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Mr. Abid Mavani
Fatality Inquiry Coordinator
Justice and Solicitor General
9th Floor, 10011 - 109 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 3S8

Dear Mr. Mavani:

Thank you for providing me with the Honourable Judge S.L. Van de Veen's fatality inquiry report into the death of Mr. Robert Crowle. This letter is in response to the Judge Van de Veen's recommendations pertaining to Mr. Crowle's fatality inquiry. The two recommendations are as follows:

1. It is recommended the Government of Alberta appoint a task force to address the glaring gaps in the mental health system, which contribute to police commonly being first responders to people in crisis and emotionally disturbed individuals whose mental health issues have escalated to the point of requiring police involvement.
2. It is recommended the Government of Alberta appoint a task force comprised of the Calgary Police Service and other stakeholders to carry out the research, development, and acquisition of non-lethal weapons that can be used by police officers who are called upon to deal with people in crisis or experiencing serious mental health issues resulting in behaviour that is imminently dangerous to others.

The Public Security Division reviewed this fatality inquiry report on my behalf and determined the following:

Recommendation 1:

- Due to the specific nature of recommendation one and the fact that this recommendation was also sent to Alberta Health Services (AHS), it was determined that AHS would be in a better position to provide a fulsome response to Judge Van de Veen's recommendation regarding "glaring gaps in the mental health system".
- While this recommendation is considered outside the scope of Justice and Solicitor General's mandate, the ministry accepts Judge Van de Veen's recommendation as a reminder for government and police services to continue the current work to address this complex social and law enforcement issue.

Recommendation 2:

- As it relates to the second recommendation, the Public Security Division has been and will continue to be active participants in working with Alberta's police services, federal/provincial/territorial counterparts, and other external stakeholder groups (i.e., Defence Research and Development Canada) to analyse, research, develop policy, and provide guidance to assist police services in making informed decisions related to non-lethal weapons options and training related to use of force, specifically where an individual may be suffering a mental health crisis.

- Specific to the review of non-lethal weapons, the Public Security Division works with the Provincial Use of Force Working Group and other subject-matter specialists to:
 - Facilitate awareness and oversight of force used through the mandatory service level analysis of use of force incidents, Alberta standardized force reporting, and the Annual Survey of Force Used in Alberta.
 - Review research on the use of force and non-lethal weapons by monitoring and reviewing academic and operational research, government reviews of the use of force and non-lethal weapons, and conduct environmental scans of commercial-off-the-shelf non-lethal weapons.
 - Collaborate with other national and provincial police services as well as the federal Defence Research and Development Canada.
 - Past examples of formal reviews of non-lethal weapons include the following:
 - National (FPT) project (2010/11): Technical and medical risk review of CEW technology;
 - National project (2011): Develop a Canadian non-lethal weapons approval process;
 - Two National projects (2014 and 2019): Conduct technical and medical reviews of new CEW models (X26P, X2 and T7); and
 - Two Alberta projects (2011 and 2018): JPX Jet Protector (OC jet pistol) and extended range impact weapons (ERIW).

As such, I have directed the assistant deputy minister and director of Law Enforcement to issue a letter to all chiefs of police and the RCMP to remind them of the importance of supporting this research, analysis, and collaborative efforts to identify effective non-lethal weapon options for first responders when addressing citizens in crisis.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the recommendations of the inquiry. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

Original Signed

Dennis Cooley, PhD
Associate Deputy Minister,
Solicitor General