limits.

We will now suspend for a change of technology. It should take about five minutes and no more, so we'll see you all in five.

(1200) _____ (Pause) _____
(1205)

Tab 7 Transcript highlights – Commissioner Lucki July 25th 2022

The Chair: Thank you, colleagues. We're ready to call the meeting back to order.

Our second panel witnesses are from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Commissioner Brenda Lucki; and deputy commissioner Brian Brennan, contract and indigenous policing. They have requested that they split their time.

Commissioner Lucki, you will have seven and a half minutes, and then deputy commissioner, you will have two and a half minutes. Welcome to all of you.

I now invite you, Commissioner Lucki, to begin your opening statement.

The floor is yours.

(begin highlight) **Commissioner Brenda Lucki (Commissioner, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** Good afternoon.

I can't imagine what Nova Scotians went through during that 12- hour rampage and I recognize that there is a lot of healing required to move forward.

Each and every day, my employees do the best they can with the circumstances they are faced with, but, of course, we can always do better. That's why the Mass Casualty Commission was created: "to provide meaningful recommendations to keep communities safe in the future."

Thanks for the opportunity to speak on some of these important issues that were raised by this incident.

Let me begin and let me be clear: I did not interfere in the investigation around this tragedy; nor did I experience political interference. Specifically, I was not directed to publicly release information about weapons used by the perpetrator to help advance pending gun control legislation.

Was there pressure for information from the federal government about this incident? Yes. This wasn't surprising, as we were dealing with the biggest mass shooting incident in our country. It was my responsibility to keep relevant officials apprised of the evolving situation while maintaining the integrity of the operation.

Were the requests for information and updates political interference? No. In my dealings with Minister Blair, he was very conscious of this and has never sought to interfere in the investigation.

I understand that some RCMP employees may have different perspectives based on the meeting of April 28. However, I was the only RCMP official dealing with the minister, other senior government officials and occasionally with the Prime Minister. I am the only one who can speak to the nature of these requests, exchanges of information and my intentions during that meeting.

The integrity of a police investigation is critical. As someone with over 35 years in policing, that's something I would never seek to influence or jeopardize, nor would I allow RCMP investigations to be dictated or influenced by government officials.

I am accountable to the minister from an administrative perspective, but the RCMP is operationally independent. The basis for this principle is to prevent direct and specific political control of police operational activity, with the sole responsibility for operational decision-making resting in the hands of police officers.

Keeping the government informed through timely and accurate information sharing is not interference. It's standard procedure, and these situational updates are provided without compromising the operational integrity of an investigation.

I did provide information on April 23 about the types of weapons found in the perpetrator's possession—information that was to be shared with the minister and the Prime Minister—noting that it wasn't to be disseminated any further as there was an active investigation. Additional information was shared as well, but government officials were advised that any information received couldn't be shared with the media until first released by RCMP. This included such information as the number and names of the deceased, replica police uniforms and vehicle information, the incident at the fire hall, the background of the perpetrator and the weapons used and seized.

In the lead-up to the Nova Scotia press conference scheduled for April 28, I provided information to the government on what would be released. At that time, I was asked if the information about the weapons would be included. When my communications team told me that it would be, I relayed this information back to Minister Blair's chief of staff and the deputy minister of public safety.

Regarding my use of the word “promise” during the meeting I had with my team following that press conference, at that time and in that context, I was trying to convey that I had confirmed to the minister that the information about the weapons would be released during the press conference—a confirmation that was made based on information that I had been provided.

Due to a miscommunication, this was not the case, and I felt I had misinformed the minister and, by extension, the Prime Minister. These were difficult, dynamic and demanding circumstances, and everybody was doing their best to provide as much information to the government, the public and the media about this appalling event.

This all took place just over a month after COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. The pandemic fundamentally changed how we managed this incident.

(1210)

The unfortunate reality is that the information flow from Nova Scotia colleagues into my office in the hours and days following the shooting wasn't what it should have been. It was for this reason that I called the meeting to express my disappointment and frustration and to outline expectations. Once I was informed during that meeting of the miscommunication and that releasing the information would jeopardize the ongoing investigation, I considered the matter closed and did not pursue it further. This was clearly articulated back to the minister. In fact, to support my assertion on non-interference, this information was not released until several months later.

On the matter of the April 28 meeting itself, it needed to happen. It was essential that I had more timely and accurate information, and it was important that my team understood my expectations going forward. It wasn't helped by the fact that it was a teleconference. I had no visual cues for how my words affected those on the call. In the early days of the pandemic, we didn't have access to the on-screen platforms we do now.

The timing of the meeting itself was not ideal, and I should have been more sensitive to those in attendance—people who had been operating in a high-stress and very emotionally charged environment and had just completed a significant press conference. Given this context, I regret the timing and how I framed the conversation, but the discussion was still necessary.

It wasn't brought to my attention until a year later that there were concerns of political interference stemming from that meeting and that my approach and interactions with my team were in question. Had I known my words and approach had such an effect, I would have definitely made things right sooner. This is who I am.

Let me be clear. I did not interfere in the investigation, I did not receive direction and I was not influenced by government officials regarding the public release of information and, more importantly, on the direction of the investigation. I ensured that operational independence was maintained in all my interactions with government, as I do today.

In closing, I will note that the RCMP is committed to supporting the important work of the Mass Casualty Commission. Any time we have a mechanism to review and improve how we operate is critical. (end highlight)

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Commissioner.

Now I turn to the deputy commissioner, Mr. Brennan, who has two and a half minutes to complete his opening remarks.

The floor is yours, sir.

Deputy Commissioner Brian Brennan (Deputy Commissioner, Contract and Indigenous Policing, Royal Canadian Mounted Police): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

As stated, my name is Brian Brennan and I am the deputy commissioner of contract and indigenous policing. In this capacity, I am responsible for the RCMP's contract and indigenous policing program, which includes overseeing delivery of local policing services in Canada's three territories and in all provinces except for Ontario and Quebec. I am posted here in Ottawa.

For context, prior to starting this position as deputy commissioner, I was the commanding officer in Nova Scotia, which we refer to as H Division. As deputy commissioner, it is my responsibility to keep abreast of, and when appropriate provide guidance related to, serious or significant situations occurring on the ground across our divisions to ensure a uniform level of service and

consistent responses to operational issues that arise as a result of our frontline policing responsibilities. Across the RCMP, six divisional commanding officers are direct reports to me, including the four commanding officers in the Atlantic provinces.

In the context of the mass casualty event in 2020, this meant I was supporting H Division by working with national headquarters business lines to ensure that operational requests in support of the division were actioned, and by providing briefing updates to the senior executive committee and other commanding officers. I was in regular contact with the commissioner, the commanding officer of Nova Scotia and her team to gather information and to support their response, including efforts to provide support and resources to the division from other parts of the RCMP across the country.

My focus was on policing operations rather than public communications.

(begin highlight) Understandably, there were many questions about what was happening on the ground and what information was available to share from the division. The commissioner required timely and regular updates on the evolving situation to support her work and exercise her responsibilities as commissioner. This was appropriate and expected. (end highlight)

With that, I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have on this matter.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(1215)

The Chair: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner.

The time for questions has arrived. We will start this round with Ms. Dancho.

Ms. Dancho, you have six minutes. Take the floor.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the commissioner and deputy commissioner for being here today.

(begin highlight) Commissioner Lucki, in an April 28 email from you, you said that you provided to government information that would be released to the public. Correct? (end highlight)

Commr Brenda Lucki: On what date?

Ms. Raquel Dancho: On April 28 there were several emails from you. I'm thinking of two in particular.

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) Yes, there were several versions of speaking notes that were being used by the people on the ground in Nova Scotia. That was one of many versions.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay. In one of the emails from you on April 28, you confirmed that the information about the weapons would be released in a press conference. Correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes. (end highlight)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: That would have been the early morning of April 28.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I believe so.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay. Thank you.

Deputy Minister Stewart, who appeared just before you, informed the committee earlier of a conversation in which this promise that you mentioned in your opening remarks happened. It was during a discussion with the minister. The deputy minister was not there, but he was aware of this discussion. You mentioned this in your opening remarks. Correct?

(begin highlight) **Commr Brenda Lucki:** It wasn't a promise; it was a confirmation, because I was asked if that information would be included in the media release. I verified through my comms people, who verified with the people on the ground, and at that point they advised that it was, in fact, going to be part of that big media event on April 28.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Just to be clear, the minister asked you if the weapons used in the attack would be mentioned in the press conference.

Commr Brenda Lucki: He was speaking of the weapons in the incident. That would mostly include the weapons seized, because the weapons used were still under forensics. So it was more involved with the weapons seized.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Just to confirm, the Minister of Public Safety at the time, Bill Blair, specifically asked you if weapons used during the attack would be mentioned in the press conference of April 28.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes, in the sense that it was any of the weapons involved in the incident. Some were seized and not used and some were used.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You made a promise to him that this information would be released in the April 28 press conference. Correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I confirmed, in fact, that they were going to be part of the media event.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So with regard to Darren Campbell's account of the meeting that you had called following that press conference—again, that meeting happened immediately or within two hours after—where he wrote in his notes that you had made a promise to Minister Blair that this information about the weapons would be released, he was accurate in this, given what you're saying.

