

**INQUEST INTO THE DEATHS OF SEVEN FIRST NATIONS YOUTHS:  
Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morriseau, Paul Panacheese,  
Curran Strang and Jordan Wabasse**

**IMPLEMENTATION STATUS REPORT OF  
THE THUNDER BAY POLICE SERVICE**

**September 12, 2023**

## **A. Overview**

On June 28, 2016, the verdict in the Joint Inquest into the Deaths of Seven First Nations Youths in the City of Thunder Bay (“Joint Inquest”) was released along with 145 recommendations directed to various institutional parties. Of the 145 recommendations, approximately six (6) relate to policing matters and were directed to, among other institutions, the Thunder Bay Police Service (the “Service”). All of the recommendations that refer to the Service have been accepted. This Report is prepared pursuant to Recommendation 144 to provide an update on implementation status.

## **B. Recommendations Directed to All Parties**

A number of recommendations arising out of the Joint Inquest are directed to all parties. The Service acknowledges and accepts these recommendations and reports as follows:

### **Recommendation 7 – Guiding Principles - Complete**

This recommendation is accepted by the Service. Implementation is being guided by the statements contained in this recommendation.

### **Recommendation 143 – Annual Report on Implementation Status – Complete**

This recommendation is accepted by the Service and this Report constitutes the Service’s Report thereunder.

#### **Update 2022-2023:**

The last report was submitted in September 2022, this submission constitutes the ongoing support of the annual reporting requirement.

### **Recommendation 144 – Process of Posting Annual Reports - Complete**

The Service submits its report to the Coroner and also provides NAN with its completed yearly updates for publication on NAN’s website. Further, the Service publishes its annual Inquest reports at [www.thunderbaypolice.ca/reports](http://www.thunderbaypolice.ca/reports)

### **Recommendation 145 – Revise Policies and Procedures – Complete**

The Service has completed its changes to policies and procedures. Any further changes, when identified, will be made during normal operational reviews and implemented as appropriate.

#### **C. Recommendation involving Police and other Institutions**

### **Recommendation 48 – Grade 8 Visit Program - Complete**

The Grade 8 Visit Program (“Visit Program”) was created and implemented proactively by the Service during the hearing phase of the Joint Inquest and prior to the release of the verdict and recommendations. While the recommendation obligation has been fulfilled the TBPS will continue the program indefinitely.

#### **First Nations Visits: June 2020 - 2021 - Ongoing**

The in person visits were postponed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Community Inclusion Team used the time to develop interactive presentations for future visits and for online engagement. Community Services Officers engaged youth locally through the Archery Program when restrictions were not in place.

The Community Inclusion Team including the School Resource Officers continued presentations online to students within our jurisdictions.

The Community Inclusion Team is also partnering with a media relations company and a youth mentor to create new content and anti-gang presentations to be used during engagement activities when COVID restrictions allow. Online engagement will begin in the fall if in person presentations are still restricted.

#### **2022 - 2023 Update:**

In 2022, the Community Outreach officers and civilian staff collaborated with the Canadian Military at the Canadian Junior Rangers summer program, Camp Loon, to deliver the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). The camp was held at Springwater Lake, 50

kilometers north of Geraldton. In the summer months of 2022, officers taught basic archery principles to 59 Junior Rangers from 17 First Nations, as well as instructors comprised of 22 Canadian Rangers, who are part-time reservists and 45 other military personnel. In the evening, Officers ran a paintball range, which saw a large amount of participation.

In July of 2023 the Thunder Bay Police expanded its collaboration with the Canadian Ranger Group by participating in two separate activities. On this occasion Camp Loon was held in Nipissing, Ontario at the Spirit Point Wilderness Academy and Camp. Officers expanded their involvement with the 50 youth in attendance. In addition to instructing the NASP archery program and running the paintball range, an Officer from the School Resource Office delivered presentations regarding bullying and online safety.

Also in July of 2023, two Officers from the Community Outreach Office, in collaboration with the Canadian Rangers went on a 5 day canoe trip in Quetico Park. There were 16 youth from Northern communities that attended this trip. They were instructed in first aid, canoe tipping/recovery, Tarpology and fire making.

#### **Update (on Student Lists): 2022-2023 - Ongoing**

The TBPS is still waiting on whether each individual education authority will provide student lists. This year none were received.

#### **Update (on Ambassadors): 2022 - 2023 - Ongoing**

As a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic, NAN developed a workshop on Community Visit Protocols and the members of the TBPS Community Inclusion Team participated in the online training.

