

March 8, 2021

Investigation into serious injury following contact with EPS

On Feb. 28, the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) was directed to investigate the circumstances surrounding a serious injury sustained by a 39-year-old man following contact with members of the Edmonton Police Service (EPS).

At about 7:39 a.m., EPS received a call from a resident of an upper floor apartment in a residential tower in west Edmonton. It was reported that a 39-year-old man in the apartment was in a distressed state, under the influence of a controlled substance, and was acting erratically, throwing things off the balcony onto the ground below, and, at times, sitting on the railing of the balcony.

Officers attended and, at about 8:14 a.m., began speaking with the man in an attempt to de-escalate the situation. As the man moved between the interior of the apartment and the balcony, other officers remained on the ground to prevent bystanders from inadvertently walking below the balcony where they might be at risk of being struck by falling objects. As officers continued their negotiations, the man went out onto the balcony and blocked the door. His behaviour continued to be erratic and additional resources including the tactical team, a negotiator, and emergency medical personnel were requested.

As officers awaited their arrival and continued their attempts to speak to the man from inside the unit, he broke through one of the balcony railing glass panels and successfully lowered himself to the balcony one floor below. At about 9:14 a.m., the man moved to stand on the exterior of the lower floor balcony railing and shortly thereafter, appeared to attempt to drop himself down another floor to the balcony immediately below using a belt. As the man lowered himself, he lost his grip on the belt and fell multiple floors to the ground below, sustaining critical, life-threatening injuries. Available video evidence confirms that as he attempted to lower himself the second time, no one was on the balcony with him.

Emergency medical care was immediately provided and the man was transported to hospital, where he remains in an intensive care unit. His family has requested privacy during this difficult time.

ASIRT's investigation will examine the conduct of police during this incident, including the circumstances leading up to the man's fall. As ASIRT's investigation is underway, no further information will be released at this time.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:

ASIRT media line
780-641-9099