Public Hearing

Audience publique

Commissioner / Commissaire
The Honourable / L’honorable
Paul S. Rouleau

VOLUME 8

Held at:
Library and Archives Canada
Bambrick Room
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Monday, October 24, 2022

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.
https://www.transcription.tc/
(800)899-0006
### II

#### Appearances / Comparutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission Co-lead Counsel</td>
<td>Ms. Shantona Chaudhury, Mr. Jeffrey Leon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Senior Counsel</td>
<td>Mr. Frank Au, Ms. Erin Dann, Mr. Gabriel Poliquin, Ms. Natalia Rodriguez, Mr. Daniel Sheppard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Regional Counsel</td>
<td>Ms. Mona Duckett, Mr. Sacha Paul, Ms. Maia Tsurumi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Counsel</td>
<td>Mr. Stephen Armstrong, Ms. Misha Boutilier, Mr. Eric Brousseau, Ms. Sajeda Hedaraly, Ms. Alexandra Heine, Ms. Nusra Khan, Mr. Étienne Lacombe, Mr. John Mather, Ms. Allison McMahon, Mr. Jean-Simon Schoenholz, Ms. Dahlia Shuhaibar, Mr. Guillaume Sirois-Gingras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Executive Director</td>
<td>Ms. Hélène Laurendeau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## III

### Appearances / Comparutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government of Canada</th>
<th>Mr. Robert MacKinnon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Donnaree Nygard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Brendan van Niejenhuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Andrea Gonsalves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Andrew Gibbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Caroline Laverdière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Saskatchewan</td>
<td>Mr. P. Mitch McAdam, K.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Manitoba</td>
<td>Mr. Denis Guenette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Coral Lang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Alberta</td>
<td>Ms. Mandy England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Stephanie Bowes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Hana Laura Yamamoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Peter Buijs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Shaheer Meenai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>Ms. Anne Tardif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Alyssa Tomkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Daniel Chomski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Windsor</td>
<td>Ms. Jennifer L. King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Michael Finley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Graham Reeder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Peter Sioly</td>
<td>Mr. Tom Curry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Rebecca Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Nikolas De Stefano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## IV

**Appearances / Comparutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa Police Service</td>
<td>Mr. David Migicovsky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Jessica Barrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Provincial Police</td>
<td>Mr. Christopher Diana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Jinan Kubursi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Police Service</td>
<td>Mr. Thomas McRae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Bryce Chandler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Heather Paterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Police Federation</td>
<td>Ms. Nini Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Lauren Pearce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Jen Del Riccio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police</td>
<td>Ms. Aviva Rotenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA/CCCDL/CAD</td>
<td>Mr. Greg DelBigio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Colleen McKeown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs</td>
<td>Ms. Cheyenne Arnold-Cunningham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counsel Meagan Berlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Crowdfunding &amp; Fintech Association</td>
<td>Mr. Jason Beitchman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Constitution Foundation and Professor Alford</td>
<td>Ms. Sujit Choudhry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Janani Shanmuganathan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prof. Ryan Alford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appearances / Comparutions

Ottawa Coalition of Residents and Businesses
Mr. Paul Champ
Ms. Emilie Taman
Ms. Christine Johnson

The Democracy Fund, Citizens for Freedom, JCCF Coalition
Mr. Rob Kittredge
Mr. Antoine D’Ailly
Mr. Alan Honner
Mr. Dan Santoro
Mr. Hatim Kheir
Mr. James Manson

Canadian Civil Liberties Association
Ms. Cara Zwibel
Ms. Ewa Krajewska

The Convoy Organizers
Mr. Brendan Miller
Ms. Bath Sheba Van den Berg

Insurance Bureau of Canada
Mr. Mario Fiorino
## VI
### Table of Content / Table des matières

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL, Sworn</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination in-Chief by Mr. Frank Au</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Tom Curry</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Ms. Alyssa Tomkins</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Christopher Diana</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Robert MacKinnon</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Brendan Miller</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Paul Champ</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Ms. Lauren Pearce</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Ms. Cara Zwibel</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. Rob Kittredge</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Examination by Mr. David Migicovsky</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Examination by Mr. Frank Au</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
--- Upon commencing on Monday, October 24, 2022 at 9:34 a.m.

THE REGISTRAR: The Public Order Emergency Commission is now in session. La Commission sur l'état d'urgence est maintenant ouverte.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Good morning. Bonjour.

Great Monday morning. Nice to see you all back again. So we have a new witness this morning?

MR. FRANK AU: Interim Chief Bell.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. Go ahead.

Good morning.

THE REGISTRAR: Interim Chief Bell, will you swear on a religious document or do you wish to affirm?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I'll swear, please.

THE REGISTRAR: We have the Bible, the Koran, the Torah available.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The Bible, please.

Thank you very much.

THE REGISTRAR: For the record, please state your full name and spell it out.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Steven Bell, B-E-L-L.

--- INTERIM CHIEF STEVEN BELL, Sworn:

--- EXAMINATION IN-CHIEF BY MR. FRANK AU:

MR. FRANK AU: Good morning, Commissioner.

Good morning, Chief -- Interim Chief Bell. Now, Interim Chief, you remember that ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: If you could just introduce yourself for the record.
MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

It's Frank Au for the Commission. Interim Chief, you remember that we met in the summer remotely, and you attended an interview that we arranged. You -- after the interview, we prepared a summary of the interview and you reviewed it; am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: So I'd like to call up the document, WTS00000029. And this is a copy of the summary that you approved?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If -- I believe so.

If we could scroll through the document, please.

MR. FRANK AU: Could we scroll through?

Yes?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. Yes, this is correct. From what I've seen so far, yes.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, is there any correction that you'd like to make to this document?

INTERIM CHIEF BELL: No.

MR. FRANK AU: So you adopt its content, then?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: Thank you. Now, Interim Chief, you've served with the Ottawa Police Service for some 26 years?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Almost 27 now.

MR. FRANK AU: And over those years, you've been in charge of many different portfolios?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct. I've been involved in several different places within the
MR. FRANK AU: Could you give us a quick highlight of some of your responsibilities over the years?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: For sure. So I was obviously a patrol officer for a number of years. I was a neighbourhood officer. I spent time in our Professional Standards Section, our Human Resources Section, our Drug Enforcement Section. I've had the ability as an executive within the organisation to work within all the directorates, and now currently have the Interim Chief position.

MR. FRANK AU: And in January of this year, you were Deputy Chief in charge of what Deputy Ferguson has describe as the Three I's.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Those are Intelligence, Information, and Investigation.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, for the purpose of this hearing, we are going to be focussing on Intelligence. And what were your responsibilities as the Deputy Chief in charge of the Intelligence Unit?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So my responsibilities in terms of overseeing that section would have been to make sure that our Intelligence Unit was gathering, collecting, analysing, and sharing information, and I would do that through what was an established chain of command.

MR. FRANK AU: And I am going to show you a document of the organisational chart, and perhaps you can...
explain some of the people involved in that unit.

OPS00014925. Okay. If we go further to the right. Sorry, go up. Yeah, further to the right. I'm looking for Deputy Chief Bell.

So am I correct that -- well, we saw former Chief Sloly at the top, and then underneath him, at the executive levels, there are -- there were Deputy Ferguson, who was in charge of Community Policing, and then you in charge of the Three I's?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And then going down that line under you, we see Intelligence.

So we need to go further to the right.

So now we see all three I's, and then under Intelligence Directorate, who was the superintendent in charge when -- around January and early February?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So yeah, I think it's important to note the superintendent in charge at that point was Superintendent Patterson. And there had been a large movement of superintendents and leaders within the Directorate. So Superintendent Patterson was in charge, and he had two inspectors that reported to him. And that entire Command Team had just been placed in that area.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. So let's talk about that turnover. When did Superintendent Patterson assume this role of the Superintendent -- of the lead of the Intelligence Unit?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Superintendent Patterson would've taken that position on on January 1st.
MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And were you not relatively new as well to this portfolio of the Three I's?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

Towards the end of December, I was assigned into that area once I was -- before that I was temporarily in the CAO or Chief Administrative Officer role for a year due to a vacancy, and then in late December, I took over this portfolio and began to establish it with a new team.

MR. FRANK AU: So you took over in December 2021?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And then in early January 2022, Superintendent Patterson took the lead of the Intelligence Unit?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And he reported to you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, he did.

MR. FRANK AU: And under him, you said, there are two inspectors; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. FRANK AU: They would be on this chart.

They're Inspector Cartwright and Inspector Bryden. When did they join the Intelligence Unit?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So Inspector Cartwright was in the Information Services Branch.

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Inspector Bryden was in the Intelligence Service Branch, and both of them started on January 1st as well.

MR. FRANK AU: And how did those two branches

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.
interact with each other, the Intelligence and the Information branches?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So that was something that we had identified and that Chief Sloly had identified as a need for us moving ahead was how Intelligence and Information work together. So we had a large project underway at that time which was around intelligence-led policing to look at how we most effectively gather, analyse, and share information through the organisation.

So they work together very effectively, but the goal of the ILP project, as we named it, was actually to identify how we can refine that sharing of information even more to make sure the information we're bringing into the organisation is shared as broadly and effectively as it could be. We had been involved in that project for probably over a year, and I can say that there were steps and there were efficiencies and improvements that had been found in terms of information-sharing.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, in the context of Incident Command, we've heard last week that the command system is structured by way of three levels: strategic, operational, and tactical. When it comes to the work of the Intelligence Unit, is that also the rough organisation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. FRANK AU: So in that structure, you would be, I assume, at the top strategic level?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And Inspector, sorry,
Superintendent Patterson would be what?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: He would be in the operational area, and I would say Inspector Bryden would be moving from the operational to the tactical level.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. And so inferring from this chart, did -- Inspector Bryden would report up to Superintendent Patterson, then?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, he did.

MR. FRANK AU: And they both report to you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And -- okay. So let's first talk about that reporting process. How often would you receive an update or briefing from Superintendent Patterson.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Specifically around the issue we’re here to talk about or overall generally?

MR. FRANK AU: So let’s turn our mind back to around January-February of this year.

Now, we’ve heard from other people that Freedom Convoy-related events came into their radar at around mid-January, say January 13. So starting at around that time, I’m just trying to understand the frequency of briefings and meetings and so on.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So we had regularly-scheduled biweekly meetings that we called “CTOM”, Crime, Traffic and Order Management meetings, that were run by the Information Branch and that were specifically designed to identify key areas of risk and our response to it within the organization.
So that level and frequency of briefing to the entire Executive Command was on a biweekly basis as it related to -- as it related to overall issues.

Specifically to the Freedom Convoy and the events around that, that was flagged, as you say, through a Hendon Report around January 13th. Superintendent Patterson and I began having discussions on it in and around the 20th and the briefings went to me in terms of the activities that they were taking, ensuring that the information was flowing would have been on a regular basis.

MR. FRANK AU: I heard January the 20th. Did I hear it correctly?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It would have been in and around that week. I can’t say which was the specific date through that week, but that’s what it would have been flagged and raised in prominence that we would have -- we did begin discussing it.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, we’ve spoken to the former Chief Sloly and I expect that he may give evidence that he became aware -- well, he was in receipt of the first Hendon Report as of January the 13th and he forwarded a copy of that report to you.

What’s your recollection?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So my recollection is that I did not start receiving the Hendon Reports until the 27th of January, and that was through discussion with Superintendent Patterson. So I don’t recall and I don’t have -- in searches, I don’t believe I received that report.
MR. FRANK AU: Now, we’ve also spoken to Inspector Bryden, and during his interview he informed us that he received a copy of the January 13th Hendon Report from Superintendent Patterson.

Have you -- do you have any recollection at all that you received any Hendon Report before the 27th?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I didn’t. No, I don’t have any recollection. And we’ve searched to -- our database to identify when I did start receiving them, and it was on the 27th of January.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, as one of the deputies assisting the former Chief and you were tasked with the intelligence responsibility, do you recall any discussions you had with the former Chief about your specific assignment with respect to the Freedom Convoy events?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely. The -- Chief Sloly indicated when we began to discuss it. We also had morning command calls from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., and during those calls we would discuss issues that had occurred and emerging issues.

The issue of the Freedom Convoy came onto our radar in and around that week of the 20th. I’m not -- I can’t specifically identify the day. And we had discussions and there was clear discussion around intelligence responsibility to be involved and identify risks and threats and make sure that we were informing any sort of planning that was going to occur around our response.

MR. FRANK AU: I understand that Mr. Sloly, the
former Chief, made it clear that he wanted all operations to be intelligence led. Is that your understanding, too?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Oh, absolutely. One of the -- one of the things that Chief Sloly was very firm about was that intelligence -- and I absolutely agree with it. Intelligence needs to inform the planning cycle and it needs to be utilized to actually identify what our appropriate response is.

MR. FRANK AU: And he assigned you the specific responsibility to ensure that appropriate intelligence were collected and disseminated to the planning team.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And so that would have been your duty as -- around when? When do you recall that first discussion with Mr. Sloly took place?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So again, I don’t have a specific date, but it would have been in and around the week of the 20th. I’m not sure the specific date of it.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Now, was a threat assessment eventually completed by the Intelligence Unit?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it was.

MR. FRANK AU: I want to take you to a threat assessment that the Commission has received. And the document number is 00 -- sorry, OPS00004039.

Now, looking at the first -- cover page, this is a document completed by Sergeant Chris Kiez. Am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: It is dated January 28th, but the
title is “Freedom Convoy Ottawa January 29th, 2022”. Is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And is the date -- the title date January 29th because it was initially expected that the event would start on the 29th?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct, yes.

MR. FRANK AU: But this version is -- was completed on the 28th; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct. And it’s Version 4, so there’s been iterations of this as more intelligence has been received, gathered and analyzed.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. And I understand from earlier witnesses’ testimony that that week in particular was a very fluid and dynamic week, lots of things happened.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: In any event, we have reached now the 28th and this is the threat assessment.

I’d like to take you to page 3. Can we take a look at the second paragraph?

Can we enlarge the screen a little bit? Thank you.

So you see that in the second -- the second paragraph starts with:

“The most likely police matter at this time, will be the vast number of vehicles on the area roads. The Convoy will be able to stop and effectively
shut down movement if they desire.”

That’s the understanding as of the 28th; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And if we go down the page to the very bottom, the last sentence in bold says, “These conditions create grounds for passionate emotions.”

And those conditions refer to the sentiment of the truckers.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry. I’m just reading the paragraph.

MR. FRANK AU: Yes. Take your time.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, if we go to the next page, page 4, we go to the heading “Summation”.

So the writing concluded that:

“There is a quickly growing financial fund that can pay for food, lodging, fuel and legal cost.

This event is, as described above, less of a ‘professional protest’ with the usual sad players, but rather, is a truly organic grass roots event that is gathering momentum largely from the widespread population.”

And then in bold, “Read: Expect Very Large Crowds.”

Am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.
MR. FRANK AU: And then the next bullet went on to quote from a journalist to the effect that, if we go to the last sentences:

“When it finally meets a successful protest to air their grievances, there may be larger crowds and longer disruptions than was ever planned for.”

Right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct. But I also believe there’s pieces in here as well as in other intelligence reports that are missing that are very germane to the discussion we’re having today.

Large numbers. Yes, we did see large numbers. What there isn’t included in any of the intelligence that we received is the community impact that actually occurred. There’s nothing around the information that identifies the activities of the protestors when they actually arrive in the city. There’s nothing that indicates that the protestors are going to use the citizens of our community as the leverage point to have their voices heard.

In Ottawa, we manage multiple protests on a yearly basis. We’ve managed protests similar to this on previous times. We’ve never experienced and had no intelligence to indicate that it was actually going to be the leverage of the community and the activities of the protestors to use our community members through their activities as the leverage point to be heard.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. You’re talking about the
reality that dawned on everyone once the convoy arrived, as compared to what was known the day before?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. And what I would say is what was known the day before was that a large number, and the day before, so if this is the 28th, the 27th is we were starting to receive numbers on what the size and scope would be, ---

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- and that the overall activity of the group moving across was extremely lawful and extremely law abiding.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. But you agree with me that this is an assessment and this is a summation part where the writer was trying to draw some conclusions; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: It’s not -- the writer is not here just reporting various pieces of information? This is the conclusion, at least from this writer, having gathered all of these disparate sources of information; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct. And I would say the conclusion here is that large numbers could attend the city and we accepted that.

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That there could be traffic disruptions, absolutely. And that it could be a motions associated to it. But not anything that would relate to the activity that we ultimately saw on our streets.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now, if we go to the next
page and we look at the third bullet. So the author is here saying that:

“In 6 years of working large demonstration events from the intelligence point of view, the writer has never seen such widespread community action, which means three things for planners…”

Now the third thing is redacted, but we can look at the first two.

“the event is likely going to be bigger in crowd size than any demo in recent history, possibly on par with Canada Day events but more disruptive.”

Second:

“There is significant popular support for this event on a scale not seen in recent years. This means the protest groups have access to larger protestor pools than they have ever had access to, which means there will be likely widespread disorganization and confusion.”

Now, so the author seems to be warning here of something quite unprecedented, at least compared to recent experience. Do you agree?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I would absolutely agree with that.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So it may not contain as much detail about, you know, some of the events that the residents
subsequently experienced, but it’s providing a warning here as to something quite significant, not seen before?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Well I would agree with that. And I would say that all of the intelligence and intelligence gathering that we’d had prior to that indicated a very similar fact.

This group had only come on the intelligence radar in late summer of 2021 and never actually materialized. They -- as they moved across the country, they seemed to build support. But they seemed to build grass roots support and all the activities that we had seen them engage in prior to that had been very lawful, had been very pro-social. The amount of people that were supporting them, from my perspective, actually gave it more credibility that it was a grassroots initiative, not that we were going to see the violence that we saw in our streets.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. And there’s nothing here to suggest anything other than a lawful protest. But the author is pointing to the significant number and the likelihood of this organization, or at least the, if not likely -- well, there would be likely widespread disorganization and confusion.

Now, if we go on to the paragraph underneath the third redacted point:

“The demographic of the Convoy is very unusual; the protests globally are made up almost entirely of middle-class members of society. Since the so-called; silent majority’ is numerically much larger than
the professional activists. As a result, law enforcement is being met with numbers of people beyond the norm.”

So it just reinforces the theme that we’ve been on; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct, but I don’t know that the numbers of people who attended, from a pedestrian, or from a protest perspective, were unmanageable or were had any sort of -- we had any sort of consideration about the activities that they would be involved in. Numbers on their own are something that we have managed in the past at different scales. This was large. This was unprecedented. Everyone realized it was unprecedented. But for us as a policing organization, what pushed it over the top was the activities that the people protesting were engaged in and the harm that they did to our community. A large protest that was lawful could have been managed, would have been managed. It was what was anticipated. The activities engaged in were never clearly identified. And from my perspective, that is exactly what made this unprecedented to any other demonstration that we’d ever seen.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now, what Chief Sloly wanted was for you and Deputy Chief Ferguson to coordinate an approach with you -- I mean, your unit, the Intelligence Unit, providing the best intelligence to the Planning Team, so that an effective response could have been developed before the convoy arrived; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.
MR. FRANK AU: And he took some oversight role in the days leading up to the arrival of the convoy; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: You mentioned that ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So an oversight. He had a role as a Chief of Police. He was informed and briefed on the progression that was being made.

