

January 8, 2020

IIU concludes investigation into fatal WPS officer-involved shooting on Colony Street

The Independent Investigation Unit (IIU) has concluded its investigation into the death of a 43-year-old man following an officer-involved shooting at an apartment block on Colony Street last winter. It has concluded no charges should be laid against the officer who fired his weapon.

On the morning of February 23, 2019, four members of the Winnipeg Police Service responded to a call regarding a man armed with a hammer and breaking into suites. After speaking with affected tenants, two of the officers noted a man matching the description of the suspect and followed him into a suite. Both officers discharged their conductive energy weapons (Tasers) to no effect. After the man punched one of the officers in the head, the man grabbed a hammer and indicated he would use it on the officers. One of the officers then fired three shots with his service weapon, fatally wounding the man. He was taken to hospital and pronounced deceased.

In addition to receiving the subject officer's notes on the incident, IIU investigators interviewed five witness officers and seven civilian witnesses. Evidence at the scene included a hammer found on the floor where the man fell after being shot.

In his report on the investigation, IIU Civilian Director Zane Tessler found the use of lethal force by the subject officer was justified and unavoidable, and that his decision to shoot the man was necessary to prevent death or injury to himself and the other officer.

Tessler also noted that autopsy exhibits and bodily fluids from the deceased man were forwarded to the RCMP lab for analysis and a toxicology report. He wrote that the 260-day wait for results from the RCMP lab was "an inordinate delay and seriously hampered IIU in finalizing its investigation in a reasonable time."

The civilian director's complete report is available online at www.iumanitoba.ca. The details of this investigation were first announced on February 25, 2019.

There will also be an inquest into this death, as required under the *Fatality Inquiries Act*.

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Media inquiries may be directed to:
Barbara Czech
Communications, Independent Investigation Unit
204-803-9644
bczech@mts.net

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