

**PUBLIC**

To: South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Board  
(Police Board)

From: Chief Officer Dave Jones  
South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service  
(Transit Police)

Date: September 3, 2020

**Subject: Indigenous Relations Training**

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*Recommendation:*

That the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Board participate in an in-house training session on Indigenous relations led by Sgt. Cheryl Simpkin and Cst. Kirk Rattray.

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**PURPOSE**

On Feb 21 2020, the Police Board approved the *Strengthening Transit Police Support for Indigenous Peoples* report, including 15 recommended actions. Action # 15 is for the “Police Board to identify areas of TRC/cultural awareness training that would enhance their role and effectiveness, and build into annual meeting plans.” To support this action item, Transit Police is recommending that Police Board members participate in an in-house training session that has been developed by the Sergeant - Client Services and newly appointed Transit Police Indigenous Liaison Officer.

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**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

In 2019, while work was underway on the *Strengthening Transit Police Support for Indigenous Peoples* report, conversations arose between Transit Police Training Section and Operations about the potential for an in-house training course/session on:

- The history of Indigenous peoples in Canada;
- The legacy of colonization on Indigenous peoples in Canada today; and
- Ways in which Transit Police could further support Indigenous clients outside of the criminal justice system.

This training would complement and expand upon the existing 'The Spirit Has No Colour' training provided to police recruits at the Justice Institute of BC (also provided to all staff a number of years ago).

Sgt. Cheryl Simpkin agreed to work on creating a presentation that could be delivered to new recruits and lateral hires at Transit Police. As a member of the Vuntut Gwitchen First Nation, who worked for 13 years as a police officer with the Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police, Sgt. Simpkin was intimately familiar with this subject matter. Sgt. Simpkin had already developed a similar training session in 2018 for University of Fraser Valley Corrections' students. As well, over the past 12-months, she has worked with Cst. Kirk Rattray (Transit Police's Indigenous Relations Officer) on expanding this training for internal training purposes. (Cst. Rattray has Tahltan First Nation heritage. Prior to joining Transit Police in 2014, Cst. Rattray served with the Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Service for nearly four years and the Winnipeg Police Service for 16 years. Cst. Rattray has previously helped deliver training Indigenous Peoples' training to police recruits in the region.)

During the 2-hour training session, including time for questions, Sgt. Simpkin and Cst. Rattray cover a range of topics, including:

- History of residential schools and the Indian Act;
- Physical and sexual abuse in residential schools;
- Long term social, emotional and financial impacts of residential schools;
- Over representation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system;
- Issues facing Indigenous youth today;
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission;
- The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report;
- Ways to bridge the gap between police and First Nation communities; and
- Considerations of restorative justice.

The training session has been developed to educate Members about important considerations when interacting with Indigenous individuals they encounter on/around the transit system. It concludes by discussing the role of the newly created Transit Police Indigenous Relations Officer, including identifying alternate solutions (i.e., restorative justice options), when applicable.

## **CONCLUSION**

While some Police Board members may have previously taken similar Indigenous relations training, the proposed training session will provide important foundational material for other members, as well as provide insights into the training that is provided to Transit Police hires. The session further provides an opportunity for the Police Board to ask specific questions that they may have related to engaging with Indigenous peoples and the relationship between Indigenous peoples and police.

This will assist in the Police Board in advancing Action 15 from the *Strengthening Transit Police Support of Indigenous Peoples Report*.

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Chief Officer Dave Jones

Author: Stephen Crosby, Manager Strategic Services