

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
INFORMATION ON INCIDENT REVIEW**

Introduction:

This review focused on circumstances surrounding injuries to an offender at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility on May 11, 2011.

Considerations:

The review considered:

- The actions taken in response to the incident
- Whether all applicable policies/procedures/standard operating procedures were followed
- If appropriate policies and procedures are in place

This review did not address the matter of the alleged altercation. A separate police investigation was conducted with respect to the alleged altercation; criminal charges against another offender were laid by police and the matter is before the courts.

Issue:

An offender suffered injuries as a result of falling down the stairs during an alleged altercation with another offender in a dayroom at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility.

Facts:

On May 11, 2011 at 9:31PM an offender was injured during an alleged altercation with another offender.

At 9:33PM offenders in the dayroom sought the assistance of staff to attend to the injured offender. A “medical emergency” announcement was made at 9:34PM and an on-duty health care staff member, accompanied by correctional

staff, were on-site assessing the offender in just over one minute. Additional correctional staff were on-site within two minutes.

The injured offender was transferred to the health care unit at 9:43PM for further assessment by health care staff

Other offenders in the dayroom were returned to their cells within five minutes of injury occurring to the offender, and remained in their cells until after the injured offender was transferred to health care. They were released into the dayroom at 9:44PM.

A review of the CCTV video of the incident showed the injury occurred during an alleged altercation between the injured offender and another offender. As a result, all offenders in the dayroom were returned to their cells at 9:54PM, pending additional review.

The offender was transferred to hospital by ambulance at 10:38PM.

The on-duty supervisor advised the senior management of the Division of the incident at 10:53PM, following the offender's transfer to hospital.

The on-duty supervisor contacted the Halifax Regional Police at 1:59 AM, May 12, 2011 to report this incident, and two other incidents, that occurred between 9:31PM and 11:05PM on May 11, 2011. All three incidents had required the supervisor's attention and follow-up prior to contacting the police. The incidents were reported via a non-emergency phone line as was the standard practice for making reports that do not require an emergency or an immediate police response.

Findings:

Compatibility assessments on the offenders in question had been completed at the time of their admission to custody in compliance with established policy.

No conflict between the two offenders was identified or observed prior to the incident in question.

Officer rounds during the shift were completed in accordance with established procedures.

The number of staff on duty was consistent with the staffing requirements for the time of day for the unit.

The on-duty supervisor advised Division managers of the incident in accordance with normal procedures.

The on-duty supervisor advised the police service of the incident in accordance with normal practice.

Correctional staff responses to the incident were appropriate and timely, and in accordance with policies and procedures.

In accordance with regular practice, copies of the CCTV video and other documentation were provided to Halifax Regional Police to assist in their criminal investigation when they reported to the facility with respect to this matter on May 12, 2011 at 8:19AM and 12:32PM.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS AS A RESULT OF THE REVIEW

Department of Justice correctional staff met with Halifax Regional Police to discuss whether the current practice for contacting police when incidents occur should be revised. Updates to procedures have been identified and will be implemented for contact between the two Services and to ensure the best possible use of correctional and police resources.

Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility has established written procedures which formalize the different phone numbers and other contact points the facility should use for informing the Halifax Regional Police of incidents at the correctional facility, these include:

- Contact for incidents requiring immediate, but non-emergency, responses by police will be made by to a non-general inquiry phone number; these would include assaults causing bodily harm, intermittent servers who fail to report for their weekend sentences
- Some incidents will be reported using the on line reporting system through the Halifax Regional Police website, e.g., incidents involving lower value property damage
- Contact for emergency incidents, e.g., escapes, will remain 911 calls
- Other matters will be dealt with routine contacts with the Halifax Regional Police liaison officer, e.g., picking up reports, disposing of some types of contraband