

ASIRT DECISION

**IN THE MATTER OF USE OF FORCE BY AN RCMP OFFICER
ON JANUARY 12, 2026**

Executive Director: Matthew Block

File No.: 2026-0002(N)

Date of Release: October 28, 2026

Introduction

On January 13, 2026, pursuant to s. 43.2(4)(c) of the *Police Act*, the Chief Executive Officer of the Police Review Commission directed the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) to investigate the use of a less lethal projectile on an affected person (AP) as a Level 1 incident. The incident arose while executing a warrant for firearms offences at a rural industrial property, resulting in a protracted standoff with police.

ASIRT designated one subject officer and provided him with notice. ASIRT's investigation is now complete.

ASIRT's Investigation

ASIRT's investigation was comprehensive and thorough, conducted using current investigative protocols, and in accordance with the principles of major case management.

ASIRT investigators interviewed one police witness and reviewed the reports and notes of five other officers.

As the subject of a criminal investigation, the subject officer (SO) was entitled to rely on his right to silence and not speak to ASIRT. In this case, the SO provided ASIRT investigators with a written statement and answered questions in an interview.

ASIRT investigators reviewed all available video of the incident, including RCMP drone footage, and all relevant RCMP radio transmissions. They also reviewed documentation from the scene examination conducted by the RCMP Grande Prairie Forensic Identification Unit.

Circumstances Surrounding the Incident

On January 12, 2026, at approximately 6 a.m., members of the Grande Prairie RCMP and Emergency Response Team (ERT) attended a rural industrial property to arrest the AP for an alleged assault on his wife and to execute a firearms search warrant. The property consisted of a shop with two garage bay doors and an adjacent fenced compound, which was subsequently contained by police.

Upon police arrival, the AP barricaded himself inside a recreational vehicle (RV) located within the shop and repeatedly refused to surrender despite negotiation efforts. Throughout the incident, police employed a range of tactical measures, including drones, distraction devices, chemical agents, a tactical armoured vehicle (TAV), and a remotely operated skid steer. The TAV was used to breach the shop's bay doors, while the skid steer was used to remove the RV from the shop and begin dismantling it. During the standoff, the AP discharged a firearm multiple times in the direction of police officers.

After approximately 12 hours, the AP exited the RV and moved to its side, where he gestured toward a TAV positioned nearby. Officers observed him intermittently raising his hands above his head before lowering them again while holding what appeared to be a cellphone in one hand and an unidentified object in the other. They also noted that he was carrying a large knife in a sheath attached to his waistband.

Approximately three minutes later, the AP began walking around the RV toward the shop. After police discharged a projectile that appeared to strike him in the back, the AP briefly stopped and turned before continuing at a brisk pace toward the shop. In response, a TAV positioned in front of the shop advanced to obstruct his path.

At this point, the SO and two other officers exited the rear of the TAV. The SO aimed and discharged a projectile launcher at the AP. As he did so, the SO slipped on the icy ground and fell. The projectile struck the AP in the face, after which officers moved in and took him into custody.

During a search incidental to arrest, officers located a loaded .22 calibre handgun concealed in a hip holster behind the knife sheath attached to the AP's waistband. The handgun was equipped with a 10-round magazine. Officers also located additional firearms near the area where the AP was arrested, as well as inside both the shop and the RV.

Preliminary information indicated that the AP's injury could result in the loss of his eye and that he would require transfer to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton for further assessment and treatment. Based on the seriousness of the reported injury, the incident was determined to fall within ASIRT's mandate and was assigned for investigation.

Affected Person (AP)

The AP declined to participate in an interview with ASIRT investigators while his related criminal proceedings remained outstanding. He also declined to provide consent for the release of his medical records for ASIRT's review. As a result, ASIRT's understanding of the nature and extent of the AP's injuries is limited. The available information is confined to the SO's observation that the AP appeared to have sustained a significant injury to his left eye.

