

# SiRT

SERIOUS INCIDENT  
RESPONSE TEAM

## Summary of Investigation

SiRT File # 2022-019

Referral from

RCMP New Brunswick

May 10, 2022

John L. Scott  
Interim Director  
October 17, 2022

On May 10, 2022 the Nova Scotia Serious Incident Response Team (SiRT) received a call from the Director of Policing Standards and Contract Management, Department of Justice, and Public Safety of New Brunswick. Requested was a referral from the Oromocto RCMP concerning a young female, the Affected Party (AP) who jumped from an overpass to the ground below. An officer, the Subject Officer (SO), made contact with the female as she was falling. SiRT accepted the referral and began their investigation the following day. The investigation was concluded on July 27, 2022.

The following evidence was obtained, reviewed, and considered in the preparation of this report: two civilian witness statements (CW1 and CW2) who saw the AP go onto an overpass and placed herself in a highly dangerous position, the notes and reports of the SO, notes and reports of the Witness Officer (WO), as well as an interview with the SiRT investigator, interviews with three staff persons who worked at the residence of the AP on the night she went AWOL, two RCMP members who came to the scene following AP's jump from the overpass, and photos taken of the scene by the SiRT investigator. The AP's social worker/guardian indicated the AP would not be involved in giving a statement to SiRT.

### **Background**

The AP in this investigation was a 13-year-old female residing in Oromocto, New Brunswick. The AP was a temporary ward of the Province of New Brunswick residing in a supervised residence operated by a private enterprise and funded by the province. The AP had three staff persons on duty 24/7 due to her being a flight and suicidal risk. She was also known to the local RCMP detachment due to her behavioral issues.

### **Facts:**

On the evening of May 9, 2022, around 10 p.m., the AP managed to escape without notice from her residence. As a result of observations made by CW1 and CW2, calls were made to 911. CW1 was driving their vehicle when they observed a person wearing a black hoodie and grey pants run across the Waasis Road and onto an overpass that crosses the Trans Canada Highway into Oromocto West, NB. This person was observed by CW1 going on the outer side of the overpass railing and onto a small ledge holding onto the railing with both hands. CW2 was also out that night driving their car in the same general area as CW1. CW2 just happened to be on off-duty team supervisor at the home where the AP resided.

CW2 not knowing for sure if it was their client from the residence, called out the AP's name. The AP responded back to CW2 by telling them to "get away from her". Based on past experience and seeing the AP run onto the overpass, CW2 called 911.

Within a few minutes, the three staff members from AP's residence and the SO arrived separately onto the overpass. The SO, based on his duties as an RCMP member, was well known to the AP and had formed a positive relationship with her. The SO began to slowly approach the

AP, while trying to talk her from jumping off the overpass. The three staff members from the home were behind the SO some 20-30 feet. Another RCMP officer (WO) arrived and also remained a fair distance behind the SO.

This WO observed and heard the SO making verbal efforts to comfort the AP and at the same time moved closer to the AP's location. The AP told the SO that she did not want the three staff members to come any closer to her and that this time there wasn't anything the SO could do to stop her. As the SO slowly approached the AP, he had his arm extended in front of himself.

The AP released her hands off the railing and began to fall back. The SO lunged forward and was able to grab the AP's left wrist/arm area, however, the SO could not maintain his one hand hold on the AP and within a second or two, the AP fell to the ground below. Immediately the SO called for an ambulance and made his way to the location where the AP had fallen. The SO found the AP conscious but in considerable pain. The AP complained of pain in her right leg, lower back, neck and right wrist. The AP was bleeding from her chin and had a hard time breathing.

Paramedics and two other RCMP officers arrived shortly thereafter and assisted in getting her in the ambulance. The SO went to the hospital and was informed the AP had broken her right leg, right wrist, some ribs and her jaw. Her condition was stabilized and the SO left.

With the assistance of another RCMP officer, the SO measured the distance from the ledge of the overpass where the AP was standing to where she laid on the ground below a distance of 17 feet. The area where the AP had been standing on the overpass was not over the actual travelled portion of the four-lane divided highway, but over where the sloped concrete slabs under the overpass meet a level grassy area near the shoulder of the highway. The SiRT investigator was not able to get an exact verification of AP's injuries as efforts to get such information were not forthcoming.

**Relevant legal issues:**

1. Did the SO's involvement with the AP amount to anything criminal on the evening in question?

**Conclusion:**

The actions of the AP on the evening of May 9, 2022 were secretive, voluntarily driven and self-destructive in nature. It is not known why she planned what she tried to do, but no fault lies at the hands of the SO in what actions he took that night. The SO was trying to save the AP from serious injury or possible death in his efforts to grab her when she let go of her hold on the overpass railing. In his statement to the SiRT investigator, the WO indicated that the temporary grabbing of the wrist/arm of the AP, straightened out her fall and instead of landing on her back, she would have landed on her feet when she hit the ground. The SO's actions are to be commended in these

circumstances and absolutely nothing criminal in nature occurred that night. Therefore, there are no grounds for any charges against the SO.