

June 3, 2019

Investigation into Lethbridge in-custody injury

On May 29, 2019, ASIRT was directed to investigate the circumstances surrounding the arrest of a 23-year-old man by members of Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) that resulted in the man sustaining a minor nose injury and going into medical distress.

That same morning, LPS officers encountered the 23-year-old and placed him in custody in the rear seat of a marked police vehicle. When officers checked on the man, he appeared to be bleeding from the nose and in medical distress, including being in and out of consciousness. Officers provided medical assistance until Emergency Medical Services personnel arrived and took the man to hospital, where he was admitted.

Given that the man's minor injury and medical distress occurred while he was in the custody of LPS officers, the police service immediately notified the Director of Law Enforcement, pursuant to the provisions of the *Police Act*. ASIRT may be directed to investigate where circumstances may favour an independent investigation, including when a person in custody is injured or goes into medical distress.

Although the full cause and extent of the man's injury and medical distress remains under investigation, independent evidence had confirmed that the man purposely struck his own head in the police vehicle, causing the observable nose injury. The man's condition stabilized and he was subsequently released from hospital.

As ASIRT's investigation is underway, no further information will be provided.

ASIRT's mandate is to effectively, independently and objectively investigate incidents involving Alberta's police that have resulted in serious injury or death to any person.

– 30 –

Media inquiries may be directed to:

ASIRT media line
780-641-9099