Commr Brenda Lucki: That's what he wrote, but as I said in my notes, in the context.... The word "promise" that I used was in the context of confirming the answer to his question.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: But you used the word "promise". Correct? It's a very specific word.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I don't recollect that. I may have—I'm not going to question Superintendent Campbell's recollection—but it was in the context of confirming the information that was asked of me.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You said to the RCMP officials, in that infamous April 28 meeting, that you promised Minister Blair that the information about the weapons would be released, just in sum. Correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I was referring to the confirmation of the question.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Mr. Campbell also mentioned in his notes, as you're aware, that you tied that to the forthcoming gun policy. Correct?

(1220)

Commr Brenda Lucki: It was when we were speaking of many different flows of information through the last 10 days. There were a lot of issues with the flow of information. The weapons were but one part of my frustration with, and why the meeting was called—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Commissioner Lucki, did you...? According to Darren Campbell's notes and the letter to you from Ms. Scanlan from a year later, both of them said in their remarks that you tied that promise to the forthcoming Liberal gun policy—or OIC, pardon me.

Commr Brenda Lucki: No—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Is that correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: —what I did recall mentioning was that the reason why the weapons were so important, and why they asked if they were going to be included, was tied to the minister's mandate letter.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So you did connect the two.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes, I did.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Okay.

Ms. Scanlan also mentioned that you said in the meeting that there was pressure from Minister Blair on you. Is that correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No. I don't recall saying that.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So she is incorrect in what she wrote to you.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I cannot tell you if she is incorrect or not. That's her recollection.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So you did not feel pressure in that meeting when you spoke to Minister Blair and you promised him that you would get that information released about the weapons used.

Commr Brenda Lucki: First of all, I didn't promise him. I confirmed the answer to his question. Second of all, in regard to the second part of your question, there was a lot of pressure, and it wasn't just from the minister's office. It was from the various downtown offices. The most pressure was probably from the media. There was a lot of pressure internally to get communications out, because we had lost a member. There was a lot of communications. I was going in front of the media quite a bit.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: So you confirmed to Minister Blair, when he asked you if the weapons information would be released in that press conference, that, yes, it would be. Correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: That's one of the reasons you were so angry with your deputies in Nova Scotia in that meeting, correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I wasn't angry.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: You weren't angry at all?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Not at all. I was disappointed. I felt let down, but I wasn't angry or upset. It's not part of my DNA.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Darren Campbell said that you specifically said you promised. You're saying, "Maybe I did, but I definitely said I confirmed to the minister...."

Commr Brenda Lucki: I may have said that, but it wasn't the context. If Darren Campbell put that in his notes, I'm not going to question his notes. What I'm saying, though, is my intention was not.... It wasn't a promise in the traditional sense. It was confirming the answer to a question.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Commissioner, on April 23 you said that the information about the weapons should not be released because it was related to an active investigation. Why did you change your mind three or four days later? To me, it seems like this conversation with Minister Blair changed your mind.

Commr Brenda Lucki: No, not at all. It wasn't all about the investigation either. It was the fact that—

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Pardon me. On the weapons specifically, you said not to share it, and then four or five days later, you were reprimanding your deputies for not sharing it.

Commr Brenda Lucki: No. It wasn't specifically about the weapons, whether to share or not to share.... In that email, yes, but it was also about the protocol that they had in place on the ground, because nothing was to be released by anybody in government until the RCMP released it in the media.

The Chair: You have 10 seconds to finish your answer, Commissioner.

Commr Brenda Lucki: —and secondly, we had protocol with the families.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Did the minister influence your demeanour in that meeting with your deputies? Did the minister influence your demeanour?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No, he did not.

The Chair: We're out of time.

Thank you very much.

We now turn to Ms. Damoff.

You have six minutes in this round, Ms. Damoff. Go ahead whenever you're ready.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Thank you.

I, too, would like to follow up on the comments made by a number of my colleagues recognizing how triggering this meeting can be, not only to those from Nova Scotia but also to all Canadians who have lived through gun violence. I want to recognize that. In particular, to our colleague across the way, MP Ellis, and those in Nova Scotia, my condolences.

Commissioner, I recall after that shooting—and you mentioned this in your remarks—the pressure from the media. I recall pressure from Canadians. Opposition party MP Barrett asked a question during question period about when this information was going to come out.

It sounds like you had a number of conversations with Minister Blair about what would be said in that press conference. Was that a normal thing that would transpire between you and the minister, especially with a national tragedy such as what happened in Nova Scotia? Would it be normal to relay to him what he could expect to see at the press conference?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes. Many times we provide the speaking notes beforehand, but because there were so many details, and they were changing—they were adding and subtracting and adding and subtracting—we didn't have a final version.

(begin highlight) It wasn't necessarily with Minister Blair at that point. It would have been with his staff going back and forth. I would provide one. I only gave one copy because, like I said, it was so dynamic, but that's normal practice. (end highlight)

(1225)

Ms. Pam Damoff: Were those conversations only related to the guns that were used, or were they...? I recall Canadians being quite upset about the communications by the Nova Scotia RCMP at the time and the lack of information that was provided, so was that conversation only about guns or was it a broader conversation that you had?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) No, all of the conversations were about several things. The number of deceased was always changing. Where the deceased were located, the background of the perpetrator, the replica uniforms and the replica cars were others. There were so many different points.

What was getting frustrating was that the media was reporting everything before we did. With regard to the number of deceased, for example, I remember looking up on a screen and seeing

22 faces on a screen, and we were reporting different numbers. We needed to get in front of it, because this wasn't a normal type of investigation, in the sense that the perpetrator was deceased.

Usually the information is more forthcoming, but my heart goes out to them. They didn't have the capacity on the ground. It's a small division. (end highlight) They don't have a big communications centre. I should have mentioned this. They were doing the best they could with what they had, and we were trying to get a team on the ground to assist them, but because of COVID, non-operational people were not allowed into the province.

Ms. Pam Damoff: That's right. There was a ban on travel into the province at the time, wasn't there?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes, there was.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Commissioner, one of the weapons that was banned in the order in council was the AR-15, and when Minister Blair appeared earlier, he talked about how the Sandy Hook shooting in the United States with an AR-15, in particular, impacted him.

My colleague Mr. Hardie mentioned the Christchurch shooting in New Zealand.

Marine core combat veteran Dr. Kyleanne Hunter testified before the U.S. Congress recently and explained the difference between an AR-15 and other types of weapons. She said, "It was designed to kill someone wearing a military helmet.... What that does to a civilian wearing nothing...is liquify organs." That really struck me as to why in both 2015 and 2019 we promised to ban weapons like the AR-15, and also why it was in the minister's mandate and why we took action in the order in council.

Commissioner, you have far more experience than I do, is that an accurate description of an AR-15?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I would like to say that I do have that kind of experience, but I don't. I have subject matter experts who assist me in the firearms regulations. Specifically, we have a lab with a full inventory of weapons, and the experts are far more adept at that than I am.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Given that she was in the marines, I'm going to suggest that she probably does have a fair amount of experience to be able to say that.

On that note, was the RCMP involved in discussions with the minister's office about what weapons to include in that order in council? How long had those conversations been going on?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) We are always involved with anything with policy or legislation that affects policing as is the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. It was the same type of process when we were dealing with the cannabis legislation as well. Of course, within the RCMP we have many subject matter experts who came to the table and briefed the minister regularly when they were looking at legislative policy and policy changes. (end highlight)

Ms. Pam Damoff: How long had that been going on, Commissioner? The announcement had been made, and it seems to be a suggestion that the decision to do this was as a result of the—

Commr Brenda Lucki: For months.

Ms. Pam Damoff: Months?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Months and years, probably since I got in the chair.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I think Minister Goodale was actually involved in some of that.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I only have four seconds left, so I will turn it back to the Chair.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Damoff.

I will turn it over to Ms. Michaud.

Ms. Michaud, you have six minutes in this round. Take it away.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Lucki and Mr. Brennan, thank you for being with us today. We greatly appreciate it.

As I mentioned earlier, this is a sensitive topic for many, and I think that those who want answers to their questions deserve to have them, or at least get some clarification about what happened. Allegations of political interference are always a serious matter. This means that we are trying to truly understand what happened, based on different accounts.

(begin highlight) There is a lot of talk about the notes that Mr. Campbell took. I will refer to those as well, because there are some things in there that raise important questions. And I would like to hear your comments on that, Ms. Lucki.

Ms. Lucki, in a statement you issued, you assured us that you would never take any action or make any decisions that would compromise an investigation.

Do you consider publicly disclosing the type of weapons used before the investigation is complete, such as in this case, to be the kind of thing that can compromise an investigation?

(1230)

[English]

Commr Brenda Lucki: I'm a bit confused because there was no inquiry at the point when we were discussing that in a media release. Is that what you are referring to?

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: What I mean is that it seems as though political pressure was applied to reveal the weapons that were used. What we're hearing from the Nova Scotia RCMP is that public disclosure could compromise the investigation.

Do you agree that this could have or would have compromised the investigation?

[English]

Commr Brenda Lucki: That's very difficult to say because there was no inquiry called at the time that we were talking about the release of the types of weapons that were seized. It wasn't until months later that this was released, and it wasn't released by ourselves.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: At this stage, hypothetically speaking, do you consider that revealing this type of information could compromise an investigation?

[English]

Commr Brenda Lucki: It's hard to be hypothetical because it depends on what they're looking at in the inquiry. If they're not looking at weapons, then it might not compromise anything.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: The minister just told us that he never made you promise to reveal the weapons used.