#### **Update (on Service/NAPS joint presentation): 2022-2023 - Complete**

As of October 2018, all NAPS officers have received the presentation from the Service's Aboriginal Liaison Unit (ALU) (now the Community Inclusion Team). Further, the TBPS Safety Presentation video has now been sent to all NAPS detachments for them to use on a go forward basis without their respective communities.

Within the coming year, work will be completed to determine if the video should be updated and a new presentation provided. TBPS has created a series of videos in collaboration with Wali Shaw for our “Dear Self” project. They address issues of gang recruitment, drug use and human trafficking. These are to be provided to NAPS.

### **Recommendation 91 – Working Group – Substantially Complete but will be Ongoing**

This recommendation was proposed jointly by the Service and other parties. It has been accepted by the Service and implementation is ongoing.

- **i. The need to ensure timely reporting to police of all missing person matters that involve a Student (In Progress).**

The Service can confirm that it is continuing to work with Matawa Learning Centre (“Matawa”), Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School (“DFC”), Keewaytinook Okimakanak (“KO”) and the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (“NNEC”) to prepare missing person protocols and contact information resources in an effort to synchronize policies and procedures among all on-call workers across different educational organizations.

- **ii. & iv. Public Awareness/Social Media Search (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **iii. Information Sheets (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **v. Press Releases (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **vi. Best Practices for Interviews (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **vii. & viii. Internal and Global Search Plans (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.

- **ix. & x. Missing Person Risk Factors & Missing Person Questionnaire (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **xi. Training (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **xii. Training Case Scenario (Complete).** No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.
- **xiii. Consultant (Complete).** The Service has hired an external consultant (Leisa Desmoulin) regarding TBPS training modules and curriculum covering cultural issues relevant to the Indigenous community, as part of a larger organizational change project. Since the time of the hiring of the consultant, many reviews have been conducted as it relates to cultural issues and the police relationship with Indigenous people. As a result, TBPS will review those reports and implement the necessary recommendations and report the progress to the Thunder Bay Police Services Board as well as the applicable oversight bodies (ie Office of the Independent Police Review Director).

#### **2022 – 2023 Update:**

The work contemplated has been completed with the Service implementing Diversity Reconciliation Training to all members of the Service. At this time, nearly all members have the Service have completed the prescribed training.

#### **Update (Overall): 2022 - 2023**

The Service continues to be in discussion with NAN and other parties on an as needed basis to finalize the outstanding items outlined in this recommendation or should any issues arise with the implementation of the recommendations.

**Update on Public Awareness/Social Media Campaign): Complete**

No further update as recommendation was completed and reported on in previous yearly reports.

**Recommendation 94 – Multilingual Joint Search Protocol – Complete:**

**Update: June 2020 - 2021**

The Joint Search Protocol has been finalized and is now in circulation.

**Recommendation 96 – Joint Task Force with LCBO to Deter Underage Drinking (Complete).**

**Update: June 2020 – 2021:**

The “Runner Project Plan” at TBPS remains operational, when staffing complement permits.

**Recommendation 97 – Public Campaign to Deter Second Party Purchases of Alcohol (Complete).**

**Recommendation 115 – Safety Audit of River Areas (Complete).**

While the recommendation obligation has been satisfied the TBPS will continue to conduct safety audits of river areas on an ongoing permanent basis.

**Riverway/Floodway Monitoring Project:** The Service continues to monitor the identified high-risk areas, with daily foot patrols three times a day.

**Data Collection from Reporting Mechanism:** The project funding came to an end in mid-2021 and therefore the statistics as found in the 2021 report are no longer available. However, given the success of this project “floodway” patrols are still assigned to the Primary Response Branch officers to conduct twice a day in the high-risk areas. These patrols occur by officers either walking directly in the floodway area or driving their vehicles by on other occasions. The patrols allow officers to move individuals away from the water especially when alcohol is present to reduce the risk of harm.

Statistical data that has been captured indicates the following:

In 2022, there was a total of 513 incidents listed as floodway occurrences which involved approximately 881 persons. The number of involved persons is likely an underestimation as there are 24 noted occurrences in which a group of individuals was present. Up to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, there has been a total of 121 occurrences listed as floodway occurrences which involved approximately 228 persons. Due to legal restraints and other considerations, names, ages, race are not always captured and therefore it is not possible to break down the statistics further.