Video Evidence

ASIRT investigators obtained and reviewed video footage captured by an RCMP drone. Although the footage did not contain audio, it was consistent with the SO's account of the incident. Relevant images extracted from the video footage have been included in the summary below to illustrate and contextualize the SO's evidence.

Subject Officer (SO)

The SO provided a full account of the incident. The following aspects of his statement were of particular relevance to ASIRT's investigation.

The SO was a member of ERT. On January 8, 2026, he was advised that his team would be deployed to assist the Grande Prairie Rural RCMP with the execution of a firearms-related search warrant at a shop located in an industrial area. He understood that the AP was alleged to have been involved in a domestic assault, was the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant for assault and was believed to possess at least eight firearms. A tactical plan was subsequently approved, with the SO assigned to the immediate action team and equipped with a projectile launcher.

At approximately 6 a.m. on January 12, 2026, the immediate action team attended the location in a TAV, in which the SO was positioned. Police made repeated attempts to communicate with the AP using the TAV's loud hailer, while members of the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) attempted to contact him by cell phone. The AP did not respond. The TAV breached the front door of the shop and deployed a drone; however, the drone was immediately disabled by someone within the building. The TAV subsequently breached the rear door, at which point the SO heard two gunshots from inside the shop. Communication was eventually established with the AP through the CNT, which repeatedly advised him that he was under arrest and directed him to surrender. The AP refused to comply. At one point, he attempted to mislead police by advising that three people would be surrendering from one side of the building, although no one exited. Police later removed the rear bay door of the shop using a TAV and

deployed chemical agents into the building, prompting additional gunfire from within.

Police deployed a drone and it revealed that the AP was inside an RV parked within the shop. Police deployed additional chemical agents near the RV to encourage his surrender. Rather than comply, the AP fired further shots from within the RV.

A second TAV subsequently arrived on scene. Police then observed another man break through an RV window, exit, and surrender. The man advised officers that the AP possessed several firearms, had pointed them at him, and had prevented him from leaving. He reported escaping through a rear window because he feared for his life. Police continued to introduce chemical agents into the RV throughout the standoff.

Beginning at approximately 5:22 p.m., a remotely operated skid steer was brought to the scene and used to pull the RV from the shop (Figure 1).



Figure 1 - A remotely operated skid steer pulled the RV from the shop. The holes observed in the front window resulted from the AP shooting a firearm at police. The red arrow points at the marks left on the window by ERT snipers returning fire.

Several volleys of gunfire were then fired from within the RV, striking near a TAV. Officers were concerned that the TAV could be penetrated by gunfire and that ERT snipers or nearby civilians could be endangered. In response, ERT snipers fired several rounds toward the RV. The AP later advised the CNT that he had not been struck or injured by the return fire.

The AP could be seen inside the RV holding a firearm and yelling at the remote-controlled skid steer,

apparently believing it was being physically operated (Figure 2).