You just said the same thing, that you were not pressured by the minister or the Prime Minister. However, you did mention that the government had exerted pressure to obtain certain information.

Can you tell us what that information was? What kind of conversations did you have with the government that lead you to believe you were pressured?

[English]

Commr Brenda Lucki: First of all, there was pressure for every single bit of information related to this incident: the number of deceased, where the deceased were located, who the deceased were, the background of the deceased, the perpetrator, the background of the perpetrator, the perpetrator's common-law spouse, the fire hall incident, the types of vehicles that the perpetrator had, the replica uniforms. It went on and on, and it was relentless, especially from the media. I and the minister and the Prime Minister were going in front of the media in the first three days quite often. To have as much up-to-date information as we could was important.

It was about me providing situational awareness, and most of it was done on my volition to them in regard to this being the normal practice of giving situational awareness to events such as.... Well, there was no event such as this.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: So you're saying that the government simply sought information, just like the rest of the public, and that pressure was not necessarily applied to obtain information in a privileged way, before the public knew about it, for example. (end highlight)

Correct?

[English]

(begin highlight) **Commr Brenda Lucki:** No, there is never.... Much of the information that I provide is a heads-up. I like to give government officials a heads-up before things are released in the media, and normally they will be released shortly thereafter.

I am only the messenger in all of this. I am not the keeper of any information. I always have to go back to either my deputy of contract policing or my deputy of federal policing, or I need to go to the commanding officer of the division and say, "I have a question. Can you tell me something about it?" Then I see if they give me the reply, and then I'm repeating their reply. It's much the same with any of the media that I do.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: You say you are simply the messenger in this type of situation. However, as the commissioner of the RCMP, I assume you still give instructions to your employees.

will quote from Mr. Campbell's notes to provide some context. On the subject of that notable meeting, he said:

[English]

The commissioner was obviously upset. She did not raise her voice but her choice of words was indicative of her overall dissatisfaction with our work. The Commissioner accused us (me) of disrespecting her by not following her instructions. (end highlight)

[Translation]

He also said:

(1235)

[English]

(begin highlight) The commissioner said she told Comms to tell us at H Division to include specific info about the firearms used by [the killer].

[Translation]

You had issued instructions, which presumably were not followed. You were angry or upset about it. You linked it to the conversation you had with the government regarding the promise, or not, to give information about the type of weapons used. (end highlight)

Do you confirm what is in the notes?

Perhaps you were upset about something else, like what you said earlier, or other things discussed at that meeting?

[English]

The Chair: I'm sorry, Madame Michaud, but we're out of time. But I want to give the commissioner 15 seconds to answer that question.

Go ahead, Commissioner.

(begin highlight) **Commr Brenda Lucki:** I want to stress that I was not upset. First of all, upset and anger are not part of my DNA. I'm a fairly calm police officer.

(begin highlight) I always spoke in terms of how I felt. I felt disappointed and I felt frustrated with the flow of information over that past 10 days. Using the weapons as an example was but one example of the lack of flow of information back and forth between the ground and national headquarters. (end highlight)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. MacGregor, I now turn to you for your six minutes of questioning.

The floor is yours.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the commissioner and deputy commissioner for joining our committee today and helping walk us through the series of events from April 2020.

(begin highlight) Commissioner, you stated that in your mind it wasn't a promise but a confirmation and that the information would be released at the press conference.

I know that there was a lot of pressure. There was a lot of pressure from the public. There was a lot of pressure from the federal government in trying to get this kind of information.

I guess for some people, when they see the Minister of Public Safety asking you, as commissioner of the RCMP, whether or not the information on the firearms would be released at a press conference, because of the very nature of the relationship that the minister has with the commissioner of the RCMP, some people might perceive that to be undue influence in the very posing of the question.

Do you see how that could be perceived by some members of the public?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Anything's possible. There were also a lot of questions about when the names of the deceased were going to be released and when the information about the fire hall

incident was going to be released. They could not talk about anything until we spoke about it at the media events, so of course anything that we hadn't spoken about to date was of interest.

I really pride myself on giving accurate and timely information. To not give that information when I'm briefing the minister or, by extension, the Prime Minister, is not something I like to do. I like to be accurate and timely.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Commissioner, did you get a sense that when the question was posed to you, this was information the minister and his chief of staff did really want to see released to the public? In the asking of the question, could you infer that this was a result they actually wanted to see happen at the new conference given by the RCMP?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I didn't think at all. It was a question; I provided an answer.

The minister is very conscious of.... First of all, he has an appetite for questions. He's a former police officer, so the who, what, where, why, when and how is almost part of his DNA. Any time there's an event, he will ask those questions.

I provide the answers I can, but I'm always going back to the source because I often don't know what the answers to those questions are. I wouldn't infer anything from what he said. It was a simple question that I was going to provide a response to.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Just hypothetically, if the minister had asked for this information to be released through the RCMP, do you think that would be regarded as an operational directive or more of a communications directive?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I think it could be a little bit of both. The thing is, if information could be released, then I would say, "Yes, it can be released" and I will ask them to do that. I will check and see if they can actually do that or if they cannot.

The question is not interference. It's what happens with it. If I feel that the question is forcing me to do something that I don't want to do, to me that's interference. Asking me to do something in the investigation is interference. Asking me to arrest somebody, not arrest somebody, sanction somebody or not sanction somebody is interference. Asking questions is not interference. (end highlight)

(1240)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: (begin highlight) I understand.

(begin highlight) I guess if you, as commissioner, were presented with a directive that you felt was operational interference...what tools does a commissioner have at his or her disposal if the government of the day is asking that? (end highlight)

Commissioner, we have examples from the past. In the previous hour, I cited how the Diefenbaker government directed the RCMP to send forces to Newfoundland. The Liberal government under Jean Chrétien, during the 1997 APEC summit, tried to give directional information to the RCMP about the president of Indonesia's visit.

(begin highlight) What tools does the RCMP commissioner have at his or her disposal if the government of the day is very intent on micromanaging those types of affairs?

Commr Brenda Lucki: First of all, as commissioner, I have no qualms about saying, “We are entering an area of direction”. I'm prepared to leave a meeting. Also, like I said, any of the information that I'm providing is not my information. I go back to the team that holds the information and we have a discussion if need be. If somebody says that we cannot release that information because of A, B and C, then that's it—I don't even ask any more.

That's the beauty of the way we do it. It's not my information to release, nor was any of this information for me to release.

I've had a lot of discussions about this, obviously, since it's come to light. Sometimes I think it's time for all three governments to have a conversation. Whoever the government in power is, we should make sure this is very clear and that people are signing off on this, so that we're not having this discussion at the next SECU appearance.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you.

On that subject of clarity, I just wanted to nail down on that because the section of the *RCMP Act* that deals with this simply says, “under the direction of the Minister, [the commissioner] has the control and management of the Force”. Some people complain that it's far too vague and very open to interpretation.

Do you feel that we, as legislators, could be looking at that to shore it up, so that we are not in situations like this in the future?

The Chair: You're out of time, Mr. MacGregor, but I want to give the commissioner 15 seconds to answer that question.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Anything that prevents me from coming back to this committee to answer these questions would be welcome. (end highlight)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Commissioner.

We now move into the second round of questions, and we'll be led off by Mr. Lloyd.

Sir, you have five minutes, whenever you're ready.

(begin highlight) **Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for being here, Commissioner.

Would it be fair to say, Commissioner, that you believe this entire saga has been the result of a miscommunication, that you were mistakenly told that the information about the guns would be revealed and that this led to the meeting where you were unhappy about the information not being revealed? Would you say the miscommunication is the heart of the issue?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes, I think miscommunication is at the heart of many issues. (end highlight)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Okay, but in this issue in particular, there was a miscommunication.

Now, as to the meeting you had with Minister Blair when you gave him the confirmation that the information about the firearms would be included, how many people were in attendance at that meeting?

(begin highlight) **Commr Brenda Lucki:** It wasn't a meeting. It was just a question, I think, from his chief of staff saying—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Was it an email?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Normally my calendar tells me everything I do each and every day. Unfortunately, I was by myself. Because of COVID, everybody was working from home.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Earlier you said that the minister asked if the guns would be included. You said that earlier.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I said the minister's office.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: It was the minister's office. Who was it in the minister's office?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It would be the chief of staff.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: So the chief of staff, not the minister, asked you if the guns would be included.

Commr Brenda Lucki: At that point in time, I wasn't talking very often to the minister. It was more with his office.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: The deputy minister earlier today said that you had a meeting with the minister during this time period. He was not in attendance at the meeting. Did you have a physical meeting or a teleconference call with the minister between April 23 and April 28?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I don't have that in my records. I know that I was speaking with that office fairly regularly about this event, as there were a couple of other things going on as well outside of the event.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: The minister said you guys were meeting on an almost daily basis in the wake of this.

Commr Brenda Lucki: The first three to five days, yes.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: So you weren't meeting on a daily basis between the 23rd and the 28th, or even semidaily.

Commr Brenda Lucki: We didn't physically meet very often because of COVID.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: So it was over the phone and you would have had no way to tell who else could have been in the meeting.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes, absolutely.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Were you aware of departmental staff or political staff?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No. Anytime I was talking to the minister, it could have been just him and his chief of staff. I had no way of knowing for sure.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Okay.