MR. FRANK AU: So let’s talk about those briefings. You’re reporting up to the former chief. How often do those briefings occur?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So we would have discussions on this on a daily basis at our command team calls. And that’s where I would be briefed by Supt. Patterson, and that information would be shared on our command team calls.

As we came into the week of the 24th, which I believe is a Monday, and we started to increase those briefings, and actually, there was in-person -- I don’t know the specific time, but there was in-person briefings by Supt. Patterson in terms of what we were seeing and how we were moving ahead to the command team.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, if Supt. Patterson knew of the Hendon Report as early as January 13th, why was it that you weren’t aware until the week of the 20th?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So one of my responsibilities as the Deputy Chief is to make sure that the information is shared. And Supt. Patterson and I had discussions around that. He -- we had discussions around Project Hendon. And one of my responsibilities was through him
to ensure that the information that we were receiving was
gathered by Intelligence, but also shared with our Planning
Team. And he ensured me that that was happening, and then
briefed me on the information that was occurring. He identified
that there was regular on-going calls that picked up in tempo
and intensity as the convoy moved across and came closer to
Ottawa. And it wasn’t until some point during that week that he
identified that Project Hendon actually had an output in a
formal report. It was unknown to me before that. And that’s
when I requested that he started sharing it with me, and he
started to share it with me.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Now, I want to ask you
about the plan, the initial plan that was developed to respond
to the freedom convoy events. That plan was also dated January
28th; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I would need to see
the plan ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- you’re
referencing, because there’s different plans.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. So can we call up the
document, OPP -- sorry, OPS00004221? So can we zoom in to look
at the entire first page, the cover page, please?

So this document is titled “Freedom Convoy -
Canada Unity January 29th, 2022”. So the title date is also 29th,
but if we go down, we may need to enlarge it now to see the
print, here it’s noted that it’s authored -- oh, actually the
name of the author is redacted.
Let me put -- we have the identical document in an unredacted fashion, and I’ve spoken to counsel about this before.

Let's call up the identical document in the unredacted version, which is OPP00004262. Can we go down, please.

So here, we know that the author of this is Sergeant Sean Kay, and it's dated January 28th, 2022; am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: So that's the same day of the threat assessment that we saw earlier?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, if we turn the next page, the authorizing authorities, there are two here noted. The first one is Staff Sergeant Kevin Kennedy, and if we go down, and Inspector Russ Lucas. And we heard from Deputy Ferguson last week that these are members of the Planning Team; am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, if we go to page 7, I believe, that's where there is a Risk Assessment section -- Threat Assessment. Are you familiar with this part of the plan?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I am.

MR. FRANK AU: Can we scroll down a little?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Am I able to read it before we scroll through?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes, of course.

Can we go back up to the beginning of the
section?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you. So we can
scroll down, yes.

MR. FRANK AU: Can we scroll down now?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, I'm good to move
on.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Next page.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If we can -- sorry.
Can I just have you scroll up one there? Thank you very much.
Okay, thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, did you read it at around
that time?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I would've -- I
would have received the Threat Assessment as I was provided it,
and I believe it was on the 28th the copy of the Operational
Plan that was being put forward.

MR. FRANK AU: And what did you think of it at
the time?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I received this
prior to receiving the actual Threat Assessment that had been
finalised, and what I did know is that there had been very good
levels of intelligence-sharing amongst the Planning Team. The
Planning Team had been ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Excuse me a minute. Are
you ---

MR. BRENDAN van NIEJENHUIS: Sorry. No, the only
thing I wanted to point out is we have lost connection to the
database, so it's difficult for me to see the screen from there.
I gather some of my colleagues have also lost connection.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay, we have a ---

MS. ANNE TARDIF: It's the Internet that appears to be down, Commissioner. I don't think it's the party database, we've all lost internet connection. If that helps.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: So internet connection is gone for everyone, but not for me?

(LAUGHTER)

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Maybe there's something to be read into that.

Just take a moment, and the technicians are dealing with it. Because obviously, those who don't have perfect sight may not be seeing the monitors.

Can you tell me when it's back up? Thank you very much.

(TECHNICAL ISSUE - SHORT PAUSE)

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Do you want me to take a break to -- while you fix it? Okay, we'll take a 10-minute break and come back. Sorry about that.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, that's fine.

Thank you, sir.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission is in recess for 10-minutes. La Commission est levée pour 10 minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 10:05 a.m.

--- Upon resuming at 10:15 a.m.

THE REGISTRAR: Order. À l’ordre. The Commission has reconvened. La Commission reprend.

--- INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL, Resumed.
COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. I understand the technical glitch has been corrected, with our apologies.

MR. FRANK AU: Thank you, Commissioner.

--- EXAMINATION IN-CHIEF BY MR. FRANK AU (Cont'd):

MR. FRANK AU: Interim Chief, if I could take you back to the initial plan of the 28th of January, at page 7, where the Threat Assessment is found. I think you were in the process of going through the assessment.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that's correct. I -- I'm going to ask you to repeat if there was a question in there. I believe I had an answer, but I want to make sure I'm answering the correct question.

MR. FRANK AU: Well, that's a very good question. I actually don't remember what I'd asked. But let's start with -- so have you reviewed, are you -- have you completed your review of this section?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I have.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. So I'd like to know, first of all, whether you agree with this assessment?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So at the time, I think it's very important to identify how this assessment would have been created. We did create an overall Threat Assessment, which is extremely important, but this assessment would've also been influenced directly by the connection that existed between our Intelligence Unit and the Planning Team. So -- and much of that information would've been gathered through the ongoing Hendon reports.

So the ongoing Hendon reports, and the analysis...
of that, and more, formulated the overall Threat Assessment, that would've helped to support this, but there was also on-the-ground regular dialogue about the incoming information that was contained or not contained, as we've had discussions about in -- to help formulate this threat assessment.

**MR. FRANK AU:** If I understand you correctly, your team, the Intelligence Unit, was those gathering information based on the Hendon reports, but also trying to gather information from other sources to corroborate those intelligence reports, is that right?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Well, that -- yes. And that was one of the big challenges that also made this unprecedented is that there was information -- there was intelligence through Hendon but there was information in an unprecedented and almost inundating way that was coming in, and as it was building through the week until this threat assessment was completed.

Our members worked constantly with the members of the -- fellow members of the Intelligence Group, and by this time, on the 28th, there was already a Joint Intelligence Group that had been established that was embedded within the planning cell to try and take the -- all of this information that was coming in and assess it and then disseminate it to try and get a picture of what was going to occur, at this point within hours.

**MR. FRANK AU:** And looking at this threat assessment and in the context of the 28th of January, what you knew, what your team knew at the time, do you consider this an accurate reflection of the reality, to the best that anyone in
your team can know?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I -- at the time I wouldn’t have known this because I hadn’t had the opportunity to review and look through all the Hendon reports, but I think it is a very accurate assessment. I think there is one area that’s missing that we didn’t highlight enough because I don’t believe we had enough information to substantiate the level of risk that it created, and that’s specifically around the fact that there may be some members of the convoy who would stay on for a longer period of time around the 28th, 29th, and 30th that we were planning for. So in retrospect, having identified all of this, that should -- the potential that that could occur should have been something that was included in this.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So that’s the one thing, in your view -- excuse me; that’s the one thing in your view that was perhaps missing from the assessment is the risk of a prolonged occupation, if we can call it that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That’s correct.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, let me take you to some of the other information that you said might have been available as well at that time.

So now you talked about Hendon report. Maybe before we go to the other sources, let’s talk a little bit more about Hendon. You became aware of it during the week of the 20th, but you also told us that you didn’t read -- you didn’t go back and read all the Hendon reports. I want to get a sense of what you did read and what’s your best recollection as to which Hendon reports you did read at the time.
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I would have -- I would have -- I received and then would have read them on an ongoing basis, as well as receiving all -- like I said, we were inundated with other information. So we were receiving lots of information at that point and as I received it, I was trying to ensure, within my role, that we were funnelling it to the right area so it could be properly assessed. So if I got information, and I regularly did, whether it be from concerned community members, Councillors, all sorts of different sources, I would ensure that that information was funnelled through our Joint Intelligence Group for assessment and analysis and action.

MR. FRANK AU: Which was the first Hendon report that you read?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the first Hendon report that I received and read was the 27th.

MR. FRANK AU: And so I think you said that from then on you read every Hendon reports afterwards on an ongoing basis.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. FRANK AU: Did you ask for the earlier Hendon reports?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I didn’t because at that point I knew that they had been shared between the Intelligence Unit, who had done the assessments necessary, and the Planning Unit, who needed to have that information in order to conduct their planning.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. So since you did read the 27th report, let’s go to the 27th report and see what it says.
I can find ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So just for clarification, ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- and I’m sorry, I have since reviewed all of the Hendon reports.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay, yeah. But since we’re interested in finding out what was known to you at the time, let’s start with the 27th.

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. FRANK AU: I believe it is OPP00001331.

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. FRANK AU: If we go to page 4 of this report, go down.

Okay, so do you see the paragraph that says:

“It is highly unlikely that heavy machinery would be transported in the convoy if there was no intent to use it, or if some individuals in the convoy did not anticipate that it would be needed. Such equipment could be used to facilitate or secure access to strategic operational positions in Ottawa. The presence of this equipment in the convoy may indicate that some convoy participants intend to reinforce positions for long-term occupation in Ottawa; to block access to strategic...
locations; to damage property; to render roadways impassable; or to intimidate the public, government, and law enforcement.”

So this is the -- part of the January 27th Hendon report that you read, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: So do you agree that the presence of the heavy machinery supported what the report called, “Positions for long-term occupation”?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So while I do agree that the report states that, I think the subsequent action is very important to a context to this.

We identified this’ this was one of the early areas that I identified as a concern. So as a result of that, through discussion with Supt. Patterson, Intelligence was -- worked with the operational branch to actually start to look at this, look at the existence. By this point, this is on the 27th, people are coming across and there are police resources -- specifically in this case, I believe, OPP -- who are with the convoy participants.

The follow-up that we received from that was that the PLT, the Police Liaison Team, who we’ve heard about through these hearings as well, engaged with them and there was understanding that that heavy equipment would not be taken into the downtown core.

There was also understanding through the information we received back that many of the pieces of
equipment that were seen were fluid within the convoy. It appears, and as we understood, as it came across Canada, the numbers fluctuated up and down on a regular, daily, almost hourly basis. Some of the equipment that was seen in here was people that in different locations had joined in, I would imagine or speculate that it was, so that they could identify that they were part of this, and didn’t continue with the convoy as it came across.

As result of this information, plans were put in place to make sure that we diverted heavy equipment like this from the downtown core. But discussions were had with the people who had this, and from my understanding -- and it will be a question better posed to Insp. Lucas, but from my understanding, all of the equipment identified in here or any other trailer-based equipment, never made it into the red zone footprint.

So although this is concerning; it’s something that we identified, action followed up on and mitigated.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, do you agree also that there was a serious intelligence gap in terms of any exit plan for these protesters?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I do -- if we can scroll down to that area?

**MR. FRANK AU:** Yeah, let’s go to page 6.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I do understand, and I know this is in black and white but there is bolding there around priority intelligence gaps. So I believe this area highlights some of the areas where we were concentrating on, and
some of the reasons for the assumptions that were made.

By this date, this is third or fourth, I can’t be sure until we pull the other ones up, where the intelligence and information had clearly identified a three-day event. All of the discussion was around the 28th, the 29th and the 30th. There had been, through the reports, a passing reference, regular, but passing reference to the notion that a small group of people, a group of people undetermined, could stay for longer periods of time. But predominately, the intelligence identified it as a three-day event. And the top five areas in here are identified in red as priority taskings.

MR. FRANK AU: M’hm.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The plans for departing Ottawa was something that was a concern and was identified, but based on the fact that it was believed to be a small group was obviously not identified as a priority tasking. And as part of our planning, the plans, the egress plans for the demonstration to leave Ottawa, based on the fact that there was the concern about how they would get out of Ottawa was built and developed into our plan. It just never materialized once the groups dug in and decided to stay in the city.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, there are obviously many Hendon Reports. This is just one of them, and the information continued to evolve, as you pointed out earlier. But Supt. Morris from the OPP did testify here last week as to the likelihood of a weekend event, and he said that he did not recall, I quote, he did not:

“...recall any information which [could]
lead to the induction that this will only be a three-day event.”

Based on his review of the Hendon Report.

Do you share his view?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL**: So I have ultimate respect for Supt. Morris. I think he’s an incredible intelligence leader in his organization, in this country. But when I read these reports, the specifics around the three-day event are very clear as it moves ahead. There is references that some small numbers would stay beyond that, but all of the information being gathered, even in terms of the priorities for the intelligence gathering, is specifically around that three-day period.

**MR. FRANK AU**: Okay. Now, let me ask you, along this line, about the fact that many of these truckers were coming a long way from the west; right?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL**: That’s correct.

**MR. FRANK AU**: And you knew that. So for example, you understood that a group of participants from the western convoy was -- well, let me give you the reference. If I could take you to your summary at page 6? So this is WTS00000029. So if we go to the top of the page, the second line:

“As an example, PLT reported that the western Freedom Convoy lost many vehicles once it crossed the Manitoba-Ontario border.

Interim Chief Bell stated that, as the
Freedom Convoy drew closer, OPS knew that it was projected to be large. He noted that by January 29, OPS was expecting 3000-4000 vehicles to arrive in Ottawa.”

Is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, given that these convoy participants had driven across the country for more than a week, wouldn’t it make sense that they might want to stay for a little longer than a weekend in Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, I think that’s an inference we would now make, but I think it’s important to identify that they did drive across the country. The numbers ebbed and flowed. As they moved across the country, there was police agencies engaged with them on an ongoing basis. Their behaviour, as it’s described within the intelligence reports, and reports we had back, was that they were extremely lawful, that they were engaged in -- there was no anti-social behaviour that they were engaged in. And that was the observations for a number of days.

Beyond that, the organizers clearly stated on many occasions, and throughout the Hendon reports, that their intention was to be lawful and peaceful once they came to our city.

So regardless of whether the number would have -- whether the number that would have remained would have been smaller, as we anticipated it could have been, it was -- again, it was the activities that occurred here that were the most
problematic.

We, in our police service, manage many, many protests a year. Some of them are prolonged. Some of them are protracted. We’ve had examples of occupations of parks, of occupations of intersections that have gone on for a longer period of time. But those didn’t engage in the unlawful activity that we saw here. That is what I believe makes this circumstance different. The scope of people, the size of the area that they overtook, and the activity and the trauma they put our communities through. There was nothing to identify that would occur within the intelligence reports.

MR. FRANK AU: So perhaps if I could clarify, let us assume that the intent was to engage in an entirely lawful protest. Making that assumption, wouldn’t the sheer size, the number of trucks, and the intention to stay for as long as it took until the mandates are lifted create a risk that it will be a prolonged issue for the residents, in terms of traffic and other issues that came with such a loud crowd -- large crowd in the downtown area for a long time?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I think you identify the key point there. If the protests are lawful and they’re within a contained area that isn’t impacting the community, we would go through a regular process in order to ensure that we are managing that area, and that we’re negotiating with the people for them to be able to leave the area.

That -- what you described though was not what occurred in our city. There was a larger -- a large
geographical area overtaken and there was extreme harm done to our community through the activities of this protest that determined it to be unlawful. So those are very -- for me, those are very -- two very different circumstances we’re talking about.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. Now, you’d agree with me that around that time, both for the former Chief Sloly, who you report to, as well as Insp. Bryden, who reported to you through Supt. Patterson, raised concerns about the threat assessment? Do you recall any communication with them about the nature of the threat assessment that was produced?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I raised concerns about the threat assessment. We had discussions about it because my expectation was that it would have created more direct references to the Hendon Reports and to the intelligence information we were bringing in.

The threat assessment, as it’s completed, is done on a standard template. There is actually a checklist to follow through as you create a threat assessment.

We were trying to become more mature and advanced in our collection and dissemination of intelligence information. What wasn’t included on the checklist was direct references to actual intelligence information that existed. So I was looking to make sure that we had that included in that threat assessment, or least references to the mechanisms that we were drawing that intelligence from.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, it would appear that that former chief was concerned that the threat assessment reflect
the actual reality, and in the days leading up to the arrival of
the convoy. If I could take you to some of those documents?
OPS00000 -- sorry, 00003073.

So if we go down the chain and see the -- how it
originated? Go to the very bottom, please. So somebody sent --
sorry, go up. So it appears that the former -- keep going.

It appears that the former chief received
information sent to him about some potential threat.

Go up.

And he passed that information on to you.

So stop here.

So somebody sent information to the former chief
directly. Somebody wrote:

"I lay awake tonight as I read Twitter
posts from the Extreme right vowing
attacks on Rideau Hall this weekend.
Some are calling for action akin to the
happenings in Washington on Capitol
Hill. I understand the right to
peaceful protest but I'm writing as a
very concerned citizen as we are not
hearing any reassurances from the city
or policing regarding the safety of residents surrounding these vulnerable
and targeted spots."

So we go up now. The former Chief forwarded that
to you.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I'm sorry.
MR. FRANK AU: Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can I finish reading the -- just the content that was at the bottom?

MR. FRANK AU: Sure. Sorry.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If you can just scroll down a little more, please. Okay, great. Thank you very much. Thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: Is that good?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, sorry.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, thank you. Sorry.

MR. FRANK AU: Sorry, I didn't mean to ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No.

MR. FRANK AU: --- cut off your reading. If we go up now. It appears that the former Chief forwarded that email to you and to Deputy Chief Ferguson, and he said:

"The [email below] from an Ottawa resident who is seeing online postings from what he calls extreme right wing elements calling for violence [in] the event."

If we go further down.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, if you can just ---

MR. FRANK AU: Oh, okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- there is one at
MR. FRANK AU: All right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I didn't get to Number 3 yet. I'll try to read more quickly.

MR. FRANK AU: No, no, no, take your time.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay, thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: So he was outlining the concerns from the citizen?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah.

MR. FRANK AU: And then he went on to say:

"Yet our briefing note as of last night says there is no intelligence to indicate that this demo straying will be violent. Please review all available info/intel/incidents and ensure we have the most accurate threat assessment and the most appropriate operations plan for the event."

And he sent that before your briefing scheduled at nine. So you agree with me that the former Chief was taking an active interest as you got closer to the event and he wanted to ensure that the threat assessment reflects the most accurate information the intelligence could provide; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can we scroll up on the date? I'm just looking at the date on there. This is ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yes. I believe this is the 26th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: -- the 26th. The 26th. No. So in answer to your question, absolutely we were
all taking an active interest, and I think it's important to note here that the information received by the Chief was funnelled to our Intelligence Unit and our Joint Intelligence Unit for assessment.

The Hendon reports on these days, on the 26th, would reflect that there was no anticipated violence to occur. So we were continually briefing on the violence picture and making sure that all of this information was funnelled in to our Intelligence Unit and then into our Planning Team.

It makes specific reference to activities or actions that could occur at Rideau Hall. We did look into that. It raises a national security issue, and I can tell you that there was national security representatives, including CSIS and the RCMP, in our Joint Intelligence Group. So again, this was information that was taken in, assessed, evaluated, put towards our threat assessment, and ultimately this didn't bore -- bear out to be accurate. There was no threats made against Rideau Hall.

