



TRANSIT POLICE

LINE-OF-DUTY DEATHS

Effective Date: January 14, 2008

Revised Date: June 21, 2013

Reviewed Date:

Review Frequency: As Required

Office of Primary Responsibility: Inspector Support Services

POLICY

Definitions

Chief Officer – The Transit Police Chief Officer or delegate.

Line-of-Duty: The death of a sworn Member of the Transit Police by felonious or accidental means during the course of performing police functions while on or off duty.

Member – A Transit Police police officer appointed by the Police Board.

SCBCTA – The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority commonly referred to as “TransLink”.

Survivors: Immediate family members of the deceased Member to include spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancée and/or significant others.

Police Board – The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Board.

Transit Police – The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service.

Transit Police Personnel – Sworn police officers and civilians who work for the Transit Police.

TSML – The TransLink Security Management Limited, a subsidiary of the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority and legal entity/employer for the Transit Police.

Authority

1. The Police Personnel are employees of the TSML. The Transit Police is a Designated Policing Unit in British Columbia established pursuant to s. 4.1 of the Police Act upon application made by the SCBCTA. Pursuant to the application approval, the Transit Police is a part of the TSML and all Transit Police Personnel are employees of the TSML. The Transit Police is governed by the Police Board.

General

2. The Transit Police will establish procedures with respect to organizational response to Line-of-Duty deaths.
3. The Transit Police will provide proper support to the immediate survivors of a Member who dies in the Line-of-Duty and provide support for the deceased Member's family.
4. The Transit Police will be responsible for costs incurred in providing a funeral for a Transit Police Line-of-Duty death, and any associated costs incurred for the survivors to attend at the hospital and/or the funeral.

[See also: AB340 - Funeral Protocol, AB220 – Critical Incident Defusing Team, AB190 – Employee Assistance Program]

PROCEDURES

Death or Critical Injury Notification

5. Transit Police Personnel will adhere to the following procedures in cases of Line-of-Duty deaths and in case of critically injured officers with poor prognosis of survival. These procedures will be followed wherever possible, with the understanding that the wishes of the family take precedence over the desires of the Transit Police. Members providing services and assistance to family members and survivors will take all possible measures to accommodate their needs, wishes and desires, but should not make promises to family members that they are not sure can be met.
 1. The name of the deceased Member will not be released to the media or other parties before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.
 2. The Chief Officer or a Deputy Chief Officer will inform the immediate family of the Member's condition or death. If the Chief Officer or a Deputy Chief Officer is not immediately available, the senior ranking officer will make the notification or designate a Member.
 3. Notification to the survivors will be made prior to any Transit Police Personnel notifications.
 4. Notification of survivors in the immediate area will be made in person and, wherever appropriate, with another person such as the Police Chaplain. Bearing in mind the impact of the notification, medical assistance will be sought for survivors, as is necessary.
 5. If the opportunity to get the survivors to the hospital exists prior to the Member's death, the notification Member will inform the Hospital Liaison Officer (refer to s. 8) that the family is on its way. In such cases, immediate transportation will be provided for survivors rather than waiting for any other Members of the Transit Police delegation to arrive. If the Member has died, notification should be made to the survivors in as forthright and empathetic a manner as possible.

6. Communication of information concerning the Member and the incident itself will, whenever possible, be restricted to the telephone to avoid interception by the media or others. Should the media obtain the Member's name prematurely, the ranking officer, or the Transit Police Media Relations Officer, will make a request that the information be withheld until proper notification of survivors can be made.
7. The notification Member will be responsible for identification of additional survivors outside of the area and make any notifications as desired by the immediate family. Such notifications will be made by contacting the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction and requesting that personal notification be made.
8. The notification Member will submit a written report to the Chief Officer specifying the identity, time and place of survivors notified.
9. The Chief Officer or designate will notify the Police Board Chair and the TransLink Vice President – Human Resources of the Line-of-Duty incident and status, and they will be requested to notify the relevant parties accordingly.

Assisting Survivors at the Hospital

6. Whenever possible, the Chief Officer will join the family at the hospital in order to emphasize the Police Service's support. The next highest ranking officer to arrive at the hospital will serve as, or designate, a Hospital Liaison Officer who will be responsible for coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors, Transit Police Personnel, TransLink personnel, the media and others, and assume the following responsibilities:
 1. arrange for waiting facilities for immediate survivors and a media staging area. The desires of the surviving family members should be followed with regard to their accessibility to other Transit Police Personnel and friends,
 2. ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the Member's condition to family before any other parties,
 3. assist family members, in accordance with their desires, in gaining access to the injured or deceased Member,
 4. as needed, assist family with hospital personnel regarding medical coverage information, and
 5. ensure that immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital.

Appointment of Transit Police Coordination Personnel

7. The Chief Officer or designate will appoint Transit Police Personnel to serve in the following capacities: Police Service Liaison Officer, Funeral Liaison Officer, Benefits Coordinator and Family Support Liaison Officer. As appropriate to the circumstances, one officer may be assigned more than one liaison position.

8. The liaison assignments will be made in writing to: Transit Police Personnel, Police Board, and TransLink's Vice President – Human Resource and Chief Executive Officer. The surviving family members will be informed directly of those designated.
9. In addition, the Chief Officer or designate will:
 1. determine additional personnel assignments to assist in handling incoming phone calls and inquiries, and to direct the public to appropriate personnel,
 2. ensure that the Employee Assistance Program is implemented to assist the survivors and emphasize the family's right to psychological services, and
 3. ensure the other Transit Police Members are provided the opportunity to participate in critical incident stress debriefings.