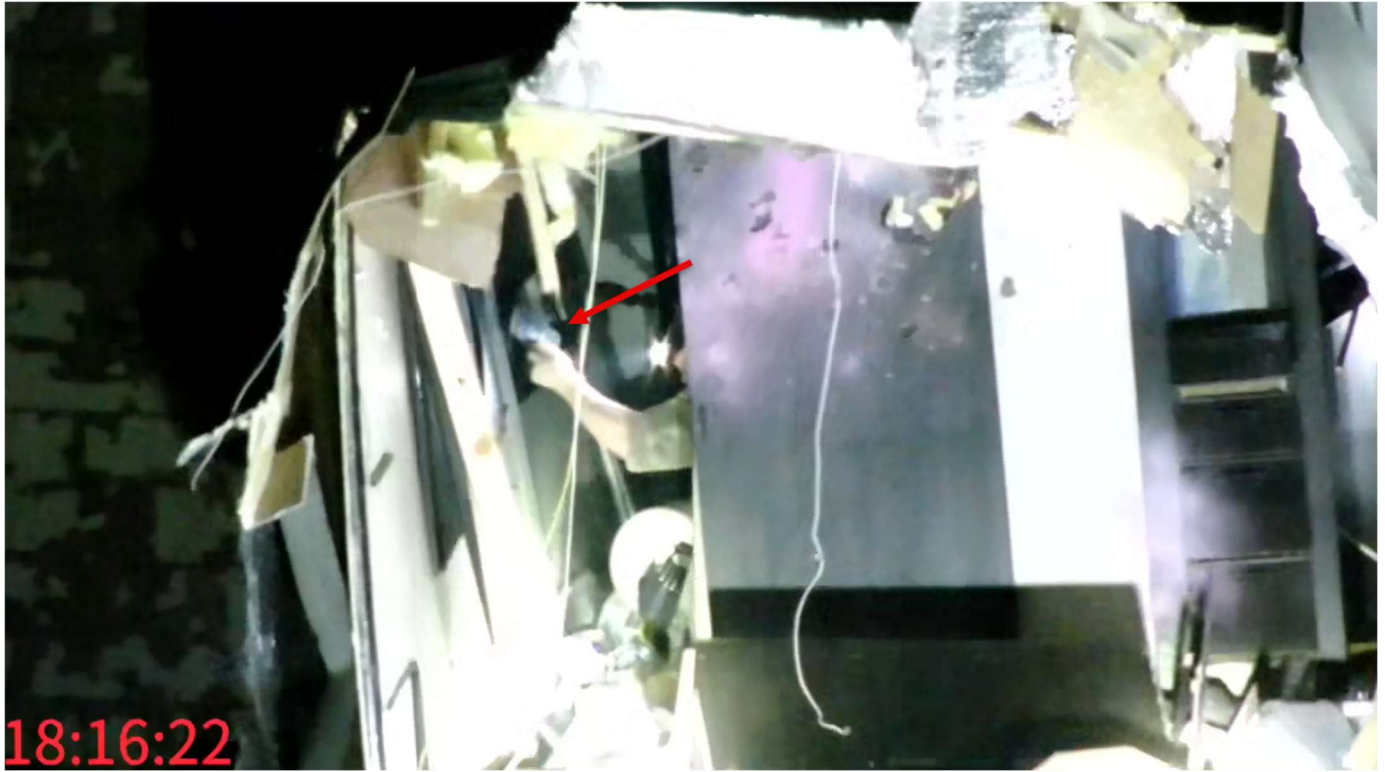


Figure 2 - The AP brandished a firearm (identified by red arrow) at police from inside the RV.

Officers used the skid steer to remove the RV from the shop and moved it into an open area, where

they began dismantling the structure with the skid steer (Figure 3).



Figure 3 – Officers used the skid steer to pull the RV into an open area and dismantle it.

Additional gunshots were then heard from within the RV.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the AP began yelling that his leg was broken and that he could not move. However, he subsequently exited the RV and stood without difficulty, indicating that his earlier claim

was untrue (Figure 4).



Figure 4 - The AP exited the RV. He stood next to the RV and intermittently raised and lowered his hands. The nearest TAV is positioned just outside the left side of the image frame.

Officers observed a large knife in a sheath attached to his waistband. The SO could hear the AP yelling at officers positioned in the second TAV and refusing to comply with verbal commands. A police supervisor provided authorization to the SO to deploy a less-lethal projectile should the AP continue to resist police direction.

The AP then began moving around the RV toward the shop. In response, the driver of the TAV occupied by the SO repositioned the TAV between the AP and the building to prevent him from regaining access

(Figure 5).



Figure 5 - The AP (identified by the yellow arrow) began briskly walking around the RV towards the shop. The second TAV (identified by the blue arrow) was pulled forward to obstruct his path. The shop is located out of frame on the opposite side of the TAV.

