

Nov. 26, 2019

Investigation into injury during Lethbridge arrest

On Nov. 21, 2019, the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) was directed to investigate the circumstances surrounding an injury reportedly sustained by a 12-year-old girl during an arrest by members of the Lethbridge Police Service (LPS).

On Nov. 16, 2019, LPS officers went to a residence in Lethbridge twice in response to calls for service. On the first occasion, the caller reported that occupants of the downstairs unit in the building were screaming and smashing objects. When officers attended, the 33-year-old female caller provided her name to police, and a female occupant of the downstairs unit was placed under arrest. When officers returned to the police station, they discovered that the caller had provided a false name, and that the woman had outstanding warrants for her arrest.

A short time later, police received a call from an occupant of the downstairs unit reporting that the 33-year-old woman from the previous call had stolen an item and was causing damage to the building. Officers attended to the residence again and encountered the 33-year-old woman, who was trying to damage the building, and again provided a false name. Officers informed her that they were aware of her real identity and that there were warrants for her arrest. When informed that she was under arrest, the woman ran inside the residence and there was a physical struggle to take her into custody.

During the struggle to handcuff the woman, the woman's 12-year-old daughter became involved. After several minutes, the 33-year-old woman was handcuffed and ultimately transported to the police station. The 12-year-old girl was taken to hospital, where she was treated for minor injuries and released.

On Nov. 19, 2019, the 12-year-old went to LPS headquarters accompanied by a lawyer to report that she had been injured during her mother's arrest. LPS made a notification and pursuant to Section 46.1 of the *Police Act*, ASIRT was directed to investigate.

ASIRT's investigation will focus on the lawfulness of police actions during the course of the arrest, while LPS will maintain responsibility for any investigation resulting from the original two calls at the residence.

As ASIRT's investigation is now underway, no further information will be released until the matter is concluded.

- 30 -

Media inquiries may be directed to:

ASIRT media line
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