



Transit Police Service

News Release

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TRANSIT POLICE RELEASE VIDEOS ON 2007/2008 TASER INCIDENTS

The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (Transit Police) is today releasing to the media a series of videos documenting incidents of Taser application that occurred in 2007 and 2008.

The station surveillance video, as well as Taser-cam video, is being released in response to a Freedom of Information access request made by CBC/Radio Canada in March 2008.

In response to the original request in 2008, Transit Police initially provided a written synopsis of ten files that related to the use of a Taser by Transit Police officers over the period 2007 and 2008. Transit Police initially took the position that the images could not be released, as the use of force incidents were subject of an external public trust investigation being conducted by the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner as a result of a complaint filed by the BC Civil Liberties Association.

That independent investigation, in relation to all but one incident, is now concluded.

The independent investigation concluded that, in all nine incidents, the Transit Police officers acted in good faith and used no more force than was reasonably necessary in the circumstances. The investigation also concluded that the subjects of the nine incidents resisted arrest or assaulted police officers and all nine deployments were justified under the National Use of Force Guideline and Transit Police policy in effect at the time.

Transit Police's policy in effect at the time allowed for Taser deployment on "non-compliant" individuals. The Transit Police policy has since been revised (in May 2008), and the term "non-compliant" has been replaced by "actively resistant". Further, the BC Solicitor General issued a directive to all police services in the province in July 2009 to severely restrict the use of Tasers in accordance with the Braidwood Commission recommendations, prohibiting the deployments of Tasers unless the subject is causing bodily harm or the police officer is satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that the subject's behaviour will imminently cause bodily harm. Transit Police are following this directive.

Since May 2008, the Taser has been activated by Transit Police in only one incident. A butcher knife was seized from the actively resistant subject in this incident and the subject was later convicted of assaulting a Transit Police officer.

"By releasing these videos, we are acknowledging that these incidents happened two and three years ago, the Police Complaints Commissioner reviewed the incidents and cleared us on the use of the Taser in each incident and, like every police agency in BC, we have tightened up our policies and practices around Taser use," explained Transit Police spokesman Inspector David Hansen.

Copies of DVDs containing the recorded station surveillance video, as well as TASER video, specific to the following incidents are available to media for pickup at the Transit Police Office :

General Occurrence No. 2007-7650
General Occurrence No. 2007-7818
General Occurrence No. 2007-8347
General Occurrence No. 2007-9099
General Occurrence No. 2007-9671
General Occurrence No. 2008-157
General Occurrence No. 2008-1909
General Occurrence No. 2008-2683
General Occurrence No. 2008-3246

The images associated with one incident (General Occurrence No. 2007-11422) have not been released. This incident remains under investigation, by a separate police agency, pursuant to the *Police Act*.

To obtain a DVD, please present valid media identification at the front counter at 307 Columbia Street in New Westminster.

For further information contact: **Inspector David Hansen 604-512-4734**