**MR. FRANK AU:** And the former Chief was also concerned about the language and content in the Threat Assessment. If I could take you to the next document.

OPS00003748.

So you see that this is an email dated the 28th of January. It was directed to Deputy Chief Ferguson, but you were copied on it. The former Chief said:

"Thank you for sending this DRAFT Operational Plan -..."

I assume this is the 28th plan that we've just
seen:

"...it is well developed considering how fast moving and fluid the situation has been.

I provided you with feedback on this DRAFT report at our 945am meeting in your office; review and improve the language and content in the Threat Assessment, explicit expansion of operational scope to include parallel demonstrations/risk beyond [the] Freedom Convoy, explicit adherence to uniform/conduct policy for all participating members."

Do you know if that was done?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I -- I'm -- I don't know directly because this was directed to Deputy Chief Ferguson, who would have put it back through her chain of command to her Planning Team, and the planning -- the normal process would be the Planning Team and Intelligence would look to identify the areas of gap that the Chief felt existed.

MR. FRANK AU: All right. Let me take you to the note of Acting Superintendent Bryden on the 28th.

This is OPS00014555. Can we do down? Sorry, I -- oh, sorry, I didn't give you the page number. Page 9, please.

So TA issues. Is that the Threat Assessment issue?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would believe so.
MR. FRANK AU: So the notes of Inspector Bryden said:

"Narrative around convoy, but need more info on activists."

If we go further down.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, I can -- sorry, if I can -- I haven't ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yes, I'm sorry.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- finished reading my notes.

MR. FRANK AU: I'll let you read it.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: The bullet I'm interested in is the one that starts with:

"[P]lan is de-mobilize the convoy on Sunday but current [Threat Assessment] does not support that operational move; current [Threat Assessment] says low or no threat."

Do you know what that means?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So if you can -- and I'm going to apologise, but if you can let me know what date that these notes are taken?

MR. FRANK AU: I believe it's the 28th.

Can we go up to check the date?

28th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Friday, the 28th. So I think it would be...
If we can go back down to the notations so I can see what I'm speaking to. Just a little farther down.

So I'm not -- I'm not sure that is in a meeting that I am involved in, so I'm not sure specifically what he would be speaking to specifically there, and I would say that we would need to cross-reference with the Hendon reports and whether there was any reinforcement around heightening our concern that the convoy could be longer than the three days.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I'm not -- I'm not in that meeting.

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah. No, but -- it's fair enough. But he seems to referring to the Threat Assessment. And his notation here that it says no and low threat when we interviewed Inspector Bryden, he confirmed that that was the view at the time, that the threat was low to no risk. Do you agree with that assessment?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So do I agree with the assessment that it made ---

MR. FRANK AU: That it was low risk.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- that they made on that day?

MR. FRANK AU: On the ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, I ---

MR. FRANK AU: Do you believe that as of the 28th of January?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That there is a low threat of violence? Then yes, I would agree there is a low threat of violence?
threat of violence at that point, as has been identified within
the Hendon reports.

MR. FRANK AU: All right, so you interpret the
low to no threat as specifically referring to the risk of
violence?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That specifically, the
threat index, I believe the Hendon reports were giving on that
day.

MR. FRANK AU: Not to the risk of a prolonged
occupation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I don't believe
that they were speaking to a prolonged occupation because as I
indicated, based on our experience, which was limited, and our
assessment, there was a low risk of the convoy in large numbers
staying beyond the weekend.

But I think that's another area that's very
important to highlight. Superintendent Morris identified that
this group grew and tried to mobilise over the fall, and
actually never did mobilise. They galvanised for the ultimate
convoy that occurred. In normal circumstances with
Intelligence, one of the things that you rely on in your
assessment of it is experience. This group had not existed
before. Nobody had any experience in terms of what they were
going to do and how they were going to position themselves. And
I'll give you an example of where experience is important to us.
We have a yearly demonstration at one of our embassies that has
gone on for a number of years. We infrequently have high levels
of intelligence around any activity in that area, yet we
continually create a large deployment footprint between
ourselves and the RCMP because we have the experience that it --
that violence has occurred there and there is the potential for
violence occurring. The same could be said about the Panda Game
Homecoming. There is little intelligence that comes out, yet we
create deployment plans around experience. Nobody had ever
experienced this group coming into an area. Ottawa on the 28th
of January was the first experience in that.

So I do know that following this there was --
there has been extensive changes internally, and people have
seen a definitive change in our response based on our
experience, but across the country, police leaders identified
that they now had a scope of what their experience could
anticipate it to be with this group. Before they arrived on the
28th, we had no experience, and all of the experience as they
moved across was that they were lawful, and that they indicated
they were coming to lawfully protest in Ottawa. That experience
package changed for us on the 28th.

MR. FRANK AU: M'hm. And I suppose one of the
challenges you faced at the time was the presence of conflicting
information. I -- we put to Deputy Ferguson last week the
information that we heard from Hotel Association that people
were booking stays of upward of 30 days, and I believe she
mentioned there were some information to the contrary.

So let me take you to one email, one chain of
email. OPS00014930. First of all, do you know of which I'm
speaking, the Hotel Association was in touch with the City of
Ottawa, and I believe that information was transferred to the

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.
OPS. And so on the 25th of January, there was information that there are all these people who may be staying for over than -- for more than 30 days. And then on the 26th, we have this email from -- now, Steve Ball, do you know who Steve Ball is?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I do. He's one letter off of my name, but he is the CEO or the Executive Director of the Ottawa Hotel Association.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. So if we go down a little bit? So it appears that this is -- do you know who Mathieu Gravel is?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, Mathieu Gravel is a member of the mayor's office staff.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So this is an exchange of email between them about the information they had received earlier, and now if we scroll back up?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Sorry, can I read the bottom first?

**MR. FRANK AU:** Oh, I'm sorry, I keep doing that. Please take your time. Where do you -- how far do you want us to go down?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** If we could go to the bottom?

**MR. FRANK AU:** Certainly.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It won't take me very long.

**MR. FRANK AU:** No, no, no. Can we go down to the very bottom, please?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Okay. We can scroll
Thank you. You can scroll up.
Okay. Good to move up.
Okay. Okay. Thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: So I just want to draw your attention to this part at 9:08 p.m.
"I'll get a sense of how long they are planning to be here by how long they [I guess it should be book] rooms. So far it's only for a few days."

So is that one example of information not being entirely clear?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So it's an extremely good example of that. And I can tell you we did receive this information from Mr. Ball through Mr. Gravel. I believe it went into our Emergency Operations Centre, where it was put into the Intelligence Group to follow up. As a result, a member of our Police Liaison Team contacted Mr. Ball, and what initially was identified as a large tract of people who were going to be in the city for many, many days was narrowed down to being, no, it's a smaller group of people who have booked a three-day stay. So one of the -- the challenging thing for us is this was information that helped contribute to our view that it was going to be a -- largely a three-day protest.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now so everyone's trying to figure out to the best they can what's going to happen, and this Commission has heard from Ms. Carrier, for instance, a week or so ago. I've referenced this when I examined Deputy Chief
Ferguson last week, so I'll put that to you again, because Ms. Carrier, who was a businesswoman, a layperson with no access to any police intelligence, just based on her observation, you know, she said -- if I could find the transcript. She said, "To me personally, it was clear that the 70-kilometre train of trucks that crossed the country was not coming in for a small protest in a day. And to me, that Sunday night was the proof that, you know, somebody somewhere had underestimated or not listened to the anger, frustration that a large, at [this] point, you know, large number of people felt. They were coming to the City of Ottawa as the representatives of what they thought and they were going to stay there. They were going to stay there until they were heard."

So entirely apart from Intelligence reports and so on, there was this common-sense inference that some people draw, that people are not going to drive all the way from the west with all of these, you know, emotions that the Intelligence reports also refers to, to only stay for a full weekend. So in terms of contingency planning, what role did Intelligence have to inform that contingency planning?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I think Intelligence would have played an important role, and to try and highlight the risks that they knew at the time. And I believe
that that was done. It became more possible, as was identified, that a small group of people could continue beyond the weekend, but then mainly it was being planned around a weekend protest. All of the activities that we took, including this one with the Hotel Association, led us to believe that that's what it was. The intelligence, as we read it, talks about a large protest, but the numbers that are necessary for planning didn't start to come in until the day before and that -- please don't hear that as a fault of anyone. It was just very difficult because of how fluid and dynamic the situation was for us to be able to gather, through our partners, real-time intelligence. So Intelligence continually stayed on, continually fed the planning team of what they knew at the time with the best information.

As you described it though, it was a fluid week. It was a rollercoaster that week in terms of information coming out and refining down. And ultimately, the numbers, the size of it weren't fully refined until the 29th and the 30th when it was already upon us.

And I'll go back to it again because I don't think it can be understated. The real impact of this protest was the community harm that was created. That was what the problem and the consequence to our community was through the activities of these protesters. There wasn't any information that identified that. And that, for me, is what created the need, the emerging need for us to make sure that we have the action plans in place as we saw that emerge. Our community were dramatically exposed to violent activity over that period of time.
MR. FRANK AU: Now this may be open to debate, but one may argue that the combination of the large number of people in trucks with the expression of an intent to stay for some time until the mandates are lifted logically lead to, you know, this risk of social trauma, if large number are going to stay here for a long time; do you agree?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So and I think that goes to exactly what I talked about, about experience. The other piece you need to add in there is experience with the group that you're gathering the intelligence on to actually assess it and then to see how they are engaging in activities. The experience we had until this point was they were -- we were exactly right. They were people moving across the country determined to be heard, but they were peaceful, and they indicated that their intention was to be peaceful when they got here. That isn't what materialized and that isn't what caused the consequence to our city. People protesting in an area lawfully is something we can manage and handle. People creating an occupation that traumatizes our community was something that no community had ever seen, is -- was unprecedented, and was the situation we're facing when we began to get the experience of these people.

MR. FRANK AU: Now we expect that Superintendent Bernier, who is testifying tomorrow, may say that there was a bizarre disconnect between the intelligence and the planning. What's your perspective on that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I'm -- I would need to know exactly when he's -- at what point he's speaking of.
Because what I do know is as the Planning Team was doing their assessments and as the Planning Team was building their plans, that the Intelligence and the Planning Team were very tightly connected. I've seen and observed several emails over my preparation for this that indicate that at every point that one of the planners is looking to develop a plan, they're referencing intelligence. And that's -- as a leader in this organization, is exactly what I would expect to happen.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Okay. So let's go to his interview summary, so that we have more context. WTS000006 -- sorry, 00000030, page 4.

So we go down. Oh, sorry, it was earlier. Could we go up again? The second paragraph. So page 4, second paragraph.

"Superintendent Bernier also shared his concerns about [the] Freedom Convoy with his supervisor, Superintendent Drummond, on [the 27th of] January [...]. He told Superintendent Drummond that there seemed to be [...] bizarre disconnect between the intelligence contained in the Project Hendon reports and OPS's preparations." Do you agree with that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So those issues were never highlighted to me. I don't know what would form Superintendent Bernier's opinion on this, but those issues were never raised. And I would hope at that point they would have
been raised if somebody felt that there was such a disconnect.

MR. FRANK AU: But the question I guess I put to you is not whether they were raised, but whether you saw a similar disconnect between the information contained in those reports and the way the OPS was preparing for the arrival of the convoy.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I didn't, because I think what you could observe, and it'll be very important to flush out through our Planning Team, is that the information was fluid, that we continued to develop more, receive more information that became more refined as we moved ahead. That information was shared with planning. I believe that's why the planning process was as fluid as it was as well. This was a circumstance that was changing by the day, by the hour, with information coming in. And Intelligence was bringing it in and assessing it and Planning was trying to respond to it. And then it wasn't finalized until the convoy actually arrived in our city.

MR. FRANK AU: Now as you know, this Commission is ultimately about learning from the past to find out what happened in order to improve what we can do in the future. So as the Deputy Chief responsible ultimately for the Intelligence Unit, what are your thoughts on what could have done -- what could have been done differently or better in order for the OPS or other police services to respond better to an event like this in the future?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So first I'd like to start with thank you very much. I'm very happy that that's one
of the areas the Commission's looking at, because I think there are many lessons for us to all learn through this. Some of those lessons, I can tell you, we've already learned and put into practice.

In terms of Intelligence, I know that one of the things that we've developed is better capacity and capability around open-source information. What was borne out of this situation was a unit that's been created within our organization specifically dedicated at collecting open-source information and sharing it into Intelligence. I think their -- you know, opportunity around Intelligence is to ensure that Intelligence, Open-source and Police Liaison Team information is more readily shared, so that it can be cross-referenced. We've seen that develop within our organization.

I also think, and one of the things we've been able to do is we read the intelligence differently now. We've had multiple subsequent events in this city where we've used our experience to leverage our operational planning. One of those was Rolling Thunder. And when you look at the intelligence, there was the identification that it may not have been a large risk event for us, but we used our experience to apply it towards that intelligence and created a deployment model that actually ultimately did, I believe, prevent a subsequent occupation to our streets.

So I think from an Intelligence perspective, the coordination and cooperation and it has always been good between ourselves and our partners, I think this identified that we need to expand that and that we need to broaden the sources of
information that we're bringing in and properly leverage them in
our operational planning with the experience we have.

MR. FRANK AU: All right. Now let's leave
intelligence for a minute, but still, I want to ask you about
planning. If I could take you to your interview summary, which
is WTS000029. Could we go to page 4? Page 4. I'm looking for
the part where you said that the OPS's approach to the protest
at the time of the Freedom Convoy did not consider community
impact.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: The paragraph right at the
top.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Sorry.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Here. "Interim Chief Bell
saw it as OPS" ---

MR. FRANK AU: That's right.

"Interim Chief Bell saw it as OP's role
to respect lawful protests. He noted
that OPS was experienced dealing with
lawful protests on national and
international issues and ensuring
public safety at these protests. He
commented that OPS's approach to
protests at the time of the Freedom
Convoy did not however consider the
community impact of demonstrations."

We go down a bit.

Since the Convoy, [you] not only
consider[...] public safety and [...]
Charter of Rights and Freedoms [and so on], but also the impact on the community."

That -- those two, part of what you just told us.

Now at the time though, you sought a legal opinion on what lawful authority was open to the OPS to respond to the arrival of the convoy; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct. I requested that legal opinion following one of our morning calls, or a Command Team meeting, as one of the requests that was going to be -- we needed to fulfil in order to make sure we understood our legal grounds.

MR. FRANK AU: Do you remember when you sought that opinion?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don't remember the specific date.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay, let's see if your notes help refresh your memory.

OPS00014525.

So it says here, January 27th, and you have a note:

"Convoy Plan. Will develop legal opinion on how we will be able to end the convoy."

Does that help refresh your memory?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it does.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. So on the 27th, you sought the legal opinion. Do you remember if you got an opinion back?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I believe I received a legal opinion on the 28th.

MR. FRANK AU: The next day.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The next day.

MR. FRANK AU: So let's go to that now.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can we scroll down on my notes just to make sure I'm not missing anything? That's it. Thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay.

So if could go to the next document, OPS00003692. Is this the opinion you received?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it is.

MR. FRANK AU: Did you read it at the time?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I did.

MR. FRANK AU: Sorry?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes -- sorry, yes, I did.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And did you circulate this opinion to anyone else?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes, because it was requested at one of our morning calls I would've shared it with the entire Command Team, I believe. But I don't have independent recollection that I did forward it on.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. But you believe you did?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe I did. We -- I collected it on behalf of the executive team, so I would've shared it with the executive team.

MR. FRANK AU: And just to be clear, the -- by
executive team, you meant?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So it would have been -- so anyone who was present. So it would've been with legal counsel who would've done this; Deputy Chief Ferguson; CAO Dunker; Chief Sloly; Chief Executive Officer, Kevin Malloney; and others. I just don't have recollection of who I forwarded it to.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Okay. So let's take a look at this opinion.

Staying on page 1, if we scroll down. The paragraph that starts with, "While the convoy", if we could go up. Yeah, that's good:

"While the convoy has not yet reached the City of Ottawa, various considerations will need to be assessed and reassessed to determine the appropriate response, including: the balancing of competing Charter rights; impacts to public enjoyment and the right to mobility; impacts to health and safety; impacts on obstructing emergency vehicles; and impacts to public safety generally."

So I want to ask you, in preparing for response, how did you and your executive team consider these bullets, including the impacts to public enjoyment and the right to mobility, and the last point, impacts to public safety generally?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think that
would've been done by an ongoing assessment that was being
conducted by the Planning Team and Intelligence moving ahead.
Those areas were specifically impacted, as I
indicated, and we only realised that once the convoy arrived.
The anticipation of the community trauma and violence to our
community that was going -- did occur, wasn't anticipated
because nobody saw that coming. Nobody knew that that was going
to be the tactic that the mob that got here was going to
actually engage in.

So that is something that we look at. We look at
public safety, we look at Charter of rights and freedoms, and
all of these index, but we had never taken the view of making
sure that the community and the surrounding areas we were as
responsive to their needs.

We take that into account more than ever now, and
that's what you've seen as we have responded to Rolling Thunder,
responded to Canada Day, to make sure that we interpret our
intelligence with our experience, but also make sure that we
identify potential hazards or concerns that could occur within
the community and put that absolutely front and centre in our
planning.

The reason I highlight that is the one thing that
I hear consistently after the removal of the occupation, and
very rightfully, is that we didn't put enough emphasis as a
police service on our community and the impact that it caused to
them in the very early days, that they felt that we didn't focus
on the harm that was being done to them. While we have always
had that in the planning, I think we need to be overt in it and say, "Community, these are -- this is your city, these are your streets. We will conduct ourselves in order to protect you within this community and protect you within those streets."

So I think the emphasis that I am playing is that we need to always have Charter rights and freedoms on our mind, we always need to have community safety, but we need to make sure that we bring the community impact to the front of everything we do because it was the area that was most violated during this event.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, the opinion talked about the balancing of competing Charter rights, and perhaps many of the residents felt that there was an imbalance. And one of the central question that arose from the planning perspective is about the ability of preventing the trucks from entering the downtown core it the first place. So I want to ask you what was your understanding of the lawful authority for the OPS to prevent the trucks from going downtown and park there that first weekend?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe that we do have the ability, and I believe we've exercised it several times since then, to prevent the vehicles from going down. A truck isn't a protected entity under the Charter of rights and freedoms, people are.

That is something we had not exercised prior as an organisation. When we had vehicle born demonstrations, protests, or events in what is the downtown core we had always allowed them because our experience was they had come and they
had left and we had managed them. And that was a regular occurrence for us, and that happened many, many times, usually many, many times a year. So although the Charter doesn't protect the vehicles, I do know that our experience had been that we would allow those type of vehicles.

I think there's another side to it as well that's very important. Particularly as we became closer to the date, we saw the volume of vehicles that were going. They were coming to Ottawa. They were very clear about that, they were coming to Ottawa. So the ability for us to protect and preserve public safety would mean that we would want them to go into a designated area so that we could better control it.

We didn't, again, didn't anticipate the activities. We didn't anticipate the size or scope or number of people who stayed because do have to remember most people did leave on Sunday night. So the ability for us to manage the protest and demonstration in a core, as opposed to people coming and have a blocked off downtown core and leaving their trucks on the 417, or trucks dispersed around many different areas, it was going to be more manageable for us in a centralised area.