Commr Brenda Lucki: We didn't have MS Teams or video then.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: So when you sent the email on April 23 and said that the information about the firearms should not be disseminated beyond the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety, you had every reason to believe that the Minister of Public Safety understood the direction from your email that the information should not be shared beyond the Minister of Public Safety and the Prime Minister's Office.

(1245)

Commr Brenda Lucki: You would have to ask him if he understood, but it was pretty clear, I think.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: But you can confirm that that information was relayed to the minister; the minister was told.

Commr Brenda Lucki: The information was never released.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: That should have ended the conversation right there. Why, five days later, were you being asked by the minister's office if this information would be included, if you had just told them five days before that this information should not be included because it would impact an active investigation? What changed? How would it have been appropriate in any way for the minister or the minister's office to ask even the most benign question about whether this information was going to be included? What would make them believe that that was appropriate in any way, given your previous direction?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It wasn't just about weapons. Questions were asked about when the names of the deceased were going to be released.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: You were asked specifically about whether the guns would be included. You said that in your testimony. You were asked specifically about the guns.

[Translation]

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I'm sorry? (end highlight)

The Chair: Who has a point of order?

Mr. Dane Lloyd: I'm stopping my time. Is there a point of order?

Hon. Greg Fergus: It's Greg Fergus.

The Chair: Mr. Fergus, go ahead.

[Translation]

Hon. Greg Fergus: As per section 18 of our Standing Orders, it is important to grant witnesses enough time to at least answer the questions posed by members.

[English]

The Chair: Yes, that's my job, and I will do the best I can to ensure—

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thanks, Chair Fergus.

The Chair: —that there's the proper toing and froing. We'll go back to you for an answer, Commissioner.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I think I need the question repeated.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you. I had about three minutes and 30 seconds on my time.

The Chair: I saved your time, Mr. Lloyd; don't worry.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Commissioner, you said specifically in your testimony that the (begin highlight) minister's office asked if information about the guns would be included. You specifically said that. Is that correct?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Okay. What would have made them think that was an appropriate thing to ask, given that five days earlier you said this information should not be disseminated beyond the Prime Minister and the Public Safety Minister's office? Was there a meeting you had in those previous five days where you said that, actually, it wouldn't be a big deal if the information was released?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No, it's because things changed hourly.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: What changed?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Everything was changing hourly. Those weapons were seized. Things changed so that we could release certain points of information. We were continually adding information at each and every press conference we did, so to ask if they were going to be part and parcel of another media release was not unusual.

Mr. Dane Lloyd: But what changed? What changed about the guns in particular between those five days? Was there no active investigation anymore into where the guns came from?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No, I was assuming that eventually that would be part of a media release, so it was not an unusual request to be asking that question, because I was given the information, thinking that, in a couple of days, that would be part of a future media release. I was simply giving them the heads-up. (end highlight)

Mr. Dane Lloyd: Were there any discussions about the upcoming—

The Chair: Thank you. We're out of time.

I now move to Mr. Noormohamed.

You have five minutes in this round, sir. Go ahead whenever you're ready.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, for being with us today.

Commissioner, I think there have been a lot of assumptions made and a lot of aspersions cast. I just want to clarify a few things, and you might help me.

(begin highlight) Can you speak very briefly about your understanding of the role of the Minister of Public Safety and the role of the commissioner, what the lines are and what lines should not be crossed?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It's about the principle of police independence, and it's about exercising police powers and making decisions in the operational realm. But, providing it's appropriate, I feel, for government and police to exchange information to provide situational awareness on events.... But if any of the political officials were to ask me to do something in an investigation specifically or provide specific direction in an operational realm or in an investigation, that would be crossing the line. Asking me to arrest somebody, asking me to investigate somebody or asking me to turn a blind eye and not to investigate somebody would be some examples.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Did the Minister of Public Safety ask you to do any of those things, anything that would be considered inappropriate or cross that line?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely not. If anybody is more conscious of that, it's Minister Blair, especially as a former police officer.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: What would you say to those who say that the government wanted to leverage this into a gun ban? What would you say to those people, and what can you say to us about the work that was done previously in respect of banning weapons such as the one that was used in this awful tragedy?

(1250)

Commr Brenda Lucki: As per the conversation with Ms. Damoff, it was absolutely something that's been on the radar for several years. It followed from Mr. Goodale into Minister Blair's

portfolio in the mandate, and it continued with Minister Mendicino. We had been helping them with policy and legislation for several years, well before I became the commissioner.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Is that something that happens regularly between the Commissioner of the RCMP and the Department of Public Safety, regardless of who is in power?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely, if it involves the police. I gave the example of the cannabis legislation. We provided a ton of advice on that as well.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Let's switch a little bit to the conversation around pressure. I can only imagine the pressure that you and your team were under in trying to make this happen, pressure from the government, from opposition, from the media, everywhere, and you provided good context in your comments earlier about this.

Can you share with us whether or not you felt the pressure that you were under was inappropriate in any way, shape or form from the minister or from the government?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely not. The only inappropriate pressure was the media.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: If you were to look back, were you asked to do anything out of the ordinary that a government should not be asking you to do in such a situation?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely not.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Did the minister ask you to do anything inappropriate or questionable as time evolved, not just the beginning but throughout, that would then change the way in which you might answer a question or you might speak to the media?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely not.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: When answering my colleague Mr. Lloyd, you spoke about how facts on the ground change and how your ability to answer questions based on information that you can provide changes. Can you explain to all of us and to Canadians the context you were under on day one, day three or day five, and how decisions are made that allow you to provide different types of information at different points in time?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It's a communication reel, and any time, from the very first press release that I did or press interview to the very last, I don't have the information in front of me. I go to my comms people, and they go to the people on the ground. The comms person on the ground is part of the command triangle in an investigation, and they're privy to everything. They, with the people who are investigating, decide what can and can't be released and when it can be released. When I'm doing media, that's how I get the information.

But, I'll tell you, I was by myself in the office, unusually, because I usually have a whole team around me who tell me where I need to be, what time I need to be there, and they put the meetings in my calendar. Like I said, it was so unusual in that context because of COVID.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: But, despite that unusual nature of COVID and everything that was happening, you were absolutely crystal clear on the lines that could not be crossed, and you can

stand here hand to heart and say that not a single line was crossed, either by you or by the minister, in the type of questions that you were asked, the work that you were asked to do and in the information that you were asked to provide.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I can clearly say that I was not interfered with, I was not directed, and I did not cross any line. (end highlight)

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: Thank you, Commissioner.

The Chair: You have eight seconds left, Mr. Noormohamed.

Mr. Taleeb Noormohamed: I'm good, Mr. Chair. I'll hand it back to you. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'll take that time and move immediately to Ms. Michaud.

Ms. Michaud, you have two and a half minutes in this round.

Please begin.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(begin highlight) I'll pick up where I left off earlier and come back to Mr. Campbell's notes. I'll quote him again.

[English]

The Commissioner then said that we didn't understand, that this was tied to pending gun control legislation that would make officers and the public safer. She was very upset and at one point Deputy Commissioner (Brian) Brennan tried to get things calmed down but that had little effect.

[Translation]

Commissioner, you said you weren't angry and that you are a relatively calm person. I don't want to contradict you, since I was not at that meeting. However, Mr. Campbell was there and, in light of (end highlight) his notes, he contradicts you. So I'll direct my question to Mr. Brennan.

Mr. Brennan, is it correct that you had to try to lower the tension? It is true that sometimes tempers flare during meetings.

As Mr. Campbell recalls it, you tried to calm things down a bit. Correct?

[English]

D/Commr Brian Brennan: Yes, that would be accurate. At that point in the meeting, I felt that we were revisiting the same thing over and over again and we needed to start focusing on how

to move forward. My focus was on, "Let's learn from these mistakes or these issues. How are we going to do better in communicating in the future?"

That's what I was trying to steer the conversation toward.

(1255)

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: You are also of the opinion that there were many communication problems in this whole situation. Isn't that so?

[English]

D/Commr Brian Brennan: Yes, there were communication issues because of the volume of information, the size of the investigation, the timeliness of information coming into national headquarters and what was being reported on social media versus what was being reported officially. The complexity of the whole situation was adding to it.

It was something that we really needed to work on to make things clarified for governments, for our employees and for the general public.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Thank you.

Commissioner, you said that you had discussions with the government regarding the regulations long before they were enacted on May 1, 2020. You say that when the government asks you questions, it is not political interference because they are entitled to ask them.

However, did you feel that the government could take advantage of a situation to advance...

[English]

The Chair: Madame Michaud, you're out of time. You'll have to pose your question very quickly.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: It would take too long.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

We are done with that round and we will now move to Mr. MacGregor.

Sir, you too have two and a half minutes. The floor is yours.

(begin highlight) **Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you, Chair.

Commissioner Lucki, I'm wondering if you can just confirm this for me. When the government asked if the information about the firearms would be released, that question in fact did come from the minister's chief of staff.

Commr Brenda Lucki: That is my recollection. I know it didn't come specifically from the minister; it came from his office.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Okay. That was the question. We know that in the course of a police investigation, the make and model of a firearm used in the commission of a crime is a very significant piece of information. What operational information did you have as commissioner that allowed you at that time to make the confirmation that the information would in fact be released?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It wasn't about the actual firearms that were being used, because that still needed to be determined and attached to the forensics. It was about the information about the firearms that were seized in the vehicle of the perpetrator.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Okay. That's an important clarification there.

I think that's probably the limit of my questions. Thank you for appearing before us, Commissioner.