The AP continued yelling at the TAV, kept his hands down, and persisted in attempting to move toward the shop. Based on the circumstances, the SO believed the AP was lawfully subject to arrest, actively resisting police direction, armed with a large knife, had access to additional firearms, had demonstrated ongoing hostile and threatening behaviour, and was attempting to reach a location where further weapons were believed to be stored. In the SO's view, the AP did not appear to be surrendering.

The SO initially attempted to deploy his projectile launcher through the TAV gunport; however, the angle prevented an accurate shot. Another officer positioned in the second TAV deployed a projectile that struck the AP in the back but appeared to have little effect.

The SO then exited the TAV and obtained a clear sightline to the AP's leg, which was his intended

target area (Figure 6).

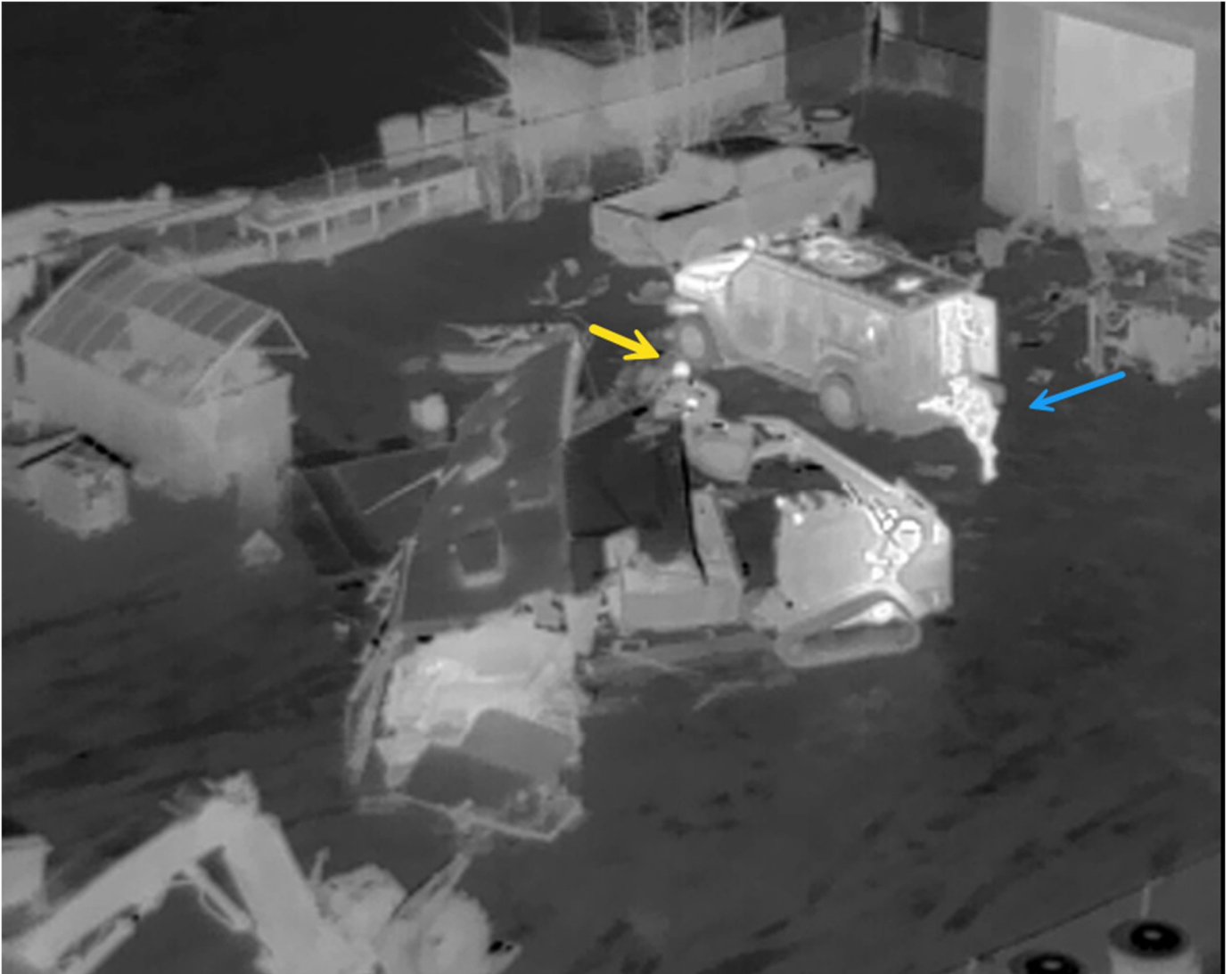


Figure 6 - The SO (identified by the blue arrow) exited the TAV and aimed his projectile launcher at the AP (identified by the yellow arrow). The shop can be seen behind the TAV in the background of this image.

As he pulled the trigger, he slipped and fell forward (Figure 7).



Figure 7 - The SO (identified by the blue arrow) slipped on the icy ground as the projectile is deployed towards the AP (identified by the yellow arrow).

While attempting to brace his fall with his left hand, the launcher rose upward in his right hand, causing the projectile to unintentionally strike the AP in the face. The AP immediately grabbed his face but remained standing as officers moved in and took him into custody. During a search incident to arrest, officers located a loaded .22 calibre handgun in a hip holster concealed behind the knife sheath. The firearm was equipped with a 10-round magazine.

Upon observing that the AP had sustained a significant injury to his left eye, the SO requested the attendance of a medic and emergency medical services to provide treatment. A subsequent search of the area located three long guns on the ground near where the AP was arrested, along with numerous additional firearms in the shop and RV.

The SO stated that, throughout the incident, the AP had demonstrated that he posed an ongoing threat of grievous bodily harm or death to others. The SO believed that, had the AP regained access to the shop, he would have been able to access additional firearms, thereby creating a substantial risk of

serious injury or death to police officers and others in the vicinity.

Witness Officers