**MR. FRANK AU:** All right. Now, we asked the same question or a very similar question of Mr. Sloly, the former Chief, and I want to show you his answer and ask you if you agree with him.

Can we go to the document WTS00000040, and if you could go to page 15, please. The second paragraph:

"Chief Sloly was advised that based on the known intelligence reports, OPS did
not have the legal authority to deny
the Freedom Convoy access to downtown
Ottawa simply because some people
disagreed with the views of some
participants. He understood that OPS
did have authority to close roads and
restrict traffic if there were public
safety concerns, but closures and
restrictions had to be commensurate to
actual threats or reasonably
predictable threats. Highway Traffic
Act or by-law violations alone would
not be sufficient to justify
restricting access to the City for all
protestors."

Do you share his view?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I'm -- I think it’s
important -- there’s a lot packed in there. So I think it’s
important that --

MR. FRANK AU: Take your time ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- we go through it.

MR. FRANK AU: --- to reflect upon it.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I would say -- I
would absolutely agree, based on the intelligence we had, we
didn’t have legal authority to deny the protestors from the
protest. All of the activity had been lawful and peaceful and
there was no indication of anything contrary to that.

MR. FRANK AU: Let me ask you this. In the
subsequent events, Rolling Thunder and so on, did you have
different intelligence assessment to suggest a more violent
event or higher risk in other aspects?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** No. We had
experience. We had experience in exactly what had occurred. We
had seen and learned from what had occurred during the Freedom
Convoy and we had worked with our City partners and policing
partners to identify different mechanisms to actually restrict
access to an area.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So in other words, it’s not the
nature of the anticipated protest that changed the planning,
it’s the experience of having been through what Ottawa went
through in January and February that caused a different planning
approach?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely. And I
think that that experience that I talk about is something that
you saw across the country as people planned and responded to
similar incidents.

Toronto Police Service and the City of Toronto
had a much more successful intervention in a protest in
subsequent weekends to what we had initially. And Chief Ramer
was being clear in identifying it. Part of that was because of
the experience that they saw occur in Ottawa, that they
identified different threats in different ways and built a plan
around the experience that they’ve seen us -- they saw us
endure.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Would you agree then that the only
thing that’s changed is the appreciation of the potential risk?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I don’t think that that’s accurate. I think what’s changed is we have an understanding of what these groups are capable of when they come together. We have an understanding of what could occur as these groups coalesce around a cause in an area.

And that’s -- Rolling Thunder, I would propose that had we not had the experience we had, we wouldn’t have planned in the way we did. We wouldn’t have had the public order deployment. We wouldn’t have had the exclusionary zone. And in that case, the Friday evening that it occurred, we would have had a truck that attempted to occupy an intersection, that was followed quickly by other vehicles, set up and be successful for a period of time in, again, taking over an area of our city. That’s the appreciation that we have of what is possible when these groups come together. That’s the experience that I’m talking about that we are now applying to all of the intelligence.

MR. FRANK AU: So if I understand you correctly, you said what’s different is the new understanding of what could occur; right? Those are your words?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, those are my words.

MR. FRANK AU: How is that different from appreciation of the potential risk?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Your words are probably just more eloquent than mine.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. We’ll go with your words. Now, I do want to ask you this. Taking you back
to the legal opinion, which is OPS00003692. If we go to page 4?
Go down. That’s right. The paragraph that starts with
“therefore”.

“Therefore, while the case law indicates
that those who wish to protest have a -
Charter-protected right in doing so, it is
not without limits. These limits, as the
courts have recognized, prevent threats of
violence, acts of violence, and unlawful
conduct. Moreover, these limits also
prevent demonstrators from obstructing
travel on roadways. It is worth nothing,
however, that there has been at least one
decision where it was found that a
blockade for a very brief period only
constituted a minor inconvenience and was
therefore permissible.”

So what this memo is saying here is that there
are limits to the Charter and part of the consideration apart
from potential threats of violence is the prospect of the
demonstrators obstructing travel on roadways. That was your
understanding too; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it was.

MR. FRANK AU: And when you have a large crowd of
protestors and their trucks being brought to the downtown core
with no exit strategy, why is that not a suitable consideration
for road closures in order to achieve some of the bullet points
we saw earlier in this memo?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, and I think this goes back to how we have and how we had addressed these types of protests in the past.

We live in Ottawa. We’re at the seat of Parliament. Protesting is something that -- lawful protesting is something that our community accepts, and I believe our community appreciates. And they have an expectation on us to be able to appropriately manage and facilitate those protests.

So for a large demonstration to come into the downtown core, in and around the seat of Parliament, and protest for a number of days would not be abnormal in this city, even with the traffic disruptions that would occur. What was abnormal in this situation was the volume of vehicles that came and the area that they actually occupied.

What was particularly -- and I’ve said it and I will say it again. What was particularly different in this event was the interactions of the protestors between themselves and the community. We had never seen that before. That was unprecedented.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Commissioner, I am about to embark on a new area. I don’t know if this would be an appropriate time for a break?

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. So we’ll take the morning break. We’ll take 15 minutes ---

MR. FRANK AU: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: --- and come back I guess a little after twenty-to. Thanks.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission in recess for 15
minutes. La Commission est levée pour 15 minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 11:25 a.m.

--- Upon resuming at 11:39 a.m.

--- INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL, Resumed:

--- EXAMINATION BY MR. FRANK AU, (cont’d):

THE REGISTRAR: Order. À l’ordre.

The Commission is reconvened. La Commission reprend.

MR. FRANK AU: Good morning again.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good morning.

MR. FRANK AU: So we -- before the break, we were talking about intelligence and other aspects of the arrival planning. I’d like to take you now to the events after the convoy has arrived. And during our interview, you explained to us that the events after the convoy arrived could be broken down into different phases. So I’d like to take you to those different phases. And perhaps you can first explain to us what those are.

And if may be helpful if we go to your interview summary first.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: For sure.

MR. FRANK AU: So can we call up WTS00000029, please? And this would be found at page 9.

So Interim Chief, you told us that broadly speaking, the events after the convoy arrived could be broken down into three phases. The first, roughly from January 28th, which was a Friday, to February 4th, another Friday.

Now, you separated the weekends from the weekdays
because you said the weekends are very different.

First of all, why are the weekends so different from the weekdays?

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what we found during the course of the occupation was the week -- during the week time, it was the people that were here. We would see those numbers swell Friday night, usually Saturday during the day, into Sunday, and then disperse into Sunday and we would go into another week allotment.

The people that travelled to Ottawa, not in trucks, but people travelled on foot attended the area during the weekends really seemed to swell and rise. And the week was more a stagnant -- stagnant is probably not the right word, a period where it was the people that were dug in, and sitting there, and remaining.

MR. FRANK AU: M’hm. So phase one, from January 28th to roughly February the 4th, I believe you call that a period of orientation or adaptation after the convoy’s arrival. Tell us what you meant?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So during that period, several key things occur. So on the 28th, the convoy arrives. We are anticipating a three-day event with the potential of a smaller group of people staying. And there’s massive numbers.

So through the weekend, and I wouldn’t be the one to best speak about it, but through the weekend, the event is managed.

Sunday night, so I believe that’s the 30th, we then anticipate most people leaving. Many people left, but we
still had a very large red zone, that we identified it, with lots of trucks, with anti-social behaviours that are targeting our community. So we start to then move into the Monday, where we’re seeing an entrenched group who are actively demonstrating, protesting, and targeting our community.

During that phase -- so on the 30th, as we’re looking at going into Monday, demobilization planning, as it’s called, is being identified by Deputy Chief Ferguson. So there’s direction that’s being put out by Deputy Ferguson.

So always a potential of them -- some staying. We have a very large footprint now. What is our -- what are our potentials to actually remove people from this area if we need to go there? So that’s tasked out on the 30th.

So during that week, we’re starting to orient ourselves. So I wasn’t present at it, but on the 1st of February, so 31st is Monday, 1st of February is Tuesday, there’s a meeting that occurs between Deputy Chief Ferguson, Chief Sloly, and the large Public Order Unit commander table to start looking at options for a tactical resolution to this.

So that group then is tasked out with coming up with options that could be used.

That Public Order team then brings back options to Chief Sloly, myself, Deputy Chief Ferguson, and other senior leaders to identify the three options that they had identified on the 4th of -- on the 4th of February. So that would be -- I believe that’s the Friday.

From that optioning -- optioning solutions that have come out, there’s three that are identified. The command
team has the discussion with them as we go through, weigh all the benefits of each of them. and ultimately, an approach is then identified on the 4th. So that takes us through the first week.

So the orientation is figuring out what’s going on within the environment, making sure, trying to get the resources that we require, or assign the resources that we require to hold the red zone in a safe manner, try and manage public safety issues in the way that we can with the limited capacity we have, as well as then start to develop planning, or at least identify strategic concepts around how we’re going to approach this moving ahead.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now I have more questions for you about this first phase, but before we get into that, I’d like you to tell the Commissioner, first of all, what the other phases are? So the second phase, I believe it is from February the 7th, which is a Monday, to February the 11th. Is that a Friday? I believe it is.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I’m sorry, I don’t know. This is a block of time to me, the days. I’m not sure of what that day is.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. But in any event, from the 7th to the 11th; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe the 7th, if the 4th is ---

MR. FRANK AU: So the 7th was the Monday and the --

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Then the 11th would be
---

MR. FRANK AU: The Friday.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- a Friday. Yes.

So during that period is the time that we’re looking at doing -- it was -- the strategic concept that was developed and approved was to look at taking off bite sized or chunk sized pieces of the demonstration to decrease its footprint to ultimately resolve it. Keep taking bites out of it until it’s actually fully resolved. That week was orientation around developing targeting risks, for lack of a better word, identifying of how it would be approached in developing smaller operational plans to do operations to try and limit or shrink the footprint.

MR. FRANK AU: So that’s the period when -- you called it the period of ad hoc responses; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And then we move to the third phase, which starts on February the 14th, which is a Monday, and carries on to the end of that week, the 18th. And I think you described that as the week when there was a focus on the development of a long-term plan to end the protest or occupation; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. So because we’ve only counted weeks, I think I would move that date of when the long-term planning started back a bit. I think it was the 11th or the 12th.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. These dates aren’t exact, but it gives a general sense of how events progressed.
So going back now to the first phase, now, you’ve told us in our interview in the summer that that was a time, you described it as, I believe, let me look for the reference. You said the “OPS was exceptionally unprepared” for and you -- and that you realized that after that first weekend.

Do you still agree with that description that you gave before?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, I believe that we were unprepared for what transpired.

MR. FRANK AU: In the sense that you weren’t prepared for what would eventually turn into an occupation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, so I want to take you to some documents and see if we can explore further what happened during that period. Superintendent Abrams, from the OPP, testified last week that he had a conversation with you on, I believe the 31st of January, that would be the Monday after the first weekend, and you told him that the OPS is now looking for a full week sustainability plan. Do you recall that conversation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: Tell us more about that conversation.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So as we transitioned from the Sunday night of the 30th into the Monday morning of the 31st, the reality of what we were facing was much more clear. Although there continued to be dates through Intelligence that we’d received that identified there might be an actual date where the group would pick up and leave, we identified that that
may or may not come to fruition, and we needed to start to engage in our planning, engage in the planning to ultimately remove the occupation.

So one of the things that we did at the very early outset in a Command Team meeting, I think it was actually at our morning call or at a specific briefing around the convoy, I can't remember which one it was, but we established for the purposes of planning what would be a long window of what we could potentially be looking at for a sustainability perspective. It's an important premise for us in order to look at the window that we are going to need to plan for. This is mainly not to identify when it's going to end, to identify what is the potential that we may need from a staffing perspective from a resource perspective so that we can actually look at planning how we manage our members and other resources coming in.

So although we had -- we didn't know what the length of it would be at that time, we identified on the long end a four-week planning period for sustainability so that we know -- we would know we had the resources in place that we needed when we needed them.

**MR. FRANK AU:** And you and Superintendent Abrams had ongoing discussions as the events progressed about the different challenges facing the OPP and the OPS; correct?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes. So one of the things that we agreed to, because there was so many tasks at that time, there was a lot going on, that I would support Deputy Ferguson by being the conduit to the OPP to either ask
questions at a strategic level or get input or questions from them. And that's the role that I played, and that's the context that I had my conversations with Superintendent Abrams.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. Now, if I could take you to Superintendent Abrams's summary of the events around that time, perhaps you can tell us if you agree with his description. Could we go to WTS00000013, please? Page 5.

So:

"On February [the 4th], Superintendent Abrams had what he characterized as a formal conversation with Deputy Chief Bell about OPS's lack of a plan and unified command structure. He explained that by unified command structure, he meant that OPS needed to be unified within itself because it was not at the time. He told Deputy Chief Bell what his OPP officers had relayed to him: that OPS was disorganized and poorly coordinated. He also told Deputy Chief Bell that OPS's maintenance of multiple command centres at the 245 Greenbank Road OPS office where OPS's MIC..."

That would be Major Incident Commander?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** M'hm.

**MR. FRANK AU:**

"...Superintendent Patterson, was
based, the OPS headquarters on 474 Elgin Road, and at the NCRCC in Orleans where OPS's Incident Commander was based, were contributing to these problems. Deputy Chief Bell agreed that OPS needed to formalize operations and told Superintendent Abrams that OPS was trying to develop a plan and a unified command. In characterizing the conversation, Superintendent Abrams explained that it was an uncomfortable situation but he felt compelled to raise his concerns and offer advice."

Now, there is a lot here, so let's unpack it. First of all, he mentioned that there are multiple command centres. And I believe there are at least three locations there. Is that what happened at the time, that there were multiple command centres within the OPS?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So there was different areas where work was being generated out of or coordinated, but the NCRCC, the National Capital Region Command Centre, was the dedicated command centre for this event. The Major Incident Commander, Superintendent Patterson, did originate -- did originally work out of his office at 245, but I believe he regularly attended the NCRCC. I'm not sure, we'd have to verify that through Inspector Lucas.

There also was -- was there another one there?

**MR. FRANK AU:** The headquarters on ---
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Based out of 474.

MR. FRANK AU: --- Elgin Road.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: 474 was where the executive command was. So the NCRCC was our command centre. That's where all Operations were resourced out of that. That's where our Joint Intelligence Group was, that's where our Incident Commander was. There was meetings that occurred in different areas. There was different locations that did need to feed information into the NCRCC, but ultimately, the NCRCC was the area where Operations were controlled from. From -- established from before the convoy arrived, and only demobilized many days after it had been dismantled.

MR. FRANK AU: If the NCRCC was where all the actions were, where the Command Post was, do you know why Superintendent Patterson was operating, initially at least, from a different location?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I can't comment on that. I don't know.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Superintendent Abrams also pointed out that there was a lack of a plan and unified command structure. Do you agree with those concerns?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So we had -- we would've had a command structure that was based out of -- a unified command that was based out of the NCRCC. The Ontario Provincial Police, the Ottawa Police Service, the RCMP, PPS, Parliamentary Protective Services were all co-located in that area, so there was the unification of all of those resources there.
From a strategic level of command, no I would absolutely agree with Superintendent Abrams's assessment that we needed a better more integrated strategic level of command. One of the learnings for me from this is even though it was assigned to me I don't -- it wasn't necessarily more helpful for Superintendent Abrams, from a strategic command within the Operation perspective, to come to me instead of managing directly through Deputy Chief Ferguson.

So those are some of the issues we identified and continued to rectify, particularly as we moved towards our Integrated Planning Team and our unified command.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Did Superintendent Abrams not also raise some issues with you about the difficulty for the OPP officers to integrate in the sense that the OPS, in his view, had failed to provide deployment instructions to his officers?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So Superintendent Abrams identified several different issues that were relayed to the Incident Command, and I know one of the issues in the early days was the tasking of a number of Ontario Provincial Police officers who -- actually the lack of tasking of a number of Ontario Provincial Police officers who had attended to assist. That was relayed to Deputy Chief Ferguson, and my understanding, it would have been my expectation, that she would've moved that down to the Incident Commander, Inspector Lucas, who would've rectified it with his partner at that time, the OPP Incident Commander, who he was sitting across the table from at the NCRCC.
MR. FRANK AU: Is it your understanding that there were in fact OPP officers physically situated in Ottawa who were just sitting around and not being effectively deployed, notwithstanding the lack of resources on the part of the OPS?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I do understand that there was an occurrence of that that was -- that did happen that was raised to me, and it is my understanding that it was immediately rectified and it didn't occur again.

MR. FRANK AU: And was there not also concerns that in terms of the planning there were OPP planners provided to assist the OPS but they couldn't really do their job because they were conflicting directions from the OPS.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don't believe that was a concern that Supt. Abrams raises to me.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Could we go to page 4 of this document?

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. FRANK AU: The second paragraph:

“Superintendent Abrams also reported that OPS planners and the OPP planners assisting them were receiving contradictory directions. At OPS’s request, OPP assigned two members, Inspector Younan and Staff Sergeant Gauvin, to help OPS develop plans. Chief Sloly had requested plans for three scenarios:”

Went through the three scenarios.
“On February 3, Superintendent Abrams was advised that OPS [Instructor] Michel Marin had informed the OPS planners and the OPP planners assisting them to scrap the 3-scenario planning because Chief Sloly wanted a new, different plan, and that Inspector Marin’s intervention had left the planners confused as to what they should be doing. Superintendent Abrams contacted Deputy Chief Bell, who informed him that Inspector [I don’t know if that’s ‘Marin’ or] Marin lacked authority to issue planning directions and that the planners should be reporting to OPS Superintendent Jamie Dunlop, who was leading planning even though Superintendent Patterson was serving as the OPS MIC.”

Does that help refresh your memory?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it does. Thank you very much.

MR. FRANK AU: Tell us what was the nature of the problem, or perceived problem?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So -- and this highlights where some of the challenges. I wasn’t involved in any of the tasking that was going on around, as not the Major Incident Commander.
So my understanding of what occurred here is -- and I do recall Supt. Abrams calling me and saying that Insp. Marin had come in and given a direction that was contrary to what we had expected to come out of this planning table. That’s why it then directed him to Supt. Dunlop, who was assisting in that area and would be the person who would be able to provide direction as being involved directly in our morning briefings, in terms of how we were moving ahead. I don’t know what occurred to have Insp. Marin engage in that way with that direction, but I did highlight to Supt. Abrams that if there was any questions in that planning area or in that public order area, that it was Supt. Dunlop who was best equipped to answer them, and he would be the only one that could give directions in that area.

MR. FRANK AU: All right. Now, let’s move on, then, to the second phase; as you’ve described it, the phase of *ad hoc* responses.

This would have begun on around the 5th, although you separated the weekends from the weekdays, so probably the 7th, right?

So I want to ask you about a number of events that occurred during this period and get your perspective on whether they might be problematic, from your point of view.

First of all, on the 4th of February, I think this came from our interview with you, but on the 4th of February, the OPS made an announcement about a search and contain plan. Do you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.
MR. FRANK AU: And my understanding is that that plan contemplated surging officers into neighbourhoods affected by Freedom Convoy activity?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: As well as hardening the downtown core protest site, including by closing interprovincial bridges and highway off-ramps and so on.