I'll cede the rest of my time to you, Chair. (end highlight)

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to Mr. Perkins.

Welcome to the committee, Mr. Perkins. You have five minutes in this slot. Take it away.

(begin highlight) **Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC):** Thank you. Maybe I can just follow up on that last question.

Commissioner, in your email of April 23 to the chief of staff, you said, "Here is the information about the firearms we know to date". It doesn't say those were the ones found in the vehicle or not. It wasn't clear. That was at four o'clock. Then you included a list of the details.

Earlier we heard the minister testify that there was a cabinet meeting that day, or a briefing or cabinet meeting somehow with the Prime Minister that day. Between that meeting and this email, where did the request for this information specifically come from? Was it a call from the chief of staff after that cabinet meeting?

Commr Brenda Lucki: I was getting general requests from both the.... Normally when major events happen, I brief the deputy minister of public safety, the national security advisor to the Prime Minister and I often include the chief of staff, so the minister will be briefed up. Sometimes I directly brief the minister and others.

People in any of those groups were asking, so I went back to the Nova Scotia people and asked if there was anything we could give about the guns. I was actually told that we couldn't talk

about the guns used. We could talk about the guns seized. That's where that information came from.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Thank you.

In your call or whatever remote system you were using on April 28—a conference call facility of some sort—who from RCMP headquarters was also on that call?

Commr Brenda Lucki: It was Deputy Commissioner Brian Brennan; our director of communications, Sharon Tessier; and another person from communications, Dan Brien.

Mr. Rick Perkins: He's the media relations head.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes.

(1300)

Mr. Rick Perkins: In that call that was referenced earlier, you said that the team in Nova Scotia didn't understand that this was tied to pending gun control legislation. Did you say that in that meeting?

Commr Brenda Lucki: What I recall is that.... Somebody might have mentioned why the weapons were important, and I said that it's not a surprise because part of the minister's mandate letter is, in fact, gun legislation.

That's how I was tying it in. That's why I inferred the question was being asked about whether those weapons are going to be included, along with numerous other times I was asked when information was going to be released.

Often in a press conference, the Prime Minister was asked something and he didn't have the information. They would come back and say, "Do we have that information?" We were not ready to release that yet. They'd ask, "Do you have this...?"

Because they were asked these questions, we were just trying to get them the information that they could release.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It was part of an active police investigation and at the time, I believe, the team was trying to figure out the actual origin of the firearms and were dealing with the United States agencies.

Was there any reason that anyone outside that police investigation actually required the details of those firearms for any reason whatsoever in an active police investigation?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No.

It's funny because when I think of all of this investigation, I honestly was thinking about the connection of the guns used and tying them to the forensics. When I asked if any of the information on the guns could.... I had no idea what was going on with the investigation, so I asked the question of whether any of the information on the guns could be released. I got an email that you saw on the 23rd with the caveat. I said, "Okay. Great."

I literally forwarded the email—or cut and pasted—and put it towards the people who were asking.

Mr. Rick Perkins: In that email you said to please not give it beyond the Prime Minister and the minister, but—

Commr Brenda Lucki: That was the instruction I was given.

Mr. Rick Perkins: At 10 at night, six hours later, in that email chain you actually copied five other government officials and an RCMP person. You actually started to disseminate it beyond the two you had said.

Commr Brenda Lucki: I'd have to see that.

Mr. Rick Perkins: It's in the email that was provided to the Mass Casualty Commission. Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Moreau, Mr. Barrick Stewart and Vincent Rigby were all copied on that same chain. In essence you had released the information about the firearms to a large number of people beyond the Prime Minister.

Commr Brenda Lucki: My chief of staff has all the information that I had. The three primary people and their chiefs of staff usually are included. They are the national security adviser to the Prime Minister, the deputy minister of public safety, and the minister via the chief of staff.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Superintendent—

The Chair: Thank you. We're out of time in that round of questioning.

I now move to Mr. Hardie, who will have the last slot in this round.

You have five minutes, sir, whenever you're ready. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, thank you for being here.

From the letter to you from Lia Scanlan, I wanted to read one section here. (begin highlight) It says, "It stood out to me that once you were informed there was a miscommunication, and Sharon advised that she briefed incorrectly..."

Who is Sharon? (end highlight)

Commr Brenda Lucki: Sharon is the director of communications at national headquarters.

Mr. Ken Hardie: (begin highlight) Was it Sharon who told you that the information on the firearms would be disclosed?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Yes. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: I see.

Who did Sharon ask about that? Do you know?

Commr Brenda Lucki: You'll (begin highlight) have to ask her. She's in the next panel. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay, very good.

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) I'm going to assume it's communications on the ground. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: A critical piece here is, when the question was asked, was the question asked "if" it would be disclosed, or did they ask "for" it to be disclosed?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) To my recollection, like I said at the very beginning, it's "if" the weapons information would be included. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: All right.

Now there were two briefings, one on April 24 and one on the 28th. Did Superintendent Campbell conduct the briefing using prepared notes?

Commr Brenda Lucki: Which briefing are you referring to?

Mr. Ken Hardie: The ones on the 24th and/or the 28th.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Are you talking about the media briefings?

Mr. Ken Hardie: Yes, correct.

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) I'm not sure about the 24th, because I'm not involved at that level. You'd have to probably talk to the comms people. I know the one for the 28th, because it was so extensive and they were covering so many parts of that. They were actually going through a chronology with maps and locations. They were working with our comms people and their own comms people in reference to his notes...to go through all of that. (end highlight)

(1305)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Were you privy to the notes that were...?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No. I don't get involved at that level.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Given that you were led to expect that the firearms information would be included in the briefing to the media on April 28, did you subsequently ask to see the notes that Superintendent Campbell was using during that period?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) I definitely saw the speaking notes, but I saw them early on in the day. Like I said, there were many versions that came after, and I didn't follow it. I just had too many other things to do. I left that for my comms people. There were lots of things that were changing, so I wasn't privy to the final version. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay, but in the version that you did see, was there a reference to the firearms in that?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) I don't believe so, no. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Okay. That wasn't a flag for you at that time?

Commr Brenda Lucki: No.

Mr. Ken Hardie: If it wasn't a flag to you, how important was it, to your mind, that this information be released in those briefings, and why was it important to you?

Commr Brenda Lucki: (begin highlight) It wasn't important whether or not it was released. Where I was concerned is that I asked the question, I was told that it would be released, and I transmitted that information to the minister's staff. Again, it was an example of inaccurate information, and there were a lot of issues we were having with the flow of communications.

Whether or not it was released was not a concern. Somebody asked me if it was going to be part of it. I asked them, they said yes, and it wasn't. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: I see. So it was really more the general scenario of misinformation and miscommunication which was the concern or the focus of at least part of your conversations with the team on April 28.

Commr Brenda Lucki: Absolutely. We were getting criticized by the media at every angle for the lack of timely information. There's nothing worse than watching your team get.... They're out there trying to do the best they can and getting hammered by the media for not providing the information.

(begin highlight) We wanted to get ahead. We wanted to be more proactive than reactive. It was hurtful and it was hard to hear, and the narrative was becoming very negative. We were trying to do everything we could to help them.

Mr. Ken Hardie: In your judgment, did the details of the weapons, provided by Superintendent Campbell on April 24 during that briefing, balance the interest of the public and the media for transparency without compromising the investigation?

Commr Brenda Lucki: If he released them, then yes, because that was his call to make. That's part of his job is to make sure he balances.... If it was him who released it in a media release, then he wouldn't have been compromising the investigation. (end highlight)

Mr. Ken Hardie: Was there not a provision—?

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Hardie. We're out of time.

Mr. Ken Hardie: Thank you.

The Chair: We're out of time for this session.

I would like to thank the witnesses very much for the generosity of their time. This takes us to the end of this panel.

Colleagues, we're more than two hours through a four-hour meeting. I think that probably means that one or more of you may want to make a trip somewhere, even if it's to get a sandwich.

I'm going to suggest that we take a 15-minute break now to give members a chance to do whatever it is they feel obliged or required to do, or want to do. The clerk will give us the go-ahead sign in about 15 minutes when we will proceed with the next panel.

Thank you very much. We're suspended for 15 minutes.

(1310) _____ (Pause) _____ (1325)

The Chair: I would like to call this meeting back to order, everybody.

Our third panel of witnesses are, as individuals, Lee Bergerman, former assistant commissioner and commanding officer of the RCMP in Nova Scotia, and Sharon Tessier, former director general, national communication services, RCMP. From the RCMP, we have Chris Leather, chief superintendent, criminal operations officer, Nova Scotia.

Up to five minutes will be given for opening remarks after which we will proceed with rounds of questions. Each witness in this panel has their own opening remarks to deliver, so that will be three times five minutes each.

Welcome to all.

I now invite each witness to make their opening statement. We will proceed in the order listed on the notice, beginning with Ms. Bergerman.

You have the floor for five minutes. Please go ahead.

Assistant Commissioner Lee Bergerman (Former Assistant Commissioner and Commanding Officer, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Nova Scotia, As an Individual):
Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My name is Lee Bergerman, and I retired at the rank of assistant commissioner earlier this year, having served 36 years in the RCMP.

On April 28, I was a serving member and was the commanding officer of H Division.

On April 18 and April 19, 2020, a gunman murdered 22 innocent people in Nova Scotia during a 13-hour rampage until he was shot and killed by RCMP members. This mass casualty shooting was the worst in Canadian history and has forever impacted many lives in a negative way.