ASIRT investigators interviewed one police witness and reviewed the reports and notes of five additional officers. The officers' accounts were consistent with both the available video evidence and the SO's statement. Although the drone footage did not capture audio, the witness officers were able to provide additional context regarding the verbal commands issued throughout the interaction.

The witness officers confirmed that when the AP exited the RV, he was directed to approach the nearest TAV. The AP did not comply and instead began walking away toward the shop. An officer positioned in the nearest TAV reported that he discharged a projectile, which struck him in the back. Despite being struck, the AP continued toward the shop, where his path was intercepted by a second TAV.

An officer positioned in the second TAV stated that, as the AP approached, he repeatedly directed him to get on the ground and surrender while gesturing toward the ground. The officer reported that the AP looked directly at him as these commands were given but nevertheless failed to comply.

Following the AP's arrest, officers observed several long guns on the ground in the immediate area, as well as multiple firearms located inside both the shop and the RV.

Analysis

ASIRT investigates where serious injury or death is caused by a police officer, in addition to other sensitive investigations of police officers. These are criminal investigations only.

Here, the action under investigation is the SO's discharge of a projectile launcher, which is believed to have resulted in serious injury to the AP.

Section 25 Generally

Under s. 25 of the *Criminal Code*, police officers are permitted to use as much force as is necessary for the execution of their duties. Where the force used by an officer is intended or is likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm, s. 25(3) applies and the officer must believe on reasonable grounds that the force is necessary for the self-preservation of the officer or preservation of anyone under that officer's protection. The force used here – discharging a projectile launcher at a person – was clearly intended or likely to cause grievous bodily harm. The subject officer therefore must have believed on reasonable grounds that the force he used was necessary for his self-preservation or the preservation of another person under his protection. Another person can include other police officers.

For the defence provided by s. 25 to apply to the actions of an officer, the officer must be required or authorized by law to perform the action in the administration or enforcement of the law, must have acted on reasonable grounds in performing the action, and must not have used unnecessary force.

All uses of force by police must also be proportionate, necessary, and reasonable.

