



CORONERS COURT, NUNAVUT
ᑖᑦᓂᓄᓕᑦᓚᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦ ᑕᑦᓄᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ, ᓂᑦᓂᑦ

VERDICT OF CORONER'S JURY

ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᓄᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦ

1. IDENTITY OF DECEASED: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: Felix Sappa TAQUAGAQA
2. DATE AND TIME OF DEATH: ᑕᑦᓂᑦᓂᑦ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: March 20, 2012 at 2151 hr
3. PLACE OF DEATH: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: Health Center in Igloolik, Nunavut
4. CAUSE OF DEATH: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: Gunshot wounds to the torso
5. MANNER OF DEATH: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: Homicide
6. CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH DEATH OCCURRED: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ: ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᓂᑦᑕ:

Felix Sappa TAQUAGAQA was diagnosed with, and suffered from the mental illness schizophrenia. He was receiving treatment by health care professionals. His schizophrenia was categorized as “treatment-resistant schizophrenia”.

On March 20, 2012 he was heard on the community radio making threats towards the local RCMP. Local community members were concerned and therefore contacted the Igloolik RCMP Detachment. Members of the RCMP detachment attempted to contact and find Felix Sappa Taquagaqa by telephone and through the community radio, without success.

RCMP Officers Cst. Jason Douglas Trites and Sgt. Peter Marshall proceeded to Felix's known address in an attempt to locate him. As Sgt. Marshall was conducting reconnaissance, Cst. Trites made contact with Felix. Cst. Trites told him he was under arrest for uttering threats and ordered him to place his hands behind his back. Felix was agitated and his comprehension of what was occurring is in question. Felix did not comply



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with the RCMP officer's lawful commands. He started to proceed back inside his residence from the front porch. Cst. Trites deployed and discharged his CEW (Conducted Energy Weapon). His CEW failed to deploy successfully.

Felix ran into his residence and Sgt. Marshall gave chase, followed by Cst. Trites. Felix grabbed a large kitchen knife from the kitchen and proceeded to chase Sgt. Marshall while trying to stab him. Sgt. Marshall ran out of the house through the foyer. At this point Cst. Trites encountered Felix running towards him with the knife in the front foyer. As Cst. Trites backed up he drew his issued duty pistol while attempting to block a knife attack with his raised left arm. Cst. Trites discharged four shots in quick succession at close range. At least 3 gun shots hitting Felix in the torso as well as a gunshot injury to Cst. Trites' left hand.

RCMP officers on the scene contacted RCMP dispatch to notify them that the suspect was hit multiple times and an officer was hit as well. With the assistance of three community members, Cst. Trites and Sgt. Marshall quickly loaded Felix Tauqqaugaq in to the rear bed of their marked patrol pickup truck. They quickly brought him to the Igloolik Health Center to receive care for his injuries. Felix Tauqqaugaq passed away from the injuries sustained in the shooting at 2151 hr.

NAMES OF ALL JURORS:
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SIGNATURES OF ALL JURORS:
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CORONERS COURT, NUNAVUT
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3. Community RCMP detachments in Nunavut to update their local detachment community contacts and house list every six months to ensure it's current.
4. RCMP in Nunavut to use dash-cam and body-cams on duty.
5. In an Officer Involved Shooting, RCMP and GN ensure counselling and support is available to family and community members.
6. RCMP must conduct a thorough investigation regarding the processing of all catalogued evidence in a timely manner within a non-criminal investigation and Coroner's Inquest.
7. RCMP to have an orientation program in place for new members to Nunavut that covers culture, language and community.
8. RCMP Major Crime Division or other Police Services investigating in Nunavut should have a local, certified Inuktitut translator to translate during testimony and statement gathering.
9. GN should make food security a priority in Nunavut, specifically ensuring households with individuals with mental illness and households with young children have enough food to eat.
10. GN to provide more support and education for family members of an individual diagnosed with a mental illness.
11. GN to consider the feasibility of operating a mental health treatment facility in North Baffin region.
12. GN and RCMP's goal must be zero shooting deaths for incidents where police interact with individuals with mental illness.
13. Nunavut RCMP employs a local bilingual Inuktitut support staff member in all detachments within communities where Inuktitut is the primary language.
14. The RCMP and GN will develop or revise information sharing protocols to allow the RCMP access to individuals' mental health information in crisis situations, subject to privacy laws.



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15. The RCMP will educate all officers on mental health issues and resources in Nunavut by inviting mental health organizations to speak to officers throughout the territory. Teleconferencing will be arranged for officers in remote locations.
16. The GN will identify a contact in the mental health system who is knowledgeable, accessible and familiar with each community in which the RCMP work in Nunavut. The RCMP will ensure officers are encouraged to use this contact person as a resource mental health issues, subject to privacy laws.
17. The RCMP will make a public commitment to make de-escalation a priority in all potentially violent encounters with people in mental health crisis.
18. The RCMP will, in training updates to officers in Nunavut, emphasize communication and verbal de-escalation skills, and the need to adjust communication styles when a person is not acting rationally or does not understand commands.
19. The RCMP will increase the mental health component of officer training in regard to mental health illness and interactions, to be included in mandatory annual re-certifications.
20. The RCMP will gather information from use of force deaths in Nunavut to develop scenario-based role plays for use in training officers in the territory to include language barrier.
21. The RCMP should, where an officer has been involved in an incident that results in death or serious injury, have a Use of Force Review Committee to review the officers' actions to determine whether the officers should have re-training before resuming active duty.
22. The RCMP will reward officers who use effective communication and de-escalation skills through awards. Mental health and community members will be consulted in identifying officers for recognition.



CORONERS COURT, NUNAVUT ᐅᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐ ᐃᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ

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Padma Suramala
Presiding Coroner
Chief Coroner of Nunavut
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