On April 28, 2020, in my role as the CO of H Division, I was doing detachment visits to those most impacted by the casualty event. Those detachments are in the northeast part of Nova Scotia, where most of the murders occurred.

Many of our first responders were heavily impacted by this event, as you can well imagine. They were hurting for the loss of their fellow citizens who lived in the communities they policed. We were also mourning the loss of our own Heidi Stevenson, who was murdered by the gunman

during the rampage. We also were very much concerned about Constable Chad Morrison, who was shot and wounded during the gunman's rampage. To say that many of our police officers and community members were traumatized would be an understatement.

It was my responsibility as the CO to do personal visits to support our members, assess the needs of the communities in the aftermath and develop action plans for the support of those affected. I was also pursuing the development of strategies for future resource needs.

On April 28, after finishing my detachment visits, I returned to H Division headquarters in Dartmouth. Soon after I got back to the office, I watched Chief Superintendent Campbell's press conference that he and our communications team had been working on for days. At that time, H Division was being heavily criticized for lack of information being shared about the mass casualty shootin

Tab 8 SECU appearance binder – July 25, 2022 – Relevant extracts

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Tab 3 Opening Remarks

- Good afternoon.
- I can't imagine what Nova Scotians went through during that 12-hour rampage and recognize the healing that is required to move forward.
- Each and every day, my employees do the best they can with the circumstances they are faced with, but of course we can always do better and that is why the Mass Casualty Committee was created... "to provide meaningful recommendations to keep communities safe in the future."
- Thank you for the opportunity to speak to some of the important issues raised by this incident.
- Let me be clear - I did not interfere in the investigation around this tragedy.
- Nor did I experience political interference. Specifically, I was not directed to publicly release information about the weapons used by the perpetrator to help advance pending gun control legislation.
- Was there pressure for information from the federal government about this incident? Yes.
- This wasn't surprising as we were dealing with the biggest mass shooting incident in our country.
- It was my responsibility to keep relevant officials apprised of the evolving situation while maintaining the integrity of the operation.
- Were the requests for information and updates political interference? No.
- And in my dealings with Minister Blair, he was very conscious of this and has never sought to interfere in the investigation.
- I understand that some RCMP employees may have a different perspective based on the meeting of April 28th.
- However, I was the only RCMP official dealing with the Minister, other senior government officials, and occasionally with the Prime Minister. And I am the only one who can speak to the nature of the requests, exchanges of information and my intentions during that meeting.
- The integrity of a police investigation is critical – as someone with over 35 years of policing, that's something that I would never seek to influence or jeopardize.
- Nor would I allow RCMP investigations to be dictated or influenced by government officials.
- I am accountable to the Minister from an administrative perspective, but the RCMP is operationally independent.
- The basis for this principle is to prevent direct and specific political control of police operational activity, with the sole responsibility for operational decision-making resting in the hands of police officers.
- Keeping the government informed through timely and accurate information sharing is not interference. It's standard procedure and these situational updates are provided without compromising the operational integrity of an investigation.
- I did provide information on April 23rd about the types of weapons found in the perpetrator's possession - information that was to be shared with the Minister and the Prime Minister – noting that it wasn't to be disseminated any further as there was an active investigation.
- Additional information was shared as well, but government officials were advised that any information received couldn't be shared with the media until first released by RCMP.

- This included such information as the number and names of the deceased, replica police uniforms and vehicle information, the incident at the fire hall, the background of the perpetrator and the weapons used and seized.
- In the lead up to the Nova Scotia press conference scheduled for April 28th, I provided information to the government on what would be released, at which time I was asked if the information about the weapons would be included.
- When my communications team told me it would be, I relayed this information back to Minister Blair's Chief of Staff and the Deputy Minister of Public Safety.
- Regarding my use of the word 'promise' during the meeting I had with my team following that press conference - at that time and in that context, I was trying to convey that I had confirmed to the Minister that the information about the weapons would be released during the press conference – a confirmation made based on information I had been provided.
- Due to a miscommunication, this was not the case, and I felt I had misinformed the Minister and, by extension, the Prime Minister.
- These were difficult and demanding circumstances. Everyone was doing their best to provide information to the government, to the public and to the media about this appalling event.
- And this all took place just over a month after COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. The pandemic fundamentally changed how we managed the incident.
- The unfortunate reality is that the information flow from Nova Scotia colleagues into my office in the hours and days following the shooting wasn't what it should have been. It was for this reason I called the meeting - to express my disappointment and frustration and to outline expectations.
- Once I was informed during the meeting of the miscommunication, and that releasing the information would jeopardize the ongoing investigation, I considered the matter closed and did not pursue it further.
- This was clearly articulated to the Minister's office, and in fact, to support my assertion on non-interference, this information was not released until several months later.
- On the matter of the April 28th meeting itself, it needed to happen. It was essential that I had more timely and accurate information and it was important that my team understood expectations going forward.
- It was not helped by the fact that it was a teleconference – I had no visual cues for how my words affected those on the call. In the early days of the pandemic we didn't yet have access to the on-screen platforms we do now.
- But the timing of the meeting itself was not ideal and I should have been more sensitive to those in attendance - people who had been operating in a high stress and emotionally charged environment and had just come off of significant press conference.
- Given this context, I regret the timing and how I framed the conversation, but the discussion was necessary.
- It wasn't brought to my attention until a year later that there were concerns of political interference stemming from that meeting and that my approach and interactions with my team were in question. Had I known my words and approach had such an affect I would have definitely made things right sooner...this is who I am.
- Let me be clear: I did not interfere in the investigation. I did not receive direction. And I was not influenced by government officials regarding the public release of information and, more importantly, on the direction of the investigation.
- I ensured that operational independence was maintained in all my interactions with government, as I do today.

- In closing, I'll note that the RCMP is committed to supporting the important work of the Mass Casualty Commission.
- Any time we have a mechanism to review and, importantly, improve how we operate is critical.
- Thank you.

Tab 4 Commissioner's role – political engagement

RCMP speaking points:

- I am accountable to the Minister from an administrative perspective, but the RCMP is operationally independent.
- The basis for this principle is to prevent direct and specific political control of police operational activity, with the responsibility for operational decision making resting solely in the hands of police officers.
- Keeping the government informed through timely and accurate information sharing on such activities is not interference. It's standard procedure and one of my many responsibilities as the Commissioner of the RCMP.
- This operational independence is critical to maintaining the trust of communities we serve and has been front and centre in all of my interactions with the federal government in my role as Commissioner.

If pressed on political engagement in April 2020:

- At no time did I receive direction, nor was I influenced by government officials regarding the public release of information and, more importantly, on the direction of the investigation.
- It was my responsibility to keep relevant officials apprised of the evolving situation while maintaining the integrity of the operation.
- While there were constant requests for information from the federal government, these requests for information and updates were not political interference.
- In my dealings with Minister Blair, he was very conscious of this, and has never sought to interfere in the RCMP's investigation.

If pressed on political engagement generally:

- To reiterate, the integrity of a police investigation is critical – as someone with over 35 years in policing, this is something that I would never seek to influence or jeopardize.
- As outlined in the *RCMP Act*, as Commissioner, I have the control and management of the organization, under the direction of the Minister. In all interactions, the principle of police independence is respected.
- We provide information and respond to questions on a range of issues and files without impacting criminal investigations.

Questions and answers:

What information did you share with the Minister?

- I shared situational updates with the Minister, his office and other senior officials, but government officials were advised that any information received couldn't be shared with the media until first released by RCMP.
- This included such information as the number and names of the deceased, replica police uniforms and vehicle information, the incident at the fire hall, the background of the perpetrator and the weapons used and seized.

Is the RCMP free of political influence from the Federal Government?

- Yes, absolutely. Section 5 of the *RCMP Act* specifically states that as Commissioner I have "the control and management of the Force and all matters connected with the Force". I take this very seriously to ensure that the RCMP conducts all investigations in a

manner that is free of political influence.

What do you do when you are asked for information that may interfere with an ongoing investigation?

- I am always clear with the government about what I can and cannot share, and what information needs to be protected because it is part of an ongoing investigation.
- As stated, I routinely provide operational updates to the Minister, his office and the Government during an event or incident, but I do not take operational direction.

Do you have any suggestions for safeguards that can be put in place to protect against political interference?

- I believe that colleagues from Public Safety may be better placed to answer this question, but I would note that there have been a number of reports on how police and government interact, with a range of recommendations. For example, in 2007 there was the Task Force on Governance and Cultural Change in the RCMP – the Brown Report.
- I am not an expert on the various models, but we are working with Public Safety on a number of important measures such as strengthening our Management Advisory Board as part of our modernization efforts.
- The RCMP would be happy to support Public Safety and the Department of Justice in exploring guidance and safeguards to further protect the integrity of police investigations.

Tab 5 Commissioner's role – police independence

RCMP speaking points:

- I did not interfere in the investigation around this tragedy.
- It was my responsibility to keep relevant officials apprised of the evolving situation while maintaining the integrity of the operation.
- The integrity of a police investigation is critical – as someone with over 35 years in policing, this is something that I would never seek to influence or jeopardize.
- This operational independence is critical to maintaining the trust of communities we serve and has been front and centre in all of my interactions with the federal government in my role as Commissioner.

Questions and answers:

Q. If police operations are independent, why would the Commissioner request information related to the firearm be released publicly? Did the Minister ask the RCMP to release that information?

