

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MR. CORONER**

### **PREPARED ON BEHALF OF MR. DU'S FAMILY**

1. We recommend that Vancouver Police Department (VPD) officers and staff be required to take extensive cultural sensitivity training, to aid their understanding and interactions with community members who are disabled, LGBTQ, people of colour, immigrants and refugees, poor and low-income, youth, elders and seniors, girls and women, and/or a combination of these identities and beyond, so that marginalized people are treated with dignity, integrity, and respect by city employees, including when in crisis.
2. We recommend that officers responsible for causing harm and/or death to community members receive a minimum of three mandatory counselling sessions. These sessions must allow the officer in question to gain insight into their actions, understand how their own biases and unconscious reactions may have contributed to the event, and allow that officer to cope and heal with the trauma resulting from the event so that catastrophic harm is never caused by that officer again.
3. We recommend that VPD prioritize scene containment strategies when responding to a call that likely includes a person experiencing mental health event that poses a potential threat to the public. Specifically, we recommend that VPD prioritize containment strategies that ensure that all participants emerge safely from the event, including pedestrians, vehicle traffic, the subject of the call, and officers. For example, if officers are aware that another car is also responding, and are close by, they could wait for the second car to arrive to block traffic, deal with pedestrians, etc. If officers cannot wait for the second car, they should use their own car to, at the very least, block traffic. In this case, the officers could simply have turned left onto 41<sup>st</sup> Street and blocked northbound traffic, which would have removed the problem of vehicles passing through the intersection close to Mr. Du both before and after the shooting.
4. We recommend that VPD officers be trained to not use handcuffs after a possibly lethal police-involved shooting, particularly after a pat-down search has occurred. Instead, officers should immediately place that victim in the recovery position.
5. We recommend that the Province of British Columbia make first aid training mandatory for all frontline officers so that they can provide immediate care to victims of a shooting.
6. We recommend that VPD investigate other less lethal options that would be more effective for persons in mental health crisis, which are not limited by clothing worn by the individual.

7. We recommend that VPD officers who are trained to use bean bag shotguns, also be trained to understand that they are less effective for persons in a mental health crisis, and/or for persons wearing certain clothing items, like down jackets.
8. We recommend that frontline VPD officers adopt the use of body-worn cameras, provided that there are appropriate standards in place that govern the use and dissemination of evidence obtained through the body-worn cameras.
9. We recommend that VPD conduct research and hear from international experts on the effective use of shields in possible weapons call as a containment and de-escalation strategy.
10. We recommend the VPD receive further training, and further direction from the Independent Investigations Office of BC (IIO), that they immediately cease all investigative steps once an officer-involved shooting takes place, regardless of whether the IIO has yet assumed jurisdiction. Specifically, VPD officers must not interview witnesses or family members, or attend the victim's home to gather evidence.
11. We recommend that Legal Services Society provide funding for independent legal counsel to represent families at coroner's inquests.
12. We acknowledge that the VPD has done extensive work on developing programs like Car 87, AOT and ACT, and consider those programs to be both necessary and welcome. However, these programs are geared towards prevention, and Mr. Du would not have been eligible for either AOT or ACT. As a result, we recommend that VPD develop specific response strategies, including the following:
  - a. standards to identify officers who have demonstrated skill in working with the mentally ill and de-escalating potentially violent situations involving persons experiencing a mental health crisis;
  - b. VPD must make it mandatory for those particularly skilled officers to be dispatched to potentially violent situations involving persons experiencing a mental health crisis; and
  - c. ECOMM be trained to recognize "mental health calls," code them in an identifiable way, and to ask questions of callers to gain information to provide to dispatched officers so that they may appropriately assess and plan prior to attending a call.
13. We recommend that IIO assess and improve their policies around releasing information to affected families to ensure that information is released to families as soon as possible so that they may understand and heal from the tragic event.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Frances Mahon, Counsel for the Family of Mr. Tony Du  
February 9, 2018