

December 18, 2019

IIU concludes investigation into injuries to male during WPS arrest

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into an incident in which a 25-year-old male was injured during a physical altercation with police at a warehouse in Winnipeg's Exchange District. No charges will be laid against either of the two involved officers.

On December 17, 2017, several officers responded to a call of a break and enter in progress at a warehouse on Arthur Street. In a stairwell, two officers confronted a suspect who was armed with a two-by-four piece of wood. As the man approached them, the officers deployed their conductive energy weapons (Tasers) but to no effect. The man charged them and the officers delivered numerous blows to his face and upper body. As they struggled to control him, the man tried to push the officers down the stairs, tried to reach a Taser, and bit one of the officers in the calf.

Following the man's eventual arrest, he was hospitalized with a broken jaw, broken nose and bleeding between the brain and surrounding membranes. As these are serious injuries as defined by regulation, the IIU was mandated to investigate.

Following a review of the investigative file, IIU Civilian Director Zane Tessler requested an external opinion from a use of force expert with the Vancouver Island District RCMP. This expert offered the opinion that the officers' actions were required to bring a violent person into custody and that similarly trained officers in identical circumstances would use equivalent levels of force.

In his report on the investigation, Tessler noted the man refused all commands to surrender and that the officers employed all non-lethal means available to gain control of him. He found the officers' use of force was reasonable and justified in the circumstances.

The complete report on the IIU investigation is available online at iiumanitoba.ca.

The details of this investigation were first announced on December 18, 2017.

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Information on the IIU can be found at www.iumanitoba.ca or at www.twitter.com/IUManitoba