

# Metro Vancouver Transit Police Board



July 20, 2022

BY EMAIL: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

**RE: Service or Policy Complaint – Metro Vancouver Transit Police; OPCC File No. 2022-21156**

This letter is further to my last correspondence of February 24, 2022.

You complained to the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner (the “OPCC”) regarding your concerns related to a Metro Vancouver Transit Police Service (“MVTP”) officer who displayed a patch on their uniform you described as a “thin blue line fascist patch.” As stated in my letter to you of February 24, 2022, that complaint was forwarded to me as a service or policy complaint, and in accordance with s. 171(1)(a) of the Police Act, the MVTP Board requested that the Chief Officer of the MVTP investigate and provide a report to the Board on the matter.

At the June 17, 2022 MVTP Board meeting, the Board received and considered the Chief Officer’s investigation report. The report is attached. As outlined in the report, a “thin blue line” image is a symbol sometimes worn by police officers in memory of fallen officers. Blue ribbons have been in use by police services in Canada since the 1990s as a memorial symbol, and the Memorial Ribbon was endorsed nationally by the Canadian Police Association, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and the RCMP over twenty years ago. The ‘thin blue line’ on a patch or pin, alone or together with an image of the Canadian flag or a blue ribbon, has more recently also been used in British Columbia, including on shoulder flashes issued by many police departments in honour of Police and Peace Officers Memorial Day. Wearing such a patch is currently authorized under Transit Police policy.

As indicated in the report, it appears that racist or intolerant groups have recently been using a blue line on versions of national flags taken to large events, in an attempt to hijack the symbol for their own ends. The MVTP and the MVTP Board denounce this unequivocally. The attempt

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by some groups to claim this symbol as a message of hate is unacceptable. It tarnishes the true meaning of the blue line and deeply dishonours those officers the symbol is meant to memorialize.

The MVTP Board acknowledges that the “thin blue line” image has become a matter of public debate throughout British Columbia and Canada, with similar complaints being received and considered at other police services, including the Vancouver Police Department. The Chief Officer has directed staff to monitor ongoing discourse related to the subject, and bring forward the report of the Vancouver Police Department on this subject once that is available. In view of the ongoing public discussion, the MVTP Board has directed the governance committee to regularly review the policy.

The file is now closed. Pursuant to Section 172(2) of the Police Act, if you are dissatisfied with the actions of the Police Board in this matter, you may ask the Police Complaint Commissioner to review them. You have twenty business days from receipt of this letter to request such a review.

Yours truly,

*original signed*

Sara A. Levine, QC,  
Chair, Metro Vancouver Transit Police Board

C: Wayne Rideout, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services  
Clayton Pecknold, Police Complaint Commissioner  
Chief Officer David Jones, MVTP

*Enclosure*