- I was not asked or directed to ensure the public release of information about the weapons used by the perpetrator.
- As I noted in my opening remarks, in the lead up to the Nova Scotia press conference scheduled for April 28th, I was asked if the information about the weapons would be included.
- When my communications team told me it would be, I relayed this information back to Minister Blair's Chief of Staff and the Deputy Minister of Public Safety.

Q. Why then, did you tell your team you had 'promised' this information would be released?

- Regarding my use of the word 'promise' during the meeting with my team that followed that press conference - at that time and in that context, I was trying to convey that I had confirmed to the Minister that the information about the weapons would be released during the press conference – a confirmation made based on information I had been provided.
- Once I was informed during this meeting that releasing the information would jeopardize the ongoing investigation, I considered the matter closed and did not pursue it further.
- This clarification was provided to the Minister's office.

Background / Current status:

Under the various statutes establishing the agencies, the Minister has the authority to provide "direction" to the Agency Heads, who are responsible for the "control and management" of the agency, "under the direction of the Minister". Direction is sometimes provided through formal instruments known as "Ministerial Directives".

The Principle of Police Independence

The two principles above apply even more strongly in the case of the RCMP, due to the principle of police independence. The principle of police independence requires that police, in exercising their police powers and making decisions related to law enforcement and the investigation of individual cases of alleged criminal activity, must be free of direction or influence from the executive. This principle was endorsed by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1999 in the case of Campbell and Shirose, which explained that the RCMP Commissioner "is not to be

considered a servant or agent of the government while engaged in a criminal investigation. The Commissioner is not subject to political direction". This includes political direction by the Minister of Public Safety, to whom the Commissioner ultimately reports. Any Directive to the RCMP must be provided to the Commissioner only and falls outside the law enforcement function so as to not infringe on police independence. They should not interfere with a specific law enforcement function, often referred to as "core policing decisions", as expertise, tactical and implementation decisions should be left to the RCMP.

Police Independence and Information Sharing

It is appropriate for government and police to exchange information. The government has a legitimate authority and often a significant interest in receiving information from the police about ongoing police operations. This authority is justified by the principle of ministerial accountability. Likewise, the government has the responsibility to keep the police updated on relevant policy decisions if it can be reasonably foreseen that they will affect police operations or public safety. However, safeguards must be put in place to protect the police from inappropriate government direction or interference. In exchanging information, RCMP and Government must respect proper chain of command and communication lines.

Police Independence and Contract Policing

As the representative of "Canada" for the purposes of the Provincial Police Service Agreements, the Minister continues to have a role and responsibilities in relation to the RCMP; the Commissioner continues to be under his direction. However, a distribution of responsibilities has been agreed upon in the Agreements. There is a danger that directives could be issued concurrently on matters of the same or overlapping subjects. To avoid being placed in a difficult position in relation to the delivery of policing services, the RCMP may thus, to the extent that it can and that it may be aware of an incoming directive, wish to encourage consultations between the governments of Canada and the province prior to a direction being issued.

Tab 6 Commissioner's role – communications

RCMP speaking points:

On communications in April 2020 specifically

- The 2020 mass shooting was a significant and dynamic event. As the situation unfolded, regular updates were provided to the public.
- Communication efforts were as timely as possible in an effort to provide Canadians with the information we could confirm at the time - without compromising an active, ongoing investigation.
- RCMP personnel, including communication and public affairs teams, are prepared to handle various crisis situations. As always, we continuously review our policies and procedures with a view to improving and applying lessons learned.
- The Mass Casualty Commission will continue its review of our actions in April 2020. The RCMP is committed to supporting the important work of the Mass Casualty Commission. Any time we have a mechanism to review and importantly improve how we operate is critical.

Background / Current status:

Roles and Responsibilities - RCMP Communications Staff

The RCMP's communications team is made up of representatives at the national, divisional, and detachment levels. The Director General (DG), National Communication Services (NCS) is the head of communications for the RCMP. The RCMP communications staff's activities, at National Headquarters and in Divisional offices, must adhere to the requirements set out by the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, regardless of reporting relationships or placement within organizational structures.

At National Headquarters, NCS employees provide valuable advice and assistance in the development of policies and programs that enhance and promote RCMP services to the public, the RCMP's roles and responsibilities, and the RCMP's commitment to strengthening partnerships. This is key in safeguarding trust and confidence with the public and RCMP partners and stakeholders.

Divisional Communication Advisors provide advice and assistance in the development of policies, programs, and projects that enhance and promote RCMP services to the public, its roles and responsibilities and its commitment to strengthening partnerships. They provide many of the same services and products available from NCS, for example, web-based publishing, media-oriented products, project management for print products.

RCMP Reference Guide and Standard Operating Procedures for Crisis Communications (SOPs)

The RCMP Reference Guide and Standard Operating Procedures for Crisis Communications (SOPs) were developed by an internal working group of National Communications Services (NCS) staff in consultation with divisional communications units. The document offers detailed tactical guidance within a best practice framework of definitions, objectives and principles from three primary sources¹:

¹ (i) *Public Safety Canada's Emergency Communications Protocol 2021 – Version 3.0*

(ii) *Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications*, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(iii) *Crisis Communications in Canada*, by John E.C. Cooper

The goal of this document is to equip RCMP Communications teams “to respond quickly and appropriately to events ... to ensure a well-coordinated and effective communications response...”² that maintains public confidence in the organization.

The SOPs spell out key objectives, core stakeholder groups, evidence-based principles for an overall strategic approach, proven practices, roles and responsibilities for the on-site communications team and counterparts at National RCMP Headquarters, as well as evaluation and monitoring mechanisms. The document is updated on a yearly basis as to ensure relevancy and accuracy of the information contained.

² Public Safety Canada’s Emergency Communications Protocol 2021 – Version 3.0

Tab 7 Comportment

RCMP speaking points:

On the April 28, 2020 Meeting with H Division

- As police officers, we are relied upon to stay calm when faced with high pressure and emotional situations.
- I have expressed regret for the way I approached the meeting with my Nova Scotia RCMP colleagues.
- The timing of the meeting was not ideal. I should have been more sensitive to those in attendance - people who had been operating in a high stress and emotionally charged environment and had just come off of a significant press conference.
- But, the April 28th meeting needed to happen. It was essential that I had more timely and accurate information and it was important that my team understood my expectations going forward.
- We – our regular and civilian members, public service employees and those who work alongside us – are a team, and in that moment, I did not effectively lead them the way I would have liked.
- We are striving as an organization to gain the trust and confidence of the public and to build a safe and healthy workplace, and I know this starts with me.

If pressed on comportment during April 28, 2020 meeting

- Hindsight has offered me an opportunity to learn from this experience and do better. I've acknowledged my actions, expressed regret, and am committed to self-improvement.

If pressed on leadership and cultural change

- We have been focused in recent years on understanding RCMP culture and what we need to do to create meaningful and lasting change.
- We have learned that we need to focus on the ways we support each other professionally and personally, create safe spaces to share perspectives without fear of reprisal, and prioritize open communication.
- As leaders, our individual behaviours must model the RCMP core values that we just renewed—acting with integrity; showing respect; demonstrating compassion; taking responsibility and serving with excellence.
- These values are at the centre of becoming the healthy, inclusive and modern RCMP that we strive to be. I remain committed to reflecting, learning and leading by example.

Questions and answers:

Q. What are you doing to ensure those members feel support now?

- Learning is an ongoing process. Through important inquiries and reports such as MacNeil and Bastarache, combined with our RCMP 150 initiatives, we have come a long way, but there's always more to be done, as we will learn from the MCC.
- For example, one initiative taken by the RCMP was the establishment of a Support for Operational Stress Injury Program known as SOSI. SOSI consists of confidential one-on-one meetings with coordinators and group sessions. SOSI Coordinators are individuals who have a lived experience with operational stress injury, either personally or through living with someone or having worked in an environment supporting persons who have experienced trauma.

- The RCMP also provides all employees with access to internal peer-to-peer coordinators. Whether it's a work-related or personal issue, our coordinators can provide information on services offered through Health Canada's Employee Assistance Services, as well as referrals to resources within the RCMP.

Q. How can you ensure those members and future members do not face retribution from reporting similar situations?

- Employee Assistance Services, which include psychological counseling, are available to all RCMP employees and their families through Health Canada.
- Progress has been made in implementing many of the recommendations in the Bastarache report, as part of a holistic, long-term approach to a modern, healthy and inclusive RCMP, most notably:
 - We launched last year the Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution (ICHR) to address harassment prevention and resolution, and provide support for employees. Options are currently being explored to further externalize the ICHR to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.

Q. What services are available for the officers and their families after this tragic event?

- The RCMP has implemented a Family Liaison Program that provides support and guidance to families of serving and former RCMP members. The program is responsible for providing outreach presentations to detachments/units, managers, employees, veterans and family. The Family Liaison Program's mandate is to inform and educate peers of resources and benefits both internal/external to the RCMP. They maintain strong relationships with Canadian Armed Forces Family Wellness Centers, Veterans Affairs Canada, RCMP Warrant Officer Group, RCMP wellness and SOSI teams.

Tab 8 Issues before the MCC and other lessons learned

RCMP speaking points:

- As I noted in my opening remarks, I can't imagine what Nova Scotians went through during that 12-hour rampage and recognize the healing that is required to move forward.
- Each and every day, my employees do the best they can with the circumstances they are faced with, but of course we can always do better and that is why the Mass Casualty Committee was created... "to provide meaningful recommendations to keep communities safe in the future."
- The RCMP is committed to supporting the important work of the MCC. Any time we have a mechanism to review and importantly improve how we operate is critical.