Now, you spoke to us about this at page 4 of your summary. So I think what’s on the screen is Abrams’s summary. Can we go to Interim Chief Bell’s summary, please?

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. FRANK AU: If we go to page 14:

“On February 4 during an 11:40 a.m. press conference, Chief Sloly announced that police would close highway off-ramps and interprovincial bridges to prevent convoy participants from entering Ottawa.”

Now, first of all, I don’t know how precise the wording is, so I want to ask for your best recollection of what was announced during that press conference.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what was announced during that press conference was that the Ottawa Police Service would take into account all options, including consideration of closing of the off-ramps and of the interprovincial bridges. So there wasn’t a definitive statement saying, “We are closing the bridges”; it was a statement by Chief Sloly indicating, “We could -- we can, and will consider it if it’s appropriate.”
MR. FRANK AU: Now, if we carry on:

“Superintendent Abrams called Interim Chief Bell and informed him that OPS had not consulted OPP. On February 5 during a 10:00 a.m. briefing meeting...”

No, no, no, stay where we are:

“On February 5 during a 10:00 a.m. briefing meeting that Interim Chief Bell attended, Chief Sloly directed OPS officers attending the meeting to close off-ramps and bridges.”

Now, first of all, is that accurate?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it is.

MR. FRANK AU: “Chief Sloly directed OPS officers attending the meeting to close off-ramps and bridges. Interim Chief Bell stated that his understanding was that OPP, not OPS was responsible for closing off-ramps, and that OPS lacked authority to close interprovincial bridges.”

Could you explain the authority to do any of those things to us, please?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the ability to close off-ramps is normally attributed to the OPP, the Ontario Provincial Police, because they are the police of jurisdiction responsible -- the police responsible for the 400-Series...
highways through Ottawa. So Ottawa police would not normally engage in -- in exigent circumstances it could occur, but we would not normally engage in closing off-ramps at the top of the ramp because it was an OPP responsibility.

We do have the ability to close ramps on the street side, but that creates traffic problems and issues. So we could close them but not normally.

Interprovincial bridges are a different circumstance. Interprovincial bridges are much more challenging to close, particularly in a preventative way. In exigent circumstances, as things are occurring, they may be closed; and the first weekend, the second weekend, and even in the third weekend, you saw that happen when the threshold for us to do that was met by the operational commanders. But to pre-emptively close an interprovincial bridge would take the intervention of the -- I believe it’s the Minister of Transportation to be able to allow us, on a preventative measure, to close those bridges.

MR. FRANK AU: So if I understand the sequence, the press conference happened on the 4th, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And then the directions to do these things, to close off-ramps and bridges and so on came on the 5th, the day after?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: But they’re -- so on the 5th, and I think it’s an important context to set, the 5th is
a Saturday. The 5th is where we’re starting to see large number of ingress of people into our community. The intelligence and the information we have around convoys is starting to come in again. So this is, I believe -- I believe that this is the Chief responding to the increased threat that we feel we may be under as we move ahead.

**MR. FRANK AU:** That's part of why you distinguished the weekends from the weekdays.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yeah, they were very different periods of time from an operational perspective.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. Now, with respect to this incident, the 4th and the 5th, the proposed actions and so on, did you have any concern about the way things unfolded?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I did on the 4th -- no, I believe the statements that were made were very appropriate. We will consider everything as we move ahead.

On the 5th, my only concern would be to -- as the Chief of Police to provide direction like that on an operational matter as the Chief of Police. That's something that I believe should be considered, contemplated at an operational level, not a strategic level, and that would have been my concern in that area.

**MR. FRANK AU:** And why would it be a problem for a strategic-level leader be directing operations? What is the concern underlying this rule that the operational commander should be doing these things instead of the strategic commander?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** The Incident Command System has levels within it for very distinct reasons. That's
so that you can actually accomplish the operation that you want
to with the most clarity, the most understanding, and the most
safely way possible. The strategic level needs to actually
identify what is the approach that's going to be used, what is
the general outcomes that we are looking for. The operational
needs to then look at how -- what are the resources, how are we
actually going to make that happen. The tactical level then
needs to execute on those plans.

When somebody engaged at a strategic level began
-- begins to give tactical or operational level commands, it
creates a lack of clarity in terms of everyone's role within the
structure. That lack of clarity then creates questions around
what do I do, what is my responsibility within this, do I have
to escalate and ask a question of. So the necessity to have
that role clarity through it, I believe, is very important, and
you have to play your roles through it, because when you don't,
you create a lack of understanding, which can impact the
operations.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now to what extent is it clear or
ambiguous what action constitutes a strategic direction or
operation -- operational direction?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Sorry, can you re ---

**MR. FRANK AU:** So I'm just trying to understand,
as a layperson having never worked within an Incident Command,
like, what kind of directions would be considered a strategic
direction and what direction might be considered an operational
or tactical direction?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So this is one of the
key areas that I believe that we needed to look at when I became Interim Chief in terms of how we continue to progress around this area. In this case, a strategic-level decision could be I don't want the convoys in the downtown area. Go and work how we actually keep those trucks out of the downtown area. An operational-level decision, in my perspective, is close the ramp so convoys don't come into the downtown area.

But I think it's also important to note, there is no rigorous system that identifies exactly where each of those thresholds land. And if there is a rigorous system, there is four different accepted systems within Canada that could be used in this area. So it's an area that I believe is something that probably hampered us somewhat in this with the lack of clarity. No fault attributed to anyone, just there was not clear clarity across the services, across ourselves in terms of what constituted each of those decisions. So I believe that that clarity needs to be struck and needs to exist, and that's one of the things that, in the early days of me taking over the operation as Interim Chief, that I spent a considerable amount of time doing. So the people that I was working with, Deputy Chief Ferguson, Superintendent Bernier had a really clear understanding of what I felt was a strategic role and what I felt was an operational level decision.

MR. FRANK AU: M'hm. Now in this paragraph that we just read, it would appear from what Superintendent Abrams said that the OPP was not consulted before the announcement was made on the 4th, because he heard it from the news. And since you explained that the OPP would have been responsible for the
highway off-ramps and so on, would it have been important to consult the OPP before the announcement was made?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So if the announcement was we will be closing ramps, I would say, yes, it would be extremely important. If the announcement was we will consider that, I would say not as much, and only because the OPP at this point is integrated within our NCRCC, our Command Centre, and those would be operational-level decisions that would be made.

There would be tactical responses developed within that area to be able to respond to the issues.

MR. FRANK AU: M'hm. So this is the weekend of the 5th and the 6th, and if we go to the following weekend, you know, I could take you to your summary at page 20. I suppose the OPS was anticipating another search for another weekend, and

---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So -- I'm sorry.

MR. FRANK AU: No, go ahead.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, what I think -- what I know was occurring, not what I think, what I know was occurring here was, there was intelligence and tracking of a convoy that existed I believe within Quebec that was being followed towards Ottawa. That's -- that is what -- that would have been the early morning intelligence briefing in terms of what was to occur. This is the Saturday as well. This is the final -- well, the second final Saturday. So we are continuing to build, monitor, maintain the area, but we are tracking a convoy at this point.

MR. FRANK AU: So in the middle of the first
"During the briefing, Chief Sloly directed that OPS close interprovincial bridges and highway off-ramps into Ottawa until Monday, February the 14[th]. Chief Sloly indicated that OPS needed to act because of the municipal and provincial state [...] of emergency."

So there appears to be a perceived need to close these off-ramps and bridges again, and he's directing, it appears from this paragraph. Is that what happened?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct, yes.

MR. FRANK AU: So if we go to the next paragraph?

"Interim Chief Bell engaged in back-and-forth discussions with Chief Sloly about whether OPS had authority to close interprovincial bridges and highway off-ramps, including at a 12:17 p.m. meeting that OPS general counsel Christiane Huneault attended."

First of all, wasn't this discussion -- didn't you already have this discussion with the former Chief the weekend before about the authority to do all this?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I hadn't added the weekend.

MR. FRANK AU: I see. Okay. So, anyway, you have these discussions with him on the 12[th], I believe, and then
"Interim Chief Bell explained that while planning and operations would ordinarily have been Acting Deputy Chief Ferguson's responsibility, he was relieving Acting Deputy Chief Ferguson that day so that she could rest. Ultimately, Chief Sloly agreed that OPS lacked authority to close the bridges and off-ramps and rescinded his direction."

So, first of all, this is the weekend that Deputy Chief Ferguson took two days off. We heard about that. Is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: So during her absence, you stepped in to look after her responsibility, and that's why you were engaging in these discussions; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah.

MR. FRANK AU: Because normally, this is part of the planning.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct. This would have been under Deputy Chief Ferguson's purview.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. The next paragraph,

"During these discussions, Interim Chief Bell informed Chief Sloly that Superintendent Bernier had developed a traffic mitigation plan to divert
arriving convoys away from the downtown core instead of closing off-ramps and bridges."

So first of all, we heard about directions to close off-ramps and bridges. Did you have the same concern expressed earlier the weekend before about a strategic-level leader providing operational-level directions?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I did.

**MR. FRANK AU:** But in this case, we have a different incident commander or event commander who already developed a traffic mitigation plan; right?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That is correct.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So we start reading from the middle of the third paragraph:

> “Chief Sloly told Interim Chief Bell that he needed more details on Superintendent Bernier’s plan so he could decide whether to approve it.”

Now, do you have any concern about the former chief expressing the need to approve the event commander’s plan?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So it is not typical in incident command structures. The strategic-level doesn’t approve operational-level demands.

**MR. FRANK AU:**

> “After some back and forth, OPS implemented the traffic mitigation…”

Can we go up? No, sorry, go down.

> “…traffic mitigation plan, which kept
convoys from entering the downtown core. Interim Chief Bell’s notes record that, during the 12:17 p.m. meeting, Chief Sloly told him that Chief Sloly ‘would assess the plan & if not satisfied would take appropriate action[s].’ Interim Chief Bell explained that Chief Sloly was asserting his authority to approve or reject the traffic mitigation plan that Superintendent Bernier was developing, as well as to hold Interim Chief Bell accountable if that plan did not meet the thresholds that Chief Sloly believed it needed to meet."

What did you mean by that? Holding you accountable?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I don’t know, but he did indicate to me that I would be held accountable for the success of that plan. I don’t know specifically what that would mean, but those were the words used by Chief Sloly.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Okay. Did that cause you concern?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** No, I think there’s -- sorry, I believe there’s a level of accountability in every level within the organization. I actually believe I would be accountable for delivery of that. And I was confident in the plan.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So you were accountable because you are now stepping into the shoes of Deputy Chief Ferguson,
who was the strategic commander; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And so when Supt. Bernier was implementing that traffic mitigation plan as the commander, you were the one then providing strategic oversight?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And that’s why you would have been accountable if anything went wrong?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well we -- ultimately the Chief is accountable for everything.

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s part of the responsibilities of being a chief of police. The delivery of this day and the diversion of this convoy would have, from a strategic level, come to me, and from an operational level, come to Supt. Bernier, who developed a very effective plan and had teams that executed those plans very well, that kept them out of our downtown core.

MR. FRANK AU: So was that an example of you trying to protect the autonomy of the operational commander?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. I would believe yes, because I strongly believe in the autonomy of the operational commander.

MR. FRANK AU: The -- and I believe the -- at the end of the day, the strategic intent was clear here. Keep convoys out of the area. Supt. Bernier and his team took that away and developed a very strong plan to manage that. Members of our organization and other organizations executed that plan...
very well that ultimately did result in those convoys not attending. That is how strategic, operational, and tactical level decision makings are intended to work.

MR. FRANK AU: M’hm. Now I want to turn your attention to another aspect that happened during the convoy events.

If we could go to your summary at page 13? If we go down a little? That’s right.

So the last paragraph:

“During the interview, Interim Chief Bell stated that there were different perspectives within OPS on the role of PLT during the Freedom Convoy.”

And we’ve heard a little about this, different perspectives within the OPS on the role that the PLT should play. Can you tell us more about your perspective and the other perspective on PLT?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I can tell you about my perspective.

MR. FRANK AU: Tell us both.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t know that I know what the other perspective is, but from my perspective, PLT is an essentially important part in the development of plans, the pre-engagement with demonstrators, and then ultimately with the engagement of them as you move ahead.

PLT, the Police Liaison Team, does an amazing job of trying to build rapport with demonstrators and protestors. And it goes -- we utilize it now beyond that, in order to be
able to have clear lines of communication, but even more so,
have a good set of understanding of expectations of the
protestors and expectations of what the protestors are
anticipating to do when they’re in their area. So they’re very
effective in the pre-planning phase and in the early development
phase.

They’re also extremely effective in the
demobilization portion, because effective PLT utilization can
actually result in -- usually through small sets of concessions,
through finding common ground with demonstrators and protestors
in order for them to be able to successfully and peacefully
negotiate an end to a demonstration.

This specific demonstration posed exceptionally
challenging for our PLT members from the perspective that there
was so many different people, so many different organizers, so
many different groups. Those leaders, organizers, and groups
changed on a regular basis, and many of them had very different
agendas. There probably could not have been a more complex and
challenging environment for our PLT members to work in. And I
can tell you they came into work every single day with the
absolute best intention to get this resolved peacefully.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, the reason I asked you for
your perspective and the other perspective is because when you
spoke to us in August, I believe, and as captured in this
paragraph, you explain that there were different perspectives
within the OPS. So you’ve just explained to us the perspective
that you adopt, as well as Chief Ferguson -- Deputy Chief
Ferguson. But as this paragraph explains in the middle, it
says:

“In contrast, Chief Sloly and Superintendent Patterson wanted to obtain quick wins. Unless PLT could convince protestors to leave, they saw no room to negotiate and preferred utilizing enforcement. Interim Chief Bell explained that, because of these different perspectives, there was often no agreement on how much negotiation should occur before OPS launched an enforcement operation.”

Now, does that paragraph -- does this paragraph accurately describe the tension within the OPS?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. In relation to utilization of PLT.

MR. FRANK AU: That’s right. That’s right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, do you recall that on February the 6th, or around the 6th of February, that you had a conversation with Supt. Abrams from the OPP and he said that the OPS needed to give more PLT autonomy to the PLT team and that the OPS command was not doing that? Do you remember having that discussion with him?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do recall on that occasion having discussions with Supt. Abrams about ---

MR. FRANK AU: Can you tell us more?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think you’ve
summarized it very well. The Ontario Provincial Police has an extremely well developed, well used, well balanced Police Liaison Team. We model our program around them. And they, in a much earlier way, in a much more active way, would have liked -- I believe would have liked to see engagement of PLT throughout this. And I think what you’re seeing there is some of Supt. Abrams’ concern over what he perceived to be a lack of utilization of our PLT resources.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Okay. So we’re still within this second phase, this second phase of ad hoc responses. We’ve heard from different witnesses about a meeting on February 9th. This is the -- after the arrival of the Integrated Planning Group in Ottawa. Chief Pardy and his team came to meet with the OPS Command Team, and there were two meetings on the 8th and the 9th. I want to ask you about the meeting on the 9th.

But before the Integrated Planning Group met with your team, you were involved in a morning meeting with the Chief and Deputy Chief Ferguson; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And I want to take you to page 17 of your summary about your recollection of that meeting.

So the first paragraph:

"After the briefing ended, Chief Sloly met with Interim Chief Bell, Acting Deputy Chief Ferguson, and OPS Chief Administrative Officer Blair Dunker at 9:15 a.m. During this meeting,
Chief Sloly told the attendees that the Integrated Planning Team had come to judge OPS, to take control or command of the situation, and that they would base decisions on whether to send RCMP and OPP resources on whether [the] OPS had plans. Chief Sloly expressed the view that OPP and RCMP were not [t]here to help and were taking directions from their political masters."

Does that accord with your recollection of what happened that morning?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, it does.

**MR. FRANK AU:** What do you understand to be the reason that the former Chief expressed those concerns?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I don't know what the reasons would be. I don't know what Chief Sloly's experience would've been with the OPP or the RCMP. It was surprising to me because up to that point, all during through this and continuing on, I've had the ability to work with both the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and they have been exceptional partners and they were exceptional partners to us through this.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, in terms of the timing, so this is February the 9th, and we've heard that a day or two days earlier, in the Ottawa City Council, there was a motion, I can't remember who was the councillor who brought forward the motion, but effectively to ask the RCMP to take over. Are you aware of
a motion?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So through this there was many motions. I think you're specifically speaking about a motion on February 7th that was forwarded by Councillor McKenney in relation to asking the RCMP to engage in -- take over policing of the Parliamentary Precinct. So I am aware of that motion.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, you were there that morning when the former Chief expressed these comments. Did you understand his comments to have anything to connect with the events before, such as the motion in the Council?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So again, as I indicated, I don't know what motivated these comments by Chief Sloly. What I do know is that in relation to that motion we had identified that it actually wasn't grounded in law. The Ottawa Police Service is the police of jurisdiction in the City of Ottawa, so in all of the City of Ottawa, including the Parliamentary Precinct. So we had provided a letter to the City to indicate that, and -- so it wasn't grounded in law that motion. I don't know whether it contributed to these comments, that's a question better suited for Chief Sloly, but I do know that the motion as it was put forward wasn't grounded in law.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, you mentioned that you did not share the same concerns as expressed by the former Chief, and in the next paragraph, you explain why. Now, I don't want to take too much time reading through your summary so I'm going to take you now to the afternoon meeting with the Integrated
Planning Group.

And if we could go to a different document, OPS00014454.

I understand these to be minutes taken by the scribe at that meeting.

If we could go to page 131, please.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So can I just ask for a point of reference on where these notes are from and who was taking them?

MR. FRANK AU: I believe these are scribes taking notes for the former Chief; right?

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: If I can assist my friend. Those are not scribe notes.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Those are notes of Christiane Huneault ---

MR. FRANK AU: Oh ---

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: --- who was general counsel. So they are ---

MR. FRANK AU: --- so these are notes taken by Ms. Huneault ---

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Yes.

MR. FRANK AU: --- the general counsel for OPS?

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Yes. So they are not scribe notes ---

MR. FRANK AU: Thank you.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: --- they are ---

MR. FRANK AU: Thanks for clarifying.
MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: --- counsel's notes.

MR. FRANK AU: Counsel's notes.

So let me try to look for the reference.

Can we go down the page?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Mr. Au, is it possible to reference the date that we're speaking of from the notes?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes. I'm not sure ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe you said it was the 8th?

MR. FRANK AU: Moment's indulgence.

Okay, so I need 131, not 130, please. Keep going down. Okay, can we go up again? That's right.

Okay. So do you see the comment:

"Chief - 'last night was amateur hour. Hard for us to make our logistics there. We need to look professional. Our job is here, our logistics are here. They will be embedded in our plan and we are not embedded in their plan.'"

Do you remember that being said?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can I ask you to move up so I can refresh my memory more fully?

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah. So I think you're right, we need to know a bit of the context.

So can we go up to find the time that may help determine. Okay, sorry. Yeah, down a bit.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, can I just read
that portion?

Can you move back up a little please, thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: So it appears that this is a

meeting that started at around noon.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay.

MR. FRANK AU: Right?

And then if we go down a bit.

You see the comment from Trish Ferguson, "I want

us to limit politics!" We have heard from her that those were

discussions at the meeting itself?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I recall this meeting,

yeah.

