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AR 9801

September 17, 2014

Mr. François Guimont  
Deputy Minister  
Public Safety Canada  
269 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0P8

Dear Mr. Guimont:

On July 5, 2013, the Chair of the Commission for Public Complaints (Commission) against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) initiated a public interest investigation into the conduct of RCMP members who were assigned to flood response duties in High River, Alberta in June of 2013. The investigation was to examine whether the RCMP members' actions, in relation to the seizure of firearms from the homes of High River residents, complied with RCMP policy and were justified in law.

As you know, many Albertans have expressed considerable criticism of the RCMP in relation to their decision to forcibly enter private residences and to seize firearms during the flood response and recovery operations. The Province of Alberta has a keen and vested interest in ensuring that the allegations made against the RCMP are independently and thoroughly investigated. We acknowledge that given the scale and complexity of this matter, Albertans must be patient in terms of allowing the Commission sufficient time to properly examine the full scope of the complaints that have been made.

Public confidence and trust in the Commission is directly related to the fact they represent independent oversight of the RCMP. I believe public trust is earned by delivering thorough and professional results in a timely fashion. I have confidence in the Commission's ability to complete a thorough and professional investigation in this matter, but I am becoming increasingly concerned that the passage of time will soon have a detrimental effect on the relevancy of the Commission's report.

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Albertans have now waited 14 months for the Commission to complete its work. Public opinion with respect to the propriety of the RCMP's actions has been ostensibly shaped by uninformed editorial comment. Factual disclosure of the details of the RCMP actions, the reasons for them, and assessment of the reasonableness of those actions has been virtually held in abeyance until the Commission makes its report public. For some Albertans, this represents failure to hold the police accountable for egregious conduct. For others, it presents an impediment to publically discuss and respond to the apprehensions and concerns raised with respect to the RCMP's actions. No matter how you look at it, Albertans and the RCMP are adversely affected by delays associated to public release of the Commission's report.

I emphasize that Alberta is committed to a process where an independent and thorough investigation of these complaints are conducted. But, I also believe Canada and Alberta share a common interest in ensuring the Chair appreciates this matter is a high priority for our respective governments and he should devote sufficient resources to this matter to ensure additional delays are minimized. I believe Canada and Alberta should jointly make our concerns known to the Chair in this respect. If you agree, I would invite you to share my letter with the Commission with any additional comments that you might wish to offer.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tim Grant', written over the words 'Yours truly,'.

Tim Grant, OMM, MSC, CD  
Deputy Minister  
Justice and Solicitor General



Public Safety    Sécurité publique  
Canada            Canada

Deputy Minister    Sous-ministre

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0P8

OCT 10 2014

The Honourable Tim Grant  
Office of the Deputy Minister  
Justice and Solicitor General  
2nd floor, 9833 - 109 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2E8

Dear Mr. Grant:

Thank you for your correspondence of September 17, 2014, concerning the timeliness of the Commission for Public Complaints (CPC) Against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's (RCMP) Chair-Initiated Complaint and Public Interest Investigation relating to the RCMP seizure of firearms in High River, Alberta.

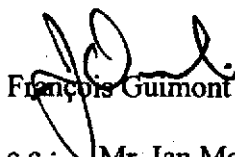
I concur with your views that given the scale and complexity of this matter, we must be patient in allowing the CPC sufficient time to properly examine the full scope of the complaints that have been made. I further agree that public trust is earned and maintained by allowing the CPC to deliver thorough professional results in a timely fashion.

The release of the CPC's report is important to Alberta residents. I understand that the CPC has allocated full-time resources on this file and will aim to have a report released by the end of October 2014, or shortly thereafter.

To this end, I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of our correspondence on this issue to the Chair of the CPC for his information and consideration.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns on this important issue to my attention.

Sincerely,



François Guimont

c.c.: Mr. Ian McPhail, Q.C.  
Chair

Commission for Public Complaints Against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Canada