Police Service Liaison Officer

10. The Police Service Liaison Officer will service as a facilitator between the family and the Transit Police. This individual will normally be a commanding officer in order to expedite the tasks of employing Transit Police resources and delegation of assignments. This officer will work closely with the Funeral Liaison Officer to ensure that the needs and requests of the family are fulfilled. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. providing travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members,
 2. assisting family members in dealing with general media inquiries and informing them of limitations on what they can say to the media specifically,
 3. coordinating with the Transit Police Media Liaison Officer the liaison functions with the media and TransLink communications, including release of any statements and holding of press conferences,
 4. ensure that Transit Police Personnel are aware of restrictions regarding release of any information that might undermine future legal proceedings,
 5. arrange for security of the family residence immediately following the incident and longer as necessary thereafter,
 6. ensuring that the deceased Member's personal property is retrieved from the locker and office, and turned over to the family, and that the issue firearm and equipment is returned to the Inspector Support Services for handling as appropriate to the circumstances,
 7. obtain biographical information and photographs of the deceased Member for media, funeral and memorial purposes,
 8. coordinating all official law enforcement notifications,
 9. in coordination with the Funeral Liaison Officer, assigning adequate staff to assist with the planning and coordination of Police Service involvement in funeral arrangements, and delegating tasks where appropriate. Planning considerations may include:
 - a. identify alternate churches and reception halls that will accommodate the law enforcement funeral – these alternatives will be presented to the family, who will make the final determination,
 - b. arrange for adjusted duty shifts and/or call out Members participating in the service,
 - c. arrange for Honor Guard and pallbearers, if requested by the family,
 - d. notify pallbearers and delegating pallbearer assignments,
 - e. prepare pre-service marshalling and procession arrival plans,

- f. prepare seating plan for the service,
- g. assist with music selections,
- h. arrange floral or other tribute, as per the family's request,
- i. brief police executive on funeral arrangements,
- j. obtain appropriate size linen flag for the casket (if requested) and obtain deceased Member's hat and any service medals, determining who will present and who will receive the flag,
- k. ensure programs are printed and distributed at the service,
- l. arrange any required transportation,
- m. provide notification to other law enforcement agencies, TransLink family and other guests of the service,
- n. arrange traffic control and escorts, if required,
- o. ensure adequate parking arrangements of the service,
- p. designate (if appropriate) a meet point to escort outside agency vehicles into the city where the funeral is taking place,
- q. if necessary, notify affected businesses/residents in advance of any parking restrictions or street closures during the service.

Funeral Liaison Officer

11. The Funeral Liaison Officer acts as facilitator between the deceased officer's family and the Police Service during the funeral or memorial service. The Funeral Liaison Officer is responsible for:
- 1. meeting with family members and explaining to them the Funeral Liaison Officer role,
 - 2. outlining the support available through the Police Chaplain, and making contact if requested,
 - 3. ensuring that the needs and wishes of the family come before those of the Police Service,
 - 4. being available to the family prior to, and throughout the funeral or memorial service,
 - 5. in coordination with the Police Service Liaison Officer, discussing with the family funeral arrangements, disposition of remains, and the extent of Police Service involvement requested by the family,
 - 6. if requested, assisting the family in contacting a funeral home, and working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements,
 - 7. relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the decedent officer's death and appropriate information regarding any investigation,
 - 8. determining the need for travel arrangements for out-of-town family members and any other special needs of the family during the funeral, and reporting of this information to the Police Service Liaison Officer, and
 - 9. briefing the family members on the procedures involved in the law enforcement funeral, if being held.

Benefits Coordinator

12. The Benefits Coordinator is responsible for:
- 1. notifying the official in charge of compensation/benefits (designated shared service provider), or designate, as soon as possible of the death of the Member

- in order to advance completion of necessary documents and notification, and initiating of applicable pay, insurance claims and benefits to the Next-of-Kin,
2. determining if the family requires immediate financial assistance, expediting pay, benefits or other assistance as required,
 3. providing, in coordination with appropriate human resource and compensation personnel, information regarding employee benefit plan entitlements available to the family and, if required, taking necessary action for entitlement processing,
 4. documenting inquires and interest in public donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions, as appropriate,
 5. arranging on behalf of the Transit Police and Police Board for flowers to be sent to the family, or for a donation to be made to charity, or other such action deemed appropriate, and
 6. arranging for a formal letter of condolence from the Transit Police to the deceased Member's Next-of-Kin.

Family Support Liaison Officer

13. The Family Support Officer serves in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family. The responsibilities of this individual include:
 1. providing contact with surviving family members in order to keep them abreast of any criminal proceedings related to the death of their family member,
 2. accompanying surviving family members to criminal proceedings, explaining the nature of the proceedings and introducing them to prosecutors and other persons as required,
 3. identifying all support services available to family members and working on their behalf to secure any services necessary,
 4. maintaining routine contact with family members to provide companionship and emotional support, and maintain an ongoing relationship between the Police Service and the immediate family, and
 5. relaying the concerns and needs of the family to those individuals or organizations that may provide assistance, and encouraging others to visit and help as necessary.