MR. FRANK AU: The Chief said:

"Last week we didn't have an incident

command. Everyone was running around

with confusion. Now we know our roles

as of noon."

Can we go down:

Some of us did our jobs last week in

what our teams needed. We need to stay

focused and stick to the plan."

"Trish - 'they are here to help - [not]

sure why we are forcing them to arrive

here.'"

I believe that was a reference to their attending

at the Headquarter location?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. FRANK AU: So getting back to the question I
wanted to ask you. What did you understand the former Chief to mean when he said, "our job is here, our logistics are here, they will be embedded in our plan, and we are not embedded in their plan"? What's our plan and what's their plan?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: What I understood him to mean is that we would maintain command and control of the situation, and that any plans that would be developed would be developed by us or with us at the head of the table.

MR. FRANK AU: And did you understand why that was important to the Former Chief?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I did not.

MR. FRANK AU: Did you share that concern that the team, the Integrated Planning Group, should be embedded in the OPS plan rather than the other way around?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I wouldn’t share that concern.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Now, if I go back to your summary -- so switch back to the summary, please, WTS00000029. We go to page 17. You see the paragraph at the very bottom, the very last line, you describe this meeting as “contentious and heated” ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I ---

MR. FRANK AU: --- the very last line.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe you’re talking about a different meeting. The meeting we were just last talking about was on -- in the morning. This is a different meeting, I believe.

MR. FRANK AU: No, sorry, I thought there was a
meeting within ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So we had three ---

MR. FRANK AU: --- the OPS team.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I’m sorry.

MR. FRANK AU: Sorry, I’ll let you explain.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So there was a pre-

meeting ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- before we went
down and met with the Integrated Planning Team.

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The notes that you had
just taken me to were notes that referenced that meeting that
Deputy Chief Ferguson, myself -- I don’t recall who else was
there -- from the notes, had with Chief Sloly prior ---

MR. FRANK AU: I see.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- to all of us
attending the Integrated Planning meeting -- Integrated Planning
Team meeting.

MR. FRANK AU: So before the meeting with the
Integrated Planning Group, there was a discussion to ensure that
the plan was to meet with them and ensure that they will be
embedded in the OPS plan?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That was the comments.

MR. FRANK AU: And then the OPS Command Team met
with the Integrated Planning Group and now here, in this
paragraph that we read, you’re describing that meeting with the
Integrated Planning Group as “contentious and heated”, right?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, I understand that we also put to Chief Pardy of the OPP, who was present during this 12:10 p.m. meeting, about the discussions that was had during this meeting, including asking -- the OPS asking the Integrated Planning Group whether they were willing to be embedded into the OPS plan and he responded yes, they were willing to do that. But tell us why you observed this meeting to be “contentious and heated”.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, the -- Chief Sloly, as this meeting went on, expressed reservations about the reasons for which the OPP were present. He identified that he had concerns with them that -- on a -- about a couple of things. One of them was about the recording of numbers of OPP members that had been provided to us, and another one was whether they were here to help or to assess and potentially overtake us, was my impression. It was -- it was a contentious meeting that did not, I don’t believe, form a good-start first meeting in what I believe needed to be a strong partnership.

MR. FRANK AU: I see. Now, after this meeting with the integrated planning group, there was a kind of debrief within the OPS command team, right; do you remember that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If you can bring a set of notes up, I believe I would be able ---

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. I’ll try. So this time, we go to OPS00014454. So this is again notes taken by Ms. Huneault, the OPS General Counsel. And I want to take you to -- let me find the right page. Let’s try 139. Do you see
references to “OPS debrief from meeting with OPP/RCMP”?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: At 18:40?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: And there’s a comment attributed to the Chief:

"As far as I consider, keep going. Nothing has changed until I hear something different coming from RCMP/OPP."

There’s a portion redacted but if we keep going, Chief said:

"No, they aren’t part of the command. Just a pie-in-the-sky idea by him, nothing concrete/promises was made."

So I want to ask you about just what was discussed at this debrief because we know that during the meeting there was a request that the Integrated Team be embedded under the OPS structure, and they agreed. But after the meeting was over, at this debrief, the Chief said, as far as he’s concerned, “Keep going. Nothing has changed.”

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Do we have -- can we scroll up, please, because I just want to ---

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah, just scroll up.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I’m -- I don’t believe that I’m at this meeting.

MR. FRANK AU: Sorry?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t believe that
I’m at this meeting.

MR. FRANK AU: You’re not at the debrief?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t -- I don’t believe so. I don’t recall it, and I don’t believe that it’s in my notes, so I don’t believe that I did attend this meeting.

This is on the 9th.

MR. FRANK AU: That’s right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, so I don’t believe that I was at the debrief meeting.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Is there any notations that indicates I was there?

MR. FRANK AU: I’m sorry?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Is there any notations that indicates I was there?

MR. FRANK AU: Well, this is what we have.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I just don’t ---

MR. FRANK AU: It doesn’t specify who was present at this debrief. I suppose it was an assumption my part that because you were there during the meeting that you were part of the debrief.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: My apologies, I don’t believe I was there.

MR. FRANK AU: That’s fine. That’s fine. Now, I understand also that, Interim Chief Bell, you were involved as part of the negotiation -- well, not as a negotiator but you facilitated the negotiation between the City and the protestors.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I was involved in
facilitating contact ---

MR. FRANK AU: That’s right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- so that the

negotiations could occur.

MR. FRANK AU: So I want to take you back to the

beginning of those events and ask you when -- what date were you

first involved in that process?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe that I

first became involved in the process on February the 8th, I

believe. And I’m not 100 percent. I don’t know if you have a

document that references the specific date. I do under -- I do

recall the sequence of events but I’m not sure of the specific
date. I believe it’s the 8th.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Well, tell us your best

recollection as to what happened when.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I was contact by

Supt. Patterson who identified that he was looking for a contact

between the Police Liaison Team and someone in the City to have

discussion with a group of protestors. So I questioned him as

to what -- “What level are you looking for? Is it -- are you

looking for somebody to help arrange getting Porta-potties or

are you looking for somebody at a higher level?” So we got some

clarification around exactly what the request was and it was
determined that it was somebody in a senior-level position,
either from the City or -- politically from the City or from the
City bureaucracy, i.e., the mayor or Steve Kanellakos, and that

they were asking me to make bridge contact with them.

I contacted Mr. Kanellakos and arranged for
members of our PLT to attend and have a discussion with him.
And then, ultimately, I created that bridge and I believe they
directly contacted after that.

MR. FRANK AU: So those were the initial events
on or around -- well, you asked if we could refresh -- help
refresh your memory by taking you to your notes so let’s go to
OPS0000 -- actually, sorry, 00014524. And I’m looking for
February 7th but I’m not entirely sure what the page number is.
So could we call up that document, please? Yes.
It's OPS00014525.

So my understanding is that -- can we scroll down
to February 7, page 25?

I believe it's in the evening. Keep going. All
right. Maybe let's try another way. There's another -- I'll
take you to an email, OPS00008464. Now, if we go down to the
very bottom?

So this chain began as a request from Mark
Patterson to John Ferguson.

First of all, who is John Ferguson?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: John Ferguson is a
Staff Sergeant within our organization, and during this period,
he was assigned to be responsible and head up our police liaison
team.

MR. FRANK AU: So it started as a request from
Superintendent Patterson to Staff Sergeant Ferguson, and then if
we can go up and follow the chain?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, can I take an
opportunity to read that? Thank you. Okay.
MR. FRANK AU: Okay? Go up. So this when you are added to the chain.

So does this help refresh your memory as to the date?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, absolutely, February 7th. My apologies. I said the 8th. It is actually the 7th.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And the events are essentially as you relayed?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can we keep going up? Go down a bit, please? Sorry, can I see the rest of that? Go down. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, go back up.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay.

MR. FRANK AU: And that’s the top?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah. So it does explain. It does.

MR. FRANK AU: So it came from Mark Patterson, as you said, on the 7th, and then you facilitated contact, and that happened on the 8th, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So my contact with the City happened on the 8th. I'm -- I don’t recall what date the meeting actually occurred.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. So that was your first involvement. And then you had more involvement later; was it not the case, a few days later?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So you'll need to be more specific. I had involvement every day in this.
MR. FRANK AU: So I understand that on the 13th of February -- if we could go to your notes now -- it's OPS00014525. Let's go to page 64 of your notes. Yes, page 64.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So can you move up please, just so I can see the date that we're discussing?

MR. FRANK AU: I believe the date is February 13.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sure. Okay. February 13th?

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay.

MR. FRANK AU: So let's go to 12:00 p.m.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: M'hm.

MR. FRANK AU: So it appears that there was a briefing and in which you were told of a deal to move the trucks. Do you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: What can you tell us about that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If you can go down so that I can refresh my memory, I'll -- if you can go down more, please? Go down, please. Okay. Keep going. Keep going, please. Okay.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, I want to ask you -- so in the previous page, page 65, there were some concerns noted around the logistics of moving trucks and that crowd filling -- of crowd filling the neighbourhood roads and so on, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So it wasn't crowd filling, it was concerns that if we displaced a truck from Kent Street, say, and put it in -- down into -- onto Wellington, that
another truck would then occupy behind them on Kent Street.
Those were some of the early concerns that were identified.

MR. FRANK AU: So what was your role at this meeting?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I was there listening.
I was just -- we were just being briefed as part of the executive command. This is on the 13th, so I believe Deputy Chief Ferguson is again -- has responsibility of convoy operations, so I'm just one of the executive team who's listening and receiving this information to identify what actions we need to take.

MR. FRANK AU: Now, by this time, Deputy Chief Ferguson would have been back, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And so how did you become involved in this?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe if we go up, it was an overall command level briefing. So if you can go up and I'll identify the people there. Yes. So a little higher, please? Yeah. So Chief wasn’t -- he called the meeting; that’s why he's not identified. John Steinbachs, Christiane Huneault, Kathy Burns and Vicky Nelson's are scribes, Steve Box, who's the Chief of Staff for Mr. Kanellakos, Mr. Kanellakos.

So it's a command level briefing for us. I would have -- I didn’t identify Deputy Chief Ferguson, but I do believe she was present at this meeting as well.

MR. FRANK AU: So we understand that there will
be evidence that later that day -- is it Inspector or Superintendent Drummond?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Superintendent.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Superintendent Drummond met with the City and protestors to work out some of the details of the deal. To what extent were you aware of those details?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So Superintendent Drummond was assigned to be the liaison back to the police, because we would need to facilitate the movement of those vehicles. So he was assigned by -- well, I believe it was Deputy Chief Ferguson who assigned him to do that, so that was my understanding of his responsibility.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So that was the first time we saw on this date that you were involved in any discussions. Can you tell us what came of this and what was your role, if any, in the subsequent events?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I didn’t -- I was continually briefed. I didn’t have a specific role. At this point, we had ensured that -- the chief had ensured that Deputy Chief Ferguson was the single point of contact for the convoy operations and I was responsible for things that included our enterprise project management change projects so I wouldn’t have had any direct role in it other than being present and helping to support whatever was needed of me.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, let’s go to your summary.

**COMMISSIONER ROUSSEAU:** We’re near the time for the lunch break, so just if you could be sensitive to when’s a good time.
MR. FRANK AU: Well, it may be a good time now and we can come back and finish it.

COMMISSIONER ROUSSEAU: If it’s convenient.

MR. FRANK AU: Yes, it is.

COMMISSIONER ROUSSEAU: Okay. So we’ll take the lunch break for an hour.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission is in recess for one hour. La commission est lever pour une heure.

--- Upon recessing at 1:00 p.m.

-- Upon resuming at 2:12 p.m.

THE REGISTRAR: Order. À l’ordre.

The Commission is reconvened. La commission reprend.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Welcome back. There’s a bit of an internet problem. It’s not here. It’s the service provider, which means that we don’t control it. We’re working on trying to get it joined.

We have two choices. We can continue and all of our functions continue, the webcast and the access to the document, but you will not have access on your laptops.

You may be able to tether to your phones, but that’s an issue. So the question is whether we should or should not proceed on that basis. We can delay.

I’m looking for a consensus or a response.

I obviously don’t mind because it doesn’t affect me, so that’s what I’m canvassing.

If you could -- I’m told you have to introduce yourselves because they’re having trouble in the transcripts.
when there’s an objection.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Oh, and there’s no objection, sir. Brendan Miller for Freedom Corp.

I can advise that other internet connection works. It’s LACguestsACinvites fully works. It’s not just the one that we typically use.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Obviously there’s a lot of organization in the convoy organizers.

So if that resolves everyone -- to everyone’s satisfaction.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Yeah. Paul Champ. I can confirm that one’s working.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: So there you go. Thank you for that.

--- INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL, Resumed

--- EXAMINATION IN-CHIEF BY MR. FRANK AU (cont’d):

MR. FRANK AU: Good afternoon, Interim Chief.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon.

MR. FRANK AU: So just before the lunch break, I took you to the events of February the 12th, I believe -- 13th. And I took you to your notes. Perhaps we could go there again, OPS00014525.

So you may remember that I asked you about this meeting you had at 12 o’clock.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: And it was a meeting in which you and your command teams discuss this deal that the city was entering into with the protestors; right?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

Is it possible to get the notes up? The notes are up. The page reference is not there yet.

MR. FRANK AU: Oh, I apologize. It’s page 64.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

That’s correct.

MR. FRANK AU: And I think you mentioned that you were there in a listening capacity.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No. What I indicated and what I would recall is I was there as a member of the Executive Command Team.

MR. FRANK AU: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The primary responsibility was with Deputy Chief Ferguson, but myself, I would have been there to help support in any way that was necessary.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now, given that it was on the 13th of February and we’ve heard some evidence that that was the date when the Integrated Planning Group was very close to finalizing a plan with the Superintendent Bernier, who was the Incident Commander at that time; right?

Are you aware of that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I’m not aware of that.

MR. FRANK AU: You’re not aware that they were working towards an integrated plan.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely I’m aware of that, but you identified that they had -- were about to
finalize a plan, and I’m -- I was not aware of that.

MR. FRANK AU: I see.

So I guess one of my questions is whether at this meeting at 12 o’clock when people were expressing concerns -- and we’ve seen some concerns noted in the minutes earlier -- whether anyone brought -- raised any concerns about how this deal might affect the plan being worked on by the larger group, the integrated planning group?

Any concerns raised about that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t recall that because I don’t actually recall myself specifically being aware that by this point they were almost completed the integrated plan.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And to the extent that anyone raised any concerns -- and again, if we perhaps scroll down a little.

You remember that you read through this and there were some concerns noted; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. FRANK AU: Did you share those concerns raised by others?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I’m sorry. I don’t understand. Did I share them with who?

MR. FRANK AU: No, no. I mean to the extent there were concerns expressed, did you agree with those concerns?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Oh, did I share -- sorry. I misunderstood your question. My apologies.
Can we move down in the notes a bit, please?

So I believe they are thinking -- I believe they're legitimate concerns that needed to be identified and raised in terms of how we would move ahead.

MR. FRANK AU: Yeah, so if we scroll up a little, for example, "Feds are moving into stage of engagement." What does that mean?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think one of the discussion points that we were having at this meeting is that the federal government was coming to the point -- somebody had made the comment, not myself, but that the federal government was coming to a point that they were looking to engage in what was happening in Ottawa.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And if we go down?

"Concern of logistics on how to move trucks." What was that about?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the logistics specifically would be how do you organize ourselves to move the trucks? Which trucks are going to move? Where are they going? Just the overall logistics of the movement of the vehicles from one place to another.

MR. FRANK AU: Now you may not have been aware of the details of the progress of the Integrated Plan, but you were stepping in on the 11th and the 12th for Deputy Ferguson, and in that capacity, you were involved with the planning part; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely, in terms of how the work that -- I understood that the work was coalescing between the Integrated Planning Team, but I didn't
have any indication of how far along they were with establishing
a unified command and a unified Planning Team, or how far along
they were in actually completing the plan.

MR. FRANK AU: Would it have been important to
understand how this deal fit in with the overall plan? We've
heard from Chief Pardy about the importance of ingredients, you
know, fitting into the overall plan.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: And I would agree with
Chief Superintendent Pardy that it is important that these two
activities mesh together.

MR. FRANK AU: But you don't recall any
discussions at this meeting about those concerns being
expressed?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I don't.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. Now we know that on the
14th, the next day -- oh, by the way, maybe if I could take you
to your summary, so, again, this is -- I think Mr. Clerk will
know the number better than I now. So I want to take you to
your summary at page 23, because this may also help refresh your
memory. Page 23? So if we go down a little.

So even though the meeting we just talked about
was on the 13th, you learn about this plan to move forward with a
kind of deal between the protesters and the City on the 12th.

"On February 12[th], Chief Sloly told
Interim Chief Bell that the City was
involved in discussions with the Convoy
leaders to have movement with the
current situation and that the
information was highly confidential."

Does that help refresh your memory?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely. And I think we did cover off the content of that meeting earlier on the 12th.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. So you were aware of the situation on the 12th, and then on the 13th in the morning -- sorry, at around 12, we saw what we talked about.

Now when did you notify Superintendent Bernier for the first time that these negotiations were going on?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I believe that -- I don't believe that I was the one that notified him. At the meeting on the 12th, as I indicated, we were told through the City and through the Chief that these negotiations were highly confidential and that they shouldn't be shared. So I don't believe it was shared until the 13th with Superintendent Bernier.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. Now I understand the sensitive nature of these discussions, but wouldn't you agree that if anyone needed to know, it would have been the one responsible and had the authority for the overall plan; right? And that would have been Superintendent Bernier at that time.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I would absolutely agree that we could have handled that notification better and it should have been done earlier.

**MR. FRANK AU:** So when you became aware as the Strategic Commander on the 12th that this was going on, it would have been preferrable that Superintendent Bernier be notified at that time?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, I would agree with that.

MR. FRANK AU: Now that didn't happen, and he found out later. Are you aware that Superintendent Bernier expressed concerns about this negotiation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Not directly from Superintendent Bernier, I don't believe, but I believe that Superintendent Drummond did indicate that to me in conversations we would have had.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now if I could take you to the interview summary of Superintendent Bernier, and the number would be OPS000000 and the last 2 digits would be either 30 or 40.

I'm told the new internet is slow.

Could we try 30 and see if -- I have one in 2 chance of guessing right.

Oh, yes, WTS. So if we could go to page 17? So we see under the paragraph "Impact of Negotiations with the City",

"On February [the] 13, Superintendent Bernier learned that Mayor Jim Watson planned to meet with protestors to negotiate an agreement whereby some protestors would remove their vehicles from side streets and relocate to Wellington [Street]. Neither the City nor the OPS executive had informed Superintendent Bernier of the
negotiation. Superintendent Bernier was concerned. He told Inspector Springer that OPS should stay clear of the negotiation because political influence and political negotiation could adversely impact the police operation that OPS was preparing. He was also concerned that not all protest leaders would agree to move their trucks to Wellington [Street]. [So] that not all protestors would comply with that agreement. He shared those concerns with the IECT...

Do you know what that is?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I do.