If pressed:

- I will be providing testimony in the coming weeks at the MCC.
- I will continue to respect the process underway and abstain from any further comments. The RCMP supports this important work.
- I look forward to the Commission's findings and recommendations.

Tab 9 Firearms

RCMP speaking points:

- Since 2017, I have served as the Commissioner of Firearms, the chief executive of the Canadian Firearms Program.
- As per the *Firearms Act*, the role of the Commissioner is to support the lawful ownership and use of firearms in Canada by regulating firearms licensing and registration. In my role, I engage stakeholders in reviewing and developing policies, provide advice and support implementation.
- Reducing gun violence is a priority for the RCMP in the communities and areas that we serve, and also more broadly across the country.
- Beginning this fiscal year, the RCMP received \$40.3M over five years and \$5.5M ongoing to address firearms smuggling, including investments to support the Canadian Intelligence Service Canada's new Canadian Criminal Intelligence System, which will help all law enforcement in Canada to target and disrupt criminal activity.

Questions and answers:

What are your thoughts on the SECU's study on Gun and Gang Violence and the report that was tabled prior to the House adjourning?

- The RCMP is supporting the government in preparing its response to this very important study.
- The RCMP continues to examine areas that may require possible action, whether from a training, policy, procedural, resourcing or equipment perspective.
- I take the the issue of gun violence very seriously and strive to ensure that our policy, procedures and resourcing adequately reflect that.
- The RCMP is committed to ongoing collaboration and participation with our partners – to address issues of joint concern and responsibility highlighted in the SECU report.

Background / Current status:

The Commissioner of the RCMP is also the Commissioner of Firearms and reports annually to Parliament via the Minister of Public Safety on the operation of the Canadian Firearms Program.

Each province and territory has a Chief Firearms Officer who is responsible for: licensing individuals and businesses within their jurisdiction; issuing authorizations to transport and/or carry restricted and prohibited firearms; and, inspecting and approving shooting ranges. The provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island have provincially designated Chief Firearms Officers. All other provinces and territories have federally designated Chief Firearms Officers.

Budget 2018 and 2021 Funding

From Budget 2018 and beginning in 2018-19, the RCMP received \$34.5M over five years from the Initiative to Take Action Against Gun and Gang Violence (ITAAGGV) to expand the services available to law enforcement by enhancing several capabilities to better combat the use of illegal firearms and improve the national collection, analysis and sharing of firearms-related intelligence and information. Further, the RCMP is providing specialized training to law enforcement agencies on firearms identification, regulatory requirements, as well as new technologies and emerging trends in firearms trafficking and illicit manufacturing.

From Budget 2021 and beginning this fiscal year, the RCMP received \$40.3M over five years and \$5.5M ongoing to address firearms smuggling, including investments to the Canadian Intelligence Service Canada (CISC) for its new Canadian Criminal Intelligence System that will help all law enforcement in Canada to target and disrupt criminal activity.

As well, the RCMP received an investment from Budget 2021 beginning this fiscal year of \$15M over five years and \$3.3M ongoing to increase capacity to trace firearms and identify the movement of illegal firearms into and within Canada.

Tab 10 Chronology

Sunday, April 19, 2020

- (PM Event) Outward Media – 12:15pm Conference with statementⁱ
- (H Division Event) Outward Media – 6:00pm News conferenceⁱⁱ
- (Ministerial/RCMP Event) Outward Media – Commissioner interviews with CBC, CTV and other outlets (based on MCC Report)
- (Ministerial/RCMP Event) Outward Media – Minister Blair Statementⁱⁱⁱ

Monday, April 20, 2020

- (PM Event) Outward Media – 12:15pm Conference with remarks on NS^{iv}
- (H Division Event) Outward Media – 2:00pm News conference
- (Ministerial/RCMP Event) Outward Media – 2:30 pm Ministers Blair & Fortier and Commissioner Lucki press conference^v

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

- (PM Event) Outward Media – 12:15pm News conference with remarks on NS^{vi}
- (NS Government Event) Outward Media – 3:30pm Provincial press conference^{vii}
- (RCMP NHQ Event) Outward Media – NHQ statement with updated death toll^{viii}
- (H Division Event) Outward Media – 8:26pm H Division statement on Facebook (posted online next day)

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

- (NS Government Event) Outward Media – Provincial press conference^{ix}
- (H Division Event) Outward Media – News conference and statement^{x, xi}

Thursday, April 23, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements
- Internal Communications (Unless otherwise specified, all messages sent by Commissioner Lucki) – One email outlining weapon inventory^{xii}
- Internal Communications (Unless otherwise specified, all messages sent by Commissioner Lucki) – List of weapons and request for a map^{xiii}

Friday, April 24, 2020

- (H Division Event) Outward Media – H Division news conference^{xiv}

Saturday, April 25, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements

Sunday, April 26, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements

Monday, April 27, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

- (H Division Event) Outward Media – 4:00pm news conference^{xv}

- Internal Communications (Unless otherwise specified, all messages sent by Commissioner Lucki) – Internal meeting with Commissioner Lucki and H Division regarding communications
- Internal Communications (Unless otherwise specified, all messages sent by Commissioner Lucki) One email with reaction to press conference^{xvi}

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements

Thursday, April 30, 2020

- Outward Media – No media or statements

Friday, May 1, 2020

- (PM Event) PM Announcement of Ban of assault-style firearms^{xvii}

ⁱ <https://pm.gc.ca/en/videos/2020/04/19/remarks-situation-portapique-nova-scotia-and-updates-covid-19>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/statement-nova-scotia-rcmp-commanding-officer-assistant-commissioner-lee-bergerman>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2020/04/minister-blair-responds-to-the-shooting-in-nova-scotia.html>

^{iv} <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/speeches/2020/04/20/prime-ministers-remarks-shooting-portapique-nova-scotia>

^v https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB-oc72c1_4

^{vi} <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/speeches/2020/04/21/prime-ministers-announcement-emergency-community-support-fund>

^{vii} Portail de la GRC/RCMP Web Gateway (youtube.com), COMM0057762 (2).pdf

^{viii} Update on Investigation into the incidents on April 18 and 19 | Royal Canadian Mounted Police (rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

^{ix} Portail de la GRC/RCMP Web Gateway (youtube.com)

^x Statement by RCMP Criminal Operations Officer, Chief Superintendent Chris Leather | Royal Canadian Mounted Police (rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

^{xi} Portail de la GRC/RCMP Web Gateway (youtube.com)

^{xii} Recipients: Chris Leather, Lee Bergerman, Brian Brennan

^{xiii} Recipients: Rob Stewart, Zita Astravas, Vincent Rigby, Ken Moreau, Rob O'Reilly, Radey Barrack

^{xiv} <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/maps-speaking-notes-supt-darren-campbell>

^{xv} <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/news/2020/speaking-remarks-supt-darren-campbell-april-28>

^{xvi} Recipients: Rob Stewart, Zita Astravas

^{xvii} <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/speeches/2020/05/01/prime-ministers-remarks-announcing-ban-assault-style-firearms-canada>

Tab 11 Statement – June 21, 2022

Statement by Commissioner Brenda Lucki

June 21, 2022 Ottawa, Ontario

I want to acknowledge and address information included in the foundational document issued by the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC). As a police officer, and the RCMP Commissioner, I would never take actions or decisions that could jeopardize an investigation. I did not interfere in the ongoing investigations into the largest mass shooting in Canadian history. It is important to note that the sharing of information and briefings with the Minister of Public Safety are necessary, particularly during a mass shooting on Canadian soil. This is standard procedure, and does not impact the integrity of ongoing investigations or interfere with the independence of the RCMP. I take the principle of police independence extremely seriously, and it has been and will continue to be fully respected in all interactions.

The horrific events of April 2020, in Nova Scotia have forever changed the lives of victims' families, community members and RCMP employees across Nova Scotia and beyond. Several days after the mass shooting, I met with Nova Scotia RCMP colleagues to discuss a number of things. This included the flow of information to RCMP national headquarters on the investigation and the public release of information. It was a tense discussion, and I regret the way I approached the meeting and the impact it had on those in attendance. My need for information should have been better weighed against the seriousness of the circumstances they were experiencing. I should have been more sensitive in my approach. Had I led the meeting differently, these employees would have felt more supported during what I know was an extremely difficult time.

The RCMP continues to be an active participant in the MCC. I will be providing testimony in the coming weeks and the RCMP will continue to support the Commission's important work.

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I can confirm I received the letter from an RCMP employee about a meeting I had on April 28, 2020, with members of my team.

It was an extremely difficult time and I did express frustration with the flow of information. I regret the effects my words had on those involved in that meeting.

I know there are questions about political interference. There was certainly a need for an exchange of timely and accurate information with the Government of Canada and I endeavoured to do that. However, I want to re-emphasize that I did in no way seek to interfere in the ongoing investigation, nor did I feel any political pressure to do so.

I will be providing sworn testimony to the Mass Casualty Commission in the coming weeks and appearing before a Parliamentary Committee on these matters.

I won't be commenting any further as my thoughts and attention are on honouring Cst. Heidi Stevenson as we gather to celebrate her life at tomorrow's memorial.