

Report slams RCMP in airport Taser death

Last Updated: Tuesday, December 8, 2009 | 12:50 PM PT [Comments 561](#) [Recommend 321](#)

[CBC News](#)



RCMP officers at Vancouver airport discharged a Taser five times while restraining Polish immigrant Robert Dziekanski on Oct. 14, 2007. (Paul Pritchard) A damning report on the conduct of RCMP involved in the death of Robert Dziekanski at the Vancouver airport was released on Tuesday by the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP.

In the strongly worded report, Paul Kennedy, chair of the commission, made 23 findings and 16 recommendations that were highly critical of both the actions of the four officers and the followup investigation by the RCMP.

Dziekanski died at Vancouver's airport in October 2007 minutes after he was stunned repeatedly with a Taser by the RCMP, who were responding to a disturbance call in the airport arrivals lounge.

The report faulted the officers for using the Taser on Dziekanski too quickly, too often and without warning.

'No meaningful attempt was made to de-escalate the situation,'

Kennedy also said he doubted the officers version of events and faulted the RCMP's own investigation into the incident, saying it was confused and failed to provide accurate information to the public.

—Paul Kennedy, chair of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP

He also took aim at the RCMP's training and use of force guidelines, saying the force appears to have dropped historic guidelines directing officers to minimize intervention and use the least amount of force required to get the best results.

Key findings laid out

At a press conference in Vancouver, Kennedy summarized the key findings in the 200-page report:

- While they were in the lawful execution of their duties as police officers, the four officers failed to adopt a measured, co-ordinated and appropriate response to Dziekanski's reported behaviour.
- The senior on-scene RCMP member failed to take charge of the RCMP's response.
- No meaningful attempt was made to de-escalate the situation.
- No warning, visual or otherwise, was given to Dziekanski prior to him being hit by the conducted energy weapon (CEW).
- Use of the CEW against Dziekanski was premature and inappropriate.
- The CEW was used multiple times on Dziekanski without any significant effort made to determine the need for further use.
- The RCMP members present should have more actively provided first-aid and monitored Dziekanski's condition.
- The four RCMP members inappropriately met alone after the death of Dziekanski prior to giving their statements.
- The versions of events given to investigators by the four RCMP officers involved in Dziekanski's death are not deemed credible.
- The senior on-scene RCMP member should not have been present at the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) briefing held at the Richmond Detachment on Oct. 14, 2007.
- No bias or partiality toward the involved RCMP members was present in the IHIT investigation of the death of Dziekanski, but the video shot by a member of the public should have been shown to the members before taking statements from them.
- The RCMP should have released certain information to the media which would have served to clarify information pertaining to the death of Dziekanski and corrected erroneous information previously provided without compromising the IHIT investigation.

No charges were ever laid in Dziekanski's death. A coroner concluded he died as a result of the stress from both the Taser stuns and the struggle with police as they pinned him to the ground and handcuffed him.

RCMP withholds comments

Kennedy said he has presented his report to RCMP Commissioner William Elliott, but the commissioner refused to send back an official response until after a second report from retired judge Thomas Braidwood is issued later next year.



Paul Kennedy, chair of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, released his report into the death of Robert Dziekanski on Tuesday. (CBC) The Braidwood public inquiry was set up by the B.C. government and wrapped up in October. RCMP spokesman Sgt. Tim Shields said the force would issue its response to both reports following the release of the Braidwood report.

Shield also said the RCMP was committed to doing whatever possible to adapt its training and operations to ensure such a tragic situation would not occur again, and said many of the concerns raised in Kennedy's report have already been addressed by the force.

The RCMP requested Kennedy not publicly release his report until the Braidwood report comes out next year, but Kennedy said on Tuesday that he was against any further delays.

Kennedy has been increasingly critical of the RCMP during his term as commissioner, which expires at the end of December, and he was not reappointed to the position by the federal government.

Earlier this year he called for an end to RCMP investigations of deaths and serious injuries involving RCMP officers.

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[gunner1954](#) wrote: Posted 2009/12/08

at 10:20 PM ET Kennedy's comments at the end of this article kinda sum up a lot of peoples feelings including myself:

Earlier this year he called for an end to RCMP investigations of deaths and serious injuries involving RCMP officers.

- [1](#)
- [0](#)

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[Grateful Slave](#) wrote: Posted 2009/12/08

at 10:20 PM ET sad_mountie wrote: "I also beg Canadians to take the time to get to know a local Mountie. See that most of us are just like other Canadians. I hope some of them give you, the people we have sworn to protect, a sense of hope."

In the past three years I have encountered over 30 mounties. I've had 1 reasonable and respectful interactions out of the bunch. I have no criminal record, no outstanding warrants and no outstanding criminal charges. I have been dragged from my vehicle, handcuffed and then beaten with a metal flashlight until unconscious, convulsing and bleeding on the ground, all at the hands of mounties. And then the cover-up, conflicts of interest and lies really started hitting the fan. Instead of admitting error or incompetence, the force systematically vilifies their victims. Please don't try and tell me it's only a few bad apples. It literally adds insult to injury.

- [2](#)
- [0](#)

[2 Agree 0 Disagree Policy Report abuse](#)

[eneoji](#) wrote: Posted 2009/12/08

at 10:15 PM ET The yellow stripe is wrongly located. With this ongoing incompetance being demonstrated to us more and more frequently, perhaps it should be located vertically on the back?

- [3](#)
- [3](#)

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[rwnuton](#) wrote: Posted 2009/12/08

at 10:15 PM ET By the way,

How much did we just spend to find out these four buffoons are incompetent?? One of them just got charged with impaired driving causing death for God sakes. And if I'm not mistaken there was suspicious behavior around that incident as well.

Again, don't trust em.

- [8](#)
- [1](#)

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[Wayfarer](#) wrote: Posted 2009/12/08

at 10:13 PM ET In other words: the RCMP acted like a bunch of goons.

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- [4](#)

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