**MR. FRANK AU:** What is it?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It's the Integrate Command Team. It's the Integrated -- I -- so, apparently, I don't know. I know what it represents. It's a combined table of many different disciplines that come together to do collaborative and comprehensive planning around ---

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** --- Integrated Event Command Table.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Right. So Superintendent Bernier passed on those concerns to that group and to,

"...Superintendent Drummond and [he] told [...] Drummond not to get
involved. However, Chief Sloly ordered Superintendent Drummond to attend the negotiation as OPS's representative. Superintendent Drummond understood Chief Sloly to be directing that OPS attend the meeting and provide logistical support to the City in the negotiation."

Those concerns that were expressed, do they ring a bell?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely, yes, they do.

MR. FRANK AU: Do you share that concern?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The concern of Superintendent Bernier?

MR. FRANK AU: That's right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I don't.

MR. FRANK AU: Why not?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This is because -- as we talked about, everyone has a role to play within the Command Structure. There's strategic-level decisions, there's operational and tactical-level decisions. I think this, in my perspective, is clearly a strategic-level decision that needs to be implemented. There's a superintendent who's been asked to go to a meeting. That is by the Chief. I think it's very appropriate that that person attended. The strategic-level decision here for me is whether we support or not the negotiations, and that was made by Chief Sloly, so I believe
it's Superintendent Bernier's responsibility to identify his concerns, raise those concerns, but then when this level of decision is made, look how we operationally and tactically implement that plan.

MR. FRANK AU: Now perhaps you can help me understand in terms of understanding what is strategic and what is operational and what is tactical. Wouldn't it be equally arguable that negotiation is one component of operations?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. FRANK AU: And so why is it a strategic decision?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So this was a strategic decision to be involved in this negotiation. And I think it's more clear as you play it out. So the strategic-level decision here is to be involved in this negotiation to create the logistical circumstances for the trucks to be able to move. It then moves to operations. As this unfolded, operational commanders identified challenges in it and it's my understanding that based on their decision-making at the operational level, it stopped. That is the appropriate mechanism to follow through a properly integrated command team.

MR. FRANK AU: So what happened after the 13th was, on the 14th, the movement of the trucks began, and we expect that there will be evidence that the movement started at around 1:00 p.m. And then the movement of the trucks ended sometime that day and did not resume. Do you know why the OPS stopped facilitating the movement of the trucks from the residential areas to Wellington St. on the 14th?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I do not.

MR. FRANK AU: Were you ever made aware of concerns expressed by the PPS, the Parliamentary Protective Service, about this relocation of vehicles?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Not at the time but I am aware of them now.

MR. FRANK AU: If we move forward to the next day, the 15th, and if I can take you to Document No. OPS00014455 -- now, these are the notes of Supt. Drummond. If we go to page 59, and let’s go to 11:20 a.m. Now, you see the reference: "Call from Steve Bell. Direction -- continue to provide safe..."

Could you -- do -- I’m not sure I can read that: "...safe passage for truck to Wellington as per the City agreement with Freedom Convoy."

So he’s suggesting here that he received a direction from you to continue to provide safe passage. Do you recall giving that direction to Supt. Drummond?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. FRANK AU: Tell us about the circumstances, why you gave this direction.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe this is in relation to -- this is in relation to conversations Supt. Drummond and I would have had, or had been having, during the day for him to arrange the logistical movement of this agreement that had been reached. He had raised -- he had identified with me that there was concerns from Supt. Bernier specifically
around, as I recall it, the political nature of this negotiation. So this is the point at which I advised Supt. Drummond, “You know, I understand there are concerns. Continue to operationally move ahead with it.”

And I think there’s important context to this agreement that we lose the story if we don’t actually talk about it. So this is on the 14th that these notes are, correct?

MR. FRANK AU: The 15th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This is the 15th?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the 12th and the 13th are the weekend. The 11th, 12th, and 13th are the weekend. I remember that weekend having extreme concerns for the safety of our members, for the safety of our community based on the volatility and escalation in violence in direct confrontational interactions with our members as it relates to them trying to manage the area or conduct any enforcement in it. It was concerning. The situation at this point was becoming exceptionally more volatile and you could see it escalate almost on an hour-by-hour basis.

One of the components that, for me, contributed to wanting to be involved in something like this is negotiations tend to take the temperature of the situation down. That is exactly, in my opinion, what occurred in this circumstance. I will absolutely concede we didn’t notify Supt. Bernier early enough, will absolutely say that when it operationally became, you know, unfeasible to do it, Supt. Bernier made the call and that this stopped. But I -- you have to remember the time and
place were in and this was becoming -- what was a dangerous city before, this was compounding it.

So the fact that we were able to be engaged in a level of negotiation to take the temperature down, I believe, gave us breathing room through the next week for us to be able to successfully mount and execute our operation.

**MR. FRANK AU:** Now, we heard from Chief Pardy who, as you know, was leading the Integrated Planning Group in Ottawa. We heard from Chief Pardy that he -- the group, the Integrated Planning Group, expressed concern on the 14th when they heard about these negotiations because, in fact, it raised concern for them that the -- that the unified command, or integrated command, was not truly integrated or unified because they were concerned that the OPS was still doing its own thing and not being part of the integrated plan. What do you say to those concerns?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So those concerns weren’t shared with me so I don’t know the specifics of the context of what Chief Supt. Pardy would have indicated.

**MR. FRANK AU:** But you told us earlier about the need for autonomy of the operational commander, and that would be Supt. Bernier now, working in concert with the Integrated Planning Group. If there were to be changes in strategic direction, wouldn’t it have been important to convey those directions -- change of directions to the group so they could adjust and adapt their plan rather than having a plan and then being told that something now -- different -- altogether different now is happening?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So as I indicated earlier, yes, I agree with you at. There’s many lessons we’ve learned through them. How we integrate with the incident commander around something like this is one of those lessons. Supt. Bernier and the Integrated Planning Team should have been made aware more early of this decision -- as soon as practical or possible of this decision. That didn’t occur and I believe that was an error.

MR. FRANK AU: No, so, on the 15th, when you gave this direction to Drummond to continue to provide safe passage, the fact that you need to direct something to continue implies that something was stopped. Did you not inquire as to the reason for why it stopped before you directed the continuance?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t recall but what I can say is yes, I would have. We would have had a conversation with it because it’s important that I hear their perspective. So I don’t recall that discussion but it would have occurred.

MR. FRANK AU: And your direction to continue to provide safe passage, was that coming from you or was there any input from anyone else?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So is this on the 15th or on the ---

MR. FRANK AU: The 15th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This is on the 15th?

MR. FRANK AU: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t recall.

MR. FRANK AU: Do you recall any discussions with
any officials at the City?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: On this day?

MR. FRANK AU: On this day or the day before.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t recall. If you have a notation on it, maybe you can help refresh my memory.

MR. FRANK AU: We expect that Supt. Drummond may say that he was under the impression that this could have come from the City.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t recall that.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay, fair enough.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: And I think it’s important to note Supt. Drummond, at that point, would be speaking directly with the City as he was the logistical liaison involved with the City.

MR. FRANK AU: Right. Now, in my remaining time, which is not very much, there are a couple of small things I want to cover off. First of all, we’ve heard from some of the parties raising the issue as to why ticketing, as a tactic or a strategy, wasn’t employed more as a way to deter the protestors from continuing in their illegal activities. Now, ticketing is a bylaw function but we also understand from the evidence that the City Bylaw officers were listening to the OPS as the lead agency for what would or would not be appropriate under the OPS Incident Command. So what can you tell us about this strategy involving ticketing?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So because that was on the planning and operations side, I wouldn’t have been in any direction that would have been provided to Bylaw. That would
have come through the incident command -- sorry, the NCRCC, so
would probably be a question better directed to Insp. Lucas.

MR. FRANK AU: So I understand it’s not part of
your responsibility but, as a member of the executive, did you
have any situational awareness of why certain things were done
or not done? And in this case, I’m interested particularly
about ticketing.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So, more broadly thank
ticketing, I can tell you that there was officer-safety concerns
due to the number of resources we had in many of the different
enforcement strategies that we were looking to engage in. I
would put the ticketing in with that as well. So there was --
we were very clear with out members, due to the volatility of
the situation within the occupation, "Make sure you take into
account your officer safety if you are engaging in any proactive
enforcement efforts."

MR. FRANK AU: All right. Next area -- well,
actually, back to one of the areas that we had covered -- I
believe you mentioned earlier when I asked you about
intelligence that the OPS planning decision was based on
intelligence you're familiar with that would suggest that it
would be a two-day or a three-day event.

Are you able to assist us with any specific
document that would lead you to believe that it was a two-or-
three-day event?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely. So if you
go to the Hendon Reports, I believe beginning on the 22nd or
23rd all the way through to the 29th or -- 29th, I believe,
there is references to, in the intelligence gaps, the 28th, 29th, and 30th as key dates that they're referencing in relation to the demonstration.

**MR. FRANK AU**: Now, my understanding from reading those reports when they talked about intelligence gap -- and by the way, you can correct me if I'm wrong -- but intelligence gaps just means we don't know about it, right?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL**: So I would read intelligence gaps to mean we don’t know and we need to put some effort here to collect this information.

**MR. FRANK AU**: Right. So I remember, for instance, reading the January 25th Hendon Report and it talks about intelligence gaps for those three dates, 29th, 30th, or 31st -- the 28th to the 30th, right -- that I got the impression that what it was talking about was we don’t really know much about what's going to happen on these dates, rather than that these are the only dates we can expect the event will last.

Do you agree?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL**: So can you be -- sorry, can you ask the question again?

**MR. FRANK AU**: Right. So when you're pointing to these dates in the intelligence reports, I'm asking if -- I'm asking for your opinion, since you're the expert in this area -- when they talk about an intelligence gap or let's say these three dates, 28 to the 30th, what do we understand from the intelligence gap? Is it that we don’t really know much about what going on for these dates, or can we conclude from the fact that there's an intelligence gap for these dates that the event
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think in your question that you hit the crux of one of the challenges we faced, impression. So there was a lot of opportunity to have subjective interpretation on it. I think we've done a much better job as an intelligence community to come together and be more clear through conversations in terms of what we feel these different statements mean.

For me, it's important, as we move ahead, that we -- you and I don't need to formulate an impression on what it is, that we actually have a clear common understanding of what -- how and what that intelligence means so that we can actually have a clear common understanding of how we're moving ahead with it.

As I read those reports, my impression was that they were largely scaled to around a three-day event with the potential and possibility that there could be people, a small group of people stay longer than that.

MR. FRANK AU: All right. Now, we also spoke earlier about planning and who might have had the experience to help the OPS at that time. But don't you agree that Superintendent Bernier actually had a great deal of experience that he could offer, but he wasn't really asked to assist at that time, the early -- during the early stages of the convoy events?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So again, that's going to be a -- that would be a question better suited for Deputy Chief Ferguson in terms of how Superintendent Bernier was
utilized. It is my understanding is that he was -- he did play a role in early days and played an increasing role as the convoy went through, because as I recall, when we did -- when he was finally assigned as Event Commander and Incident Commander -- Major Incident Commander, my apologies -- he had to take some time off because he had been working so hard in his other responsibilities. I just don’t recall what they are, so that would indicate to me that he was being utilized.

MR. FRANK AU: All right. I'm not entirely sure how much time I have left, but I have one area left. So if I could take you to the witness summary again, and this time, we go to page 26. Now, I want to ask you about the impact of emergency declarations.

So first of all, we know that the City declared emergency on the 6th. In your view, did that declaration of emergency have any impact on the way the police operated?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So did it have any direct -- the declaration of the emergency -- declaration of the state of emergency for Ottawa had no direct operational impact. But I do believe that it did, is it actually escalated the understanding or demonstrated the escalated understanding to the community that we understood -- the City understood the circumstances that we were in. We couldn't -- as the state of emergency is structured within the City, there are very few powers that would assist us in our police operations, because we didn’t have any large procurement needs.

MR. FRANK AU: What about the declaration of
emergency by the province?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would say absolutely that -- and when I talk about the benefits of it, I talk about it from a unified command perspective, because I know that the EMCPA was mainly utilized around traffic and mainly utilized by our OPP partners as they developed their part of the -- as they developed the highway part of the plan, moving ahead.

MR. FRANK AU: Okay. And then if we scroll up -- or sorry, scroll down. So finally, any impact of the federal declaration of the emergency on the 14th of February?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah. I believe there's probably four key areas that benefitted us.

The first one is around allowing us to streamline the swearing in of members coming in to the City from other provinces. It is -- it's a challenging, sometimes cumbersome process that has multiple stages to it, so the ability to not go through that process with many different checkpoints in it allowed us to more streamline and effectively create operational bodies with members coming in.

Second area would be around tow trucks. So the tow trucks, real or perceived, was always a challenge for us. I do understand that in the planning, the integrated planning team had identified a number of tow trucks to come, but they hadn’t yet begun. I think the Emergency Act took away any of those barriers.

The third area would be around the financial investigations, mainly conducted by the RCMP.

And for me, the main benefit that it provided to
us was it created a very stable, solid, logistic -- a legal framework for us to be able to operate within to ultimately carry out our takedown. It allowed for us to very clearly articulate to our frontline officers what their powers were and what the legislative framework that those were based around so that they could understand what to do and how to execute it.

MR. FRANK AU: I'm sorry, I thought you said there were four areas.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That was four.

MR. FRANK AU: Oh, that was the fourth? Okay.
And the time is up, so thank you very much, Interim Chief. Those are my questions.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Au.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you. If I could call on the counsel for former Chief Sloly, please?

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. TOM CURRY:

MR. TOM CURRY: Thank you.
Chief Bell, I'm Tom Curry for former Chief Sloly.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Curry.

MR. TOM CURRY: Just a couple -- if I can get your help for the Commissioner on a few things today? Just going back, if I could, to the pre-convoy period, so prior to the convoy issues, and just a couple of questions about the Ottawa Police Service, we have had some other evidence about the circumstances of the Service and the strain on resources prior to the convoy's arrival. Did you also
experience that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Most definitely. I think it's -- it was very real for us that through 2021, we hadn't had any new hires come in for attrition or for years of past growth that we hadn’t achieved. So we -- as we came in to 2022, we were in a deficit position in terms of resources.

So even before we had something that was taxing and overwhelming, we were deficit in terms of resources.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** In addition to that, and perhaps it’s subsumed in what you described, but we understood that you had lost some experienced personnel to retirement?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So absolutely. We had -- I’ve heard testimony as the Commission has gone on around the excellence that Ottawa Police have had in planning. And I truly believe that. We managed large demonstrations, large protests, over a number of years with our partners and we were seen as one of the best at it in the country.

There was a lot of expertise built within our organization. Most of that expertise had been lost to retirement, but beyond that, we had a two-year -- we had a two-and-a-half-year window of pandemic where there was no major planning that was occurring. And beyond no major planning, there was no major exercise of planning by our members to be able to practice what we do. So we had a less experienced team and a less experienced organization as this unprecedented massive event came at us.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Was there also, prior to the convoy, an incident in the City of Ottawa, or in and around the
City of Ottawa, that concerned a large industrial area and an explosion or fire called Merivale?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that’s correct.

So there was an industrial area in Merivale, which is in southwest end of our city, where there had been a large explosion. A number of people had died through it. And as a result of that, we’d been involved with our partners in the fire department to be involved in incident management of that event.

MR. TOM CURRY: Now, I raise that because there were -- during the time that you -- that -- the senior command in the service during the time of the convoy was Chief Sloly, as you described, Acting Deputy Ferguson, and yourself.

You had worked successfully on other incidents and under incident management systems, including at Merivale? Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. I would also add to the senior command, CAO Blair Dunker. She’s also part of our ---

MR. TOM CURRY: Thank you. And the -- there were as I understand it, no issues prior to the episode that we’ll come to talk about in terms of the convoy, no issues in the way the police service was functioning at the senior command level in relation to incident command? Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe that’s fair.

MR. TOM CURRY: And as between -- in terms of you and Chief Sloly, you had a good productive working relationship with him and with Acting Deputy Ferguson?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: We’ve had a
professional relationship. Absolutely.

MR. TOM CURRY: You told the Commissioner that there were command meetings amongst that group that you just described every morning, including during the convoy?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. Those meetings came into effect -- they would have been in effect for probably two years at that point.

MR. TOM CURRY: And during the time of the convoy, it’s no exaggeration to say that at the Ottawa Police Service, that it was truly all hands on deck?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is absolutely not an understatement.

MR. TOM CURRY: Leaves and time off were cancelled?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. TOM CURRY: Shifts were extended?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, but I think so the way the question is based is around the command team, and I think it’s very important to extend it well beyond that. We had members of our organization working long hours in very extreme weather and doing an exceptionally professional job. So I would never want to leave the perception that it was an exclusive hardship for any one group like the command team. Our membership was out there every day trying to resolve this.

MR. TOM CURRY: And that’s what I -- I should have been clearer. That’s what I meant. Beyond the command team, leaves, as I understand it, whether they be holidays, or for any other reason, perhaps other than illness, were cancelled.
for your members across the entire service? Everyone was required to stay on duty?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. TOM CURRY: And when we speak about shifts being extended, with the Ottawa Police Association, the service reached an accommodation to provide the resources that it needed to get through this protest?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, we reached an agreement to lengthen the shifts and reduce the number of platoons that we had in order to be able to make more resources available throughout the day.

MR. TOM CURRY: Understood. As you have told the Commissioner, I anticipate that your colleague Chief Sloly will say that this protest represented a paradigm shift in the way protest is understood, in the sense that you’ve described, the use of -- you’ve described the leverage -- leveraging the community for the protestors.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah.

MR. TOM CURRY: Do you agree?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well absolutely. And that’s what I was trying to articulate this morning. Absolutely it was a paradigm shift that we saw in terms of protesting in our city and across the country.

MR. TOM CURRY: And therefore, in your opinion, a national security threat?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t think I’m in a position to identify whether it’s a national security threat or not. I can absolutely say it was a paradigm shift in how
protests were conducted, how members in those illegal occupations engaged with our community. But there’s specific intelligence that would be brought in that would be identified as national security threat or not. And that was monitored and managed throughout the protest.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** In terms of intelligence, you told my friend Mr. Au that there were -- within the intelligence directorate, there were members of your team who did receive the Hendon Reports. You were not on that list at that time, but your colleagues were including them among the other pieces of intelligence that they used?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Oh, absolutely. Right from the first Hendon Report that was integrated and sent to our intelligence Unit and our Planning Team.

So the information that was contained in there was known to our organization and I believe disseminated properly.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** And it was -- it came in through your directorate and the idea was to make certain that -- try to make certain, to the extent that it could be -- to the best extent it could be done, to send into Acting Deputy Ferguson’s planning efforts?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Well it was actually, as we look at the tracking, it was simultaneously sent into both areas.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Could I please just have your help looking at that plan that was dated, I believe, January 29th?
So this is, for the Registrar, OPS000003531.

Other witnesses have seen this and you’ve -- I think you told us, while it’s coming up, that you saw it, but at the time, it was presented?

Thank you. Now could we look, please -- just scroll down, if we could.

I want to get your help. First of all, the plan approvals are there, but just go through to the threat assessment. I think you’ve told us that there were -- to the best of your team’s knowledge, this was expected to be a weekend event with the possibility, as you’ve told us, that some people may hold on afterwards. But the number of those people was not considered to represent a material threat that required that something be done differently with this protest? Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So yes, I believe that’s accurate. We had the intelligence and information to form out that this would happen over a weekend and there was the possibility that a small group of people beyond -- may stay in the city beyond that.