Proportionality requires balancing a use of force with the action to which it responds. As noted above, where force is intended or is likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm, s. 25(3) codifies a requirement that the officer must believe on reasonable grounds that the force is necessary for the self-preservation of the officer or preservation of anyone under that officer's protection.

Necessity requires that there are not reasonable alternatives to the use of force that would also

accomplish the same goal. These alternatives can include no action at all. Analysis of police actions must recognize the dynamic situations in which officers often find themselves, and such analysis should not expect police officers to weigh alternatives in real time in the same way they can later be scrutinized in a stress-free environment.

Reasonableness looks at the use of force and the situation as a whole from an objective viewpoint. Police actions are not to be judged on a standard of perfection, but on a standard of reasonableness.

Section 25 Applied

The SO was lawfully placed and acting in the execution of his duties. He attended the location to assist in the lawful execution of a search warrant for firearms. Throughout the approximately 12-hour standoff, the AP repeatedly demonstrated that he was in possession of firearms by discharging them at police officers. In addition, another man who had fled from the RV where the AP was barricaded confirmed that the AP possessed multiple firearms and reported that the AP had threatened him with one.

Although officers were aware of outstanding warrants and new domestic violence allegations involving the AP prior to the SO's attendance, the AP's conduct during the incident independently provided grounds for his arrest. In carrying out their core duties to enforce warrants, preserve the peace, and protect life and property, the officers on scene were authorized and required to apprehend the AP. The SO's actions throughout the incident were taken in furtherance of those lawful duties.

As the incident progressed, the risk posed by the AP continued to escalate. The AP appeared highly motivated to avoid arrest and persistently refused repeated police demands to surrender. He withstood prolonged exposure to chemical agents intended to compel his exit from the RV and continued to brandish firearms and fire at police despite the gradual dismantling of the RV and the inevitability that his position would be exposed. When he eventually exited the RV, he remained armed with a large knife secured on his waistband. That knife partially concealed a loaded handgun beneath it. The AP continued to disregard police commands and deliberately advanced toward the shop, where additional firearms were believed to be stored, even after being struck by a projectile.

In these circumstances, the SO's decision to discharge a projectile at the AP was objectively reasonable. The SO described significant concerns for his own safety, the safety of other officers, and that of any civilians in the vicinity, particularly if the AP succeeded in reaching the shop and gaining access to additional firearms. Those concerns were well founded given that the AP had already demonstrated a willingness to use firearms against police.

It was also necessary for the SO to discharge the projectile at the AP when he did. The AP presented an immediate threat that could reasonably be perceived as capable of causing grievous bodily harm or death. He refused repeated instructions to either approach the nearest TAV or get on the ground. Instead, he escalated the confrontation by continuing to advance toward the shop while visibly armed with a knife.

No lesser force option was reasonably available. Likewise, retreating or maintaining existing positions would have increased the risk officers were attempting to prevent, namely the AP's access to additional firearms believed to be stored in the shop.

The force used was proportionate to the threat presented. The subsequent discovery that the AP was carrying a loaded concealed handgun at the time of his arrest further underscores the immediacy and seriousness of the threat he posed, even if his path to the shop had not yet been fully cleared.

The video evidence corroborates the SO's account that he slipped on icy ground while discharging the projectile launcher. This supports the SO's explanation that he did not intend to strike the AP in the eye. Although the projectile impacted a vulnerable area and may have caused a serious, unintended injury, the decision to deploy the projectile was nevertheless reasonable, proportionate, and necessary in the circumstances.

The SO was required or authorized by law to act that day and acted on reasonable grounds. His use of force was reasonable, proportionate, and necessary. As a result, the defence provided by s. 25 of the *Criminal Code* is likely to apply to the SO.

Conclusion

The SO's use of force was proportionate, necessary, and reasonable. As a result, there are no reasonable grounds to believe that an offence was committed.

Original Signed

Matthew Block

Executive Director

October 28, 2026

Date of Release