

March 5, 2019

IIU concludes investigation into injuries to youth during confrontation with WPS

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into an incident in which a 16-year-old male was injured during a non-fatal officer-involved shooting around Mountain Avenue and Salter Street in Winnipeg. It has concluded the officer was justified in firing his weapon.

Just after midnight on October 4, 2018, police responded to reports of up to 10 males, possibly with machine guns, firing shots and banging on doors on Mountain Avenue. When police arrived, one of the suspects was observed running with a rifle in his hands. He refused repeated police commands to stop and was holding the weapon in such a way that he could have quickly turned it on officers. One of the officers fired his service pistol, hitting the suspect in the right ring finger.

As this matter involved an injury to a person that resulted from a police officer's discharge of a firearm, the IIU was mandated to investigate.

Investigators canvassed the area of Mountain Avenue, Salter Street and College Avenue and were aided in their investigation by interviews with 14 eye and ear witnesses.

In his report on the investigation, IIU Civilian Director Zane Tessler noted that the fact the youth did not suffer life-threatening injuries was not a factor in determining whether police use of force was justified. He noted the youth was running and in possession of a rifle; that he refused demands to stop and surrender; and the threat he posed to police was real and possibly imminent. Tessler concluded it was reasonable for the officer to fire at the youth to prevent the death of other officers and civilians.

The male youth faces outstanding charges related to this incident. The complete report on the IIU investigation will be posted online once those charges are dealt with by the courts.

The details of this investigation were first announced on October 4, 2018.

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Information on the IIU can be found at www.iiumanitoba.ca or at www.twitter.com/IIUManitoba