MR. TOM CURRY: And there is a -- there was an egress plan, I think, or an egress section.

I think that’s my bound one there. Maybe my colleague could just pass that along and I’ll get you the exact page.

But meanwhile, Ms. Registrar, we can scroll down. It’s -- you’ll see the heading. Sorry about that. There it is. What I want to show you -- thanks so much. What I want to show you is section 3.2, please.
It’s under the heading “Event Stages”. You’ll see -- do you see that? And just -- I’ll let you just a have a look at it, but I want to -- You'll see it's three stages ingress demonstrations. The purpose of the event for participants to express their lawful opinions and so on?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: M'hm.

MR. TOM CURRY: And then three, Egress:

"It is expected participants will leave the city at different times depending on their personal intents. The egress period could continue for an extended period and this stage will continually be assessed and reassessed to determine the appropriate supports that are required to manage."

Does that refresh your recollection that it was thought that it's a large group of people, they are not all going to go at the same time, they'll go over a period of time, and we will assess that as it unfolds?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So yes, that's accurate that the -- how the plan was developed.

MR. TOM CURRY: And then finally, just if I could ask you to look with us at 3.6.5. Do you see contingency staffing for a prolonged event:

"Due to the unknow[n] nature of this event. Staff[ing] will be revised..."

This may be a typo there, but:

"...mid. Should the operational period
be extended. Staffing plans would
include resources in the following
order;..."

And they are set out there.
So there was, again, some thought given to the
possibility that this event may be prolonged and additional
staffing needs could arise. Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that's fair,
based on this section.

MR. TOM CURRY: Now so far as you knew from your
contact with Superintendent Abrams, and you told us about the
role that he played and that you played, so far as you knew from
him, that you were not -- you should not be doing anything
differently than you were doing. Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, there was no --
well. So I think he raised a couple of concerns as it went
along, concerns about deployment of OPP members, concerns -- a
number of concerns that we went through this morning. But in
terms of -- are you speaking specifically in terms of the plan?

MR. TOM CURRY: Yes, he raised no concern about
the plan.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I didn't receive
any concerns from him.

MR. TOM CURRY: And the -- in terms of the role
that Superintendent Abrams had, he was the Strategic Operations
lead, OPP, and he asked you to be in effect a conduit of
information to Acting Deputy Ferguson.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I don't think he
asked. I think we identified between the Command Team that I would play that role, so that Superintendent Abrams would contact me, and then I would then have either -- try and resolve the issue or have conversations with Deputy Chief Ferguson.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Right. At the time that the convoy participants began to enter the City of Ottawa, you believed, and fair to say that OPS Command believed that they were dealing with people who intended to protest lawfully?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That's correct.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** And that the resources that OPS had available to it would be adequate to meet the needs of the community to protect the community, and of course, to allow the protesters to protest safely. Is that fair?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That's correct.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Now, the -- beyond the OPP and Superintendent Abrams, would I be right that there was no intelligence brought to your attention from any source that alerted you to the scope or the scale or the duration or the degree of disobedience and criminal behaviour that you experienced?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Now of course, the -- had any intelligence come to your attention in the days, even the few days prior to the convoy commencing, I think you told my friend, Mr. Au, you would have faced a significant challenge with the resources that the OPS had available?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That's correct. And like I said this morning, and I would want to reiterate it, what
we didn't see in any of the intelligence, what was never brought
to our attention, was the actual activity that the protesters
were going to become engaged in. All the way across Canada,
through almost every policing jurisdiction in Canada, they were
monitored, travelled with, and always lawful and always acting
in pro social behaviour, so there was no indications to us about
the activity that was going to happen.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. The number of commercial
vehicles, trucks in particular, that came to the city would have
presented a significant challenge in terms of logistics as to
where they could be diverted without cooperation from the
operators. Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what I would -- and
I've contemplated this. I believe that it would have taken the
scale of operation that we would've had with the number of
resources and the detailed planning to remove the protesters
that we did over the weekend of the -- late February to divert
them ---

MR. TOM CURRY: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- from coming into
the area. So it would've been a massive undertaking, it
would've been on scale with what we had to execute at the end of
February.

MR. TOM CURRY: That's what I wondered. And you
could provide the Commissioner with assistance in this respect.
Put another way, had the protesters adopted the perspective and
defiance, I'll use that word, that they demonstrated in refusing
to leave when requested to do so in the -- towards the end of
January, then the 1,800 plus, I suppose it was maybe closer to 1,900, service personnel would have been required to manage them prior to their arrival in the downtown core of Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would fully agree with that.

MR. TOM CURRY: And indeed, would you go further to say that some of the extraordinary powers that were used as - - available to be used as a tool would also have been required in the event that they resisted cooperating with direction or lawful orders?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's difficult to say because that's not a plan we ever contemplated. So we didn't actually get to the planning perspective of that, but it would've been a massive undertaking with massive planning requirements and massive resource requirements to undertake keeping them out of the downtown core.

MR. TOM CURRY: Fair to say that there was no time to have drawn the plans that you're talking about or to have made the resource requests of the OPP, RCMP, and other municipal police forces in the short time that you had available prior to the protest arrival in Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I would say that there is probably -- there is always time to do planning. We would've been under tight restraints. It would've have been very challenging, and I don't believe we would've had the level of detail or specificity. I think the big challenge would've been trying to access resources without having the level of plans that we know we should have to be able to bring resources.
MR. TOM CURRY: Right. And one of the things the Commissioner has heard is that there is a -- perhaps a fair question about whether resource requests should proceed ahead of plans or plans should be in place before resource requests. In this case, do you agree that once the protesters arrived and you saw what you were dealing with, as you've described it, that the most urgent thing that this city required was resources?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think there's a balance to that question. I think you absolutely need the plans to be able to drive the specific resourcing requests that you're going to have, the type of specific skills that you're going to require. But the other side of it is you also have a responsibility as a leader in an organisation to make other organisations aware that this request may or is coming, regardless of the specific skills you need. So I think it is actually a parallel track that you can travel down.

MR. TOM CURRY: And so in the case of Chief Sloly, you support the idea that he was making requests of his policing -- your and his policing partners for the, in this case 1,800 personnel, that were reasonably expected to be required to deal with the protesters?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think it was reasonable for Chief Sloly to place all of the other chiefs, and ultimately at the end of the day chiefs across Canada, on notice that we were going to need a large number of resources.

MR. TOM CURRY: And in terms of that, I appreciate you were present with others at a meeting where Chief Sloly requested the team to assemble the information that would
allow that number to be known. Turned out to be 1,800.

Do you accept that your team and the Ottawa Police Service made a good-faith effort to define the resources that were needed actually?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So absolutely. I think we made the best effort we could. What we lacked at that point was the detailed level of planning to actually indicate the type of resources we needed.

So we were putting best efforts forward while we were building -- or starting to build plans that ultimately were taken over by the Integrated -- or developed by the Integrated Planning Team.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. And the numbers and specific roles actually map on reasonably closely, don’t they?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I can’t comment on that because I wasn’t involved in that.

MR. TOM CURRY: Fair enough.

Can I get your help on this? So far as you know from the meeting -- and I’ve seen your notes. There isn’t a note of this, just to orient you to that.

You didn’t make any notes that Chief Sloly said give me a -- fix a number a then double it. That’s not the method that he chose to follow, is it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t have a recollection of that.

MR. TOM CURRY: Thank you.

Now, so far as -- a couple of other things, if I can just again for the -- make sure I get this right.
I understand the Ottawa Police Service or perhaps the City has an arrangement with the Government of Canada to provide policing services in and around the Parliamentary precinct that are beyond the Parliamentary Police Services and that there is an MOU or another arrangement that -- by which the Government of Canada pays the Ottawa Police Service the sum of $3 million for that -- for those policing services?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the Ottawa Police Service is the police of jurisdiction in the City of Ottawa, so short of security details that are done within the Parliamentary precinct, which the Parliamentary Protective Services is responsible for, so security primary response, the police is still the police of jurisdiction within that area and all of the City of Ottawa.

So if there’s a major incident, we will assist in response. If there’s a criminal investigation, the Ottawa Police Service will be the ones that conduct that investigation.

So as part of the responsibilities that we as the police of jurisdiction in the City of Ottawa undertake, which isn’t just response in Parliamentary Protective Services, which is demonstrations that would impact us directly because we’re Canada’s -- the nation’s capital.

The need for us to be engaged with Embassies and have a different level of response or different level of training as it relates to diplomats in and around our area is something that we’ve come to an agreement with the federal government to compensate us $3 million a year for extraneous costs such as Canada Day or other events.
MR. TOM CURRY: Right. Understood.

Is that under review after the -- after this event?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it is.

MR. TOM CURRY: A couple of things about Incident Management Systems, IMS or ICS, Incident Command Systems, you mentioned that that was a process that is well understood and had been used in the City of Ottawa by the Ottawa Police Service.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the -- within the City of Ottawa, they would use the provincial standard of the Incident Management System. Policing traditionally uses the Incident Command System.

There is also another gold, silver, bronze for major events that has been adopted by the RCMP and been utilized in some circumstances by the OPP.

So there is a hodgepodge. There is a bunch of different doctrines. They basically fall down to -- they basically boil down to a very similar set of circumstances. We have strategic level control, operational level control and tactical level control.

MR. TOM CURRY: And you described to the Commissioner that the border zone between strategic decisions, operational decisions and tactical decisions is not -- these are not bright lines.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No. It’s something that I believe is really important within every area to have those discussions with the Commander up and down to make sure
that everyone’s clear on where the decision-making’s made.

   It’s something that I believe is worth undertaking to make sure that we can create better lines between those and better understanding of the different areas.

MR. TOM CURRY: In this case, prior to this convoy protest, I understand that you, Chief Sloly, Acting Deputy Ferguson had functioned, I think you told us earlier, in the Incident Command System effectively; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. TOM CURRY: There was no -- you didn’t have an experience in which someone was introducing or thought to be intruding on operations or tactics from the level of strategy prior to this.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what I -- what I would say is Chief Sloly was regularly involved in reviews and revisions on operational plans. I can’t recall him ever giving directions around it, but he was very engaged in those lower -- what could be seen as lower level responsibilities.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. And those -- his involvement in those matters was not -- was not considered to be problematic. Is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think that’s fair.

MR. TOM CURRY: And the -- for example, I understand one of those might have been the Black Lives Matter protests that occurred in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd in custody.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That was a major demonstration that we managed and I have no recollection of any
challenges within our command structure.

MR. TOM CURRY: And the -- to the extent that when we came to this unprecedented protest here brought about as in the -- in the convoy that Chief Sloly and probably others were facing unprecedented circumstances that strained the ICS system as well.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. So unprecedented circumstances, immense levels of stress, very clear expectations on outcomes. And all of those together did strain the ICS system and, actually, for me, identified that there needs to be much better clarity, at least within the Ottawa Police Service, around how that system manages.

That’s exactly why when I took over as Interim Chief I spent time making sure that everyone understood their role within the ICS system.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. And in -- is it fair to say that from your long career in policing that this is unlikely to have -- the circumstances here facing the Ottawa Police Service and the City of Ottawa would not have been handled any differently in -- by any other municipal police service?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think that’s difficult for me to say because I don’t know how other police services would have handled it.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. Okay.

PLT. At the time of the convoy protest, am I right that there were 14 members in the Ottawa Police Service PLT? And I appreciate they’re part-time members that included two Sergeants?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don’t -- I don’t know about those numbers specifically.

MR. TOM CURRY: National Framework on Demonstrations was a -- is a framework that, prior to the convoy protests, am I right, you were not familiar with yourself?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So that’s the CACP National Framework?

MR. TOM CURRY: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that’s -- I had reviewed it, but to be -- to call myself familiar with it or knowledge -- extremely knowledgeable in all the content of it would be no correct.

MR. TOM CURRY: And the PLT -- the work of the PLT in this case included a couple of aspects that you -- I believe you did become involved and you’ve told us about a couple of them. Can I just get your help with them?

The issue of the fuel stored at Coventry, you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.

MR. TOM CURRY: Am I right that what the PLT team had negotiated was the removal of fuel that was stored at Coventry and the -- they wished to allow it to go downtown to the protestors who were using that fuel to operate their vehicles?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I’m generally familiar with what occurred there. Actually, I’m quite familiar with what occurred there. But in terms of the specifics about what the agreements were, it would be unfair for me to comment
because I don’t have any direct knowledge in that area.

MR. TOM CURRY: That’s fine.

Can I get this from you, that you spoke with S/Sgt. Ferguson, who was then running PLT or on the ground in respect of PLT, concerning an issue that had arisen about enforcement, that Supt. Patterson took enforcement steps to intercept those -- the conveyance of the fuel; do you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Is there a notation that can reference that that I can familiarize myself.

MR. TOM CURRY: Yeah, sure. So this -- this easiest place for us to find this, I think, in the time that I have is to look at S/Sgt. Ferguson’s summary in his interview, if I could show you that. It’s your notes also but let me just see if I can find the reference to S/Sgt. Ferguson’s statement if I have -- and which I don’t have. I don’t know what I did with it. Hang on one second. I do have. Mr. Registrar, forgive me for the delay -- WTS0000027, and could we go to page 7, please? “Coventry Road”, do you see that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do, sir.

MR. TOM CURRY: Scroll down.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sir, if I can just -- if I can just read the first paragraphs?

MR. TOM CURRY: Yeah, yeah, by all means. The stuff that I’m interested is a little later so I could probably spare you this part, but ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay.

MR. TOM CURRY: --- there’s a reference to your
conversations. If we could just scroll down, please. There it is. Just try 4:40. Do you see February 6th ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. TOM CURRY: ---

"Superintendent Patterson advised Staff Sergeant Ferguson...would be seizing fuel..."

And there was a conversation between Supt. Patterson and S/Sgt. Ferguson?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I see that.

MR. TOM CURRY: Staff -- next paragraph:

"...attempted unsuccessfully to convince others in OPS not to proceed with the public order Operation..."

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: M’hm.

MR. TOM CURRY: And Insp. Marin told him that the fuel was not to leave. And there, at 5:10, that’s what I’m interested in:

"Staff Sergeant Ferguson contacted Deputy Chief Bell and advised him that the enforcement operation would undermine PLT’s negotiations, which had been proceeding for at least two hours. Staff Sergeant Ferguson informed Deputy Chief Bell that protestors were compliant."

At 5:18:
"Deputy Chief Bell contacted Staff Sergeant Ferguson and informed him that he agreed with Superintendent Patterson’s decision. Later that evening, Staff Sergeant Ferguson learned that Deputy Chief Bell supported Superintendent Patterson’s decision because three convoy vehicles had left the Coventry Road site and were transporting fuel to supply protestors downtown."

Does that assist your recollection? These -- the footnotes, I think, might go to your notes or his notes but there are some notes of yours I could take you to. But does that assist your recollection that ---

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I do recall. Yes, I do recall this conversation.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** And this is an example, isn’t it, of PLT negotiating something that did not fit with your strategic direction that fuel was not to go from Coventry Road fuel depots downtown where it would presumably present and even greater public safety risk; is that fair?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I do believe that’s fair. So -- but I also do believe -- so I do believe this is the right in this circumstance but I also think that, as we went through, and as we managed through this incident, we needed to ensure that we gave PLT better direction, better guidance, better structure so that they could be more effective in their
work. We can’t create public safety hazards with it, and I would assume, in this case, that PLT would not have known where it was going, would not have known that it was going to be -- create a safety hazard like this, but we have to find a way that we balance the use of PLT with enforcement efforts and this is an example of where we probably weren’t that effective.

MR. TOM CURRY: Although wouldn’t it be an example of PLT not -- if they didn’t know where it was going, that’s its own problem.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. TOM CURRY: And I think -- and there’s some other information I think the Commissioner might hear that they did know where it was going. So if they -- if they -- when we speak about or when the Commissioner hear about “PLT autonomy”, do you agree that the PLT could never operate completely autonomously because, for example, they might come to a conclusion that lies in the opposite direction of strategic direction from those who have more information like, for example, you, in this case; is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think what this highlights to me is that one of the areas that we failed was -- or one of the areas we were not as effective as we could be -- I think “failed” too strong of a word -- is in our alignment with -- of PLT within our overall operating context. This -- this type of -- “confrontation” is probably too strong a word but this type of disagreement around what is occurring wouldn’t
happen, likely, I don’t believe, if we had better common understanding of what we were achieving and we were moving ahead. So, for me, this is one of the things, in terms of lesson learned, that we have to take very, very seriously, and I can tell you we have taken seriously. PLT needs to be aligned and integrated and help to drive the operations because they are a hugely important component.

MR. TOM CURRY: No disagreement. I think Chief Sloly will say the same thing. It just -- when we come -- when it comes to specific examples, just like with the strategic, operational, and tactical, there are not bright lines; there has to be good communication between PLT and operations; is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: There has to be good communication so that a circumstance like this doesn’t actually ever exist.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. There were other examples I’ve seen in the record. I’ll give you one. Do you recall a circumstance in which PLT negotiators wanted to bring Porta-potties, portable toilets, into the red zone or into the protestors with no quid pro quo, just a sign of -- I suppose a sign of good faith, and that was a decision that was not shared by -- or a goal or objective that was not shared by strategic command? Does that ring a bell with you, that that negotiation took place?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I do remember that and I do remember advocating for that. And I do understand that it was going to be about bringing Porta-potties in where there
wasn’t anything immediately in return but, for me, it was about part of those small gains that you could actually make so that you could build relationships and, in those relationships, you could look how to lower the temperature and also look for a resolution. So absolutely, I do recall that.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right. And running the other way was incredible community anger. You were dealing with angry residents.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I wouldn’t describe them as “angry residents”. I think we were dealing with residents who were hurt, who were harmed, who were victimized, and who wanted this to end. They were angry but that wasn’t the emotion that I would explain first off when we describe our community during this period.

MR. TOM CURRY: Fair enough. I’ll take the description that you gave; they were suffering.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: They were suffering.

MR. TOM CURRY: And you and Chief Sloly, Deputy Chief Ferguson, and everyone in the service was trying to do their best, in good faith, to help resolve this problem?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. TOM CURRY: Now, the -- one small thing, did you ever go to a BIA meeting with Chief Sloly as part of the community outreach during the protest?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t believe so.

MR. TOM CURRY: Okay. Your -- you told us that, in a public statement at least -- just dealing with the public statements -- Chief Sloly did not promise or declare to the
public that he was going to close bridges, only that that was
something that would be considered; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So if we’re
referencing -- and I believe it’s the February 4th statement ---

MR. TOM CURRY: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- that was -- caused
cconcern to Supt. Abrams. No, it’s not my recollection or upon
my review that those were the statements. The statement was
that it was something that we could use if needed.

MR. TOM CURRY: Right.

In the same way, can I ask you about the
statement that Chief Sloly made that there may not be a policing
solution alone to this protest. That statement, I expect the
Commission will hear, was made at a briefing of Council and
Police Services Board at which you were also in attendance. It
lasted many hours. Do you recall that meeting?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Not specifically. If
we could have some reference pulled up to it?

MR. TOM CURRY: It is a multiple hours long ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Do you have a date,
sir?

MR. TOM CURRY: --- briefing. February 2.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The 2nd.

MR. TOM CURRY: And indeed, you and Deputy
Ferguson were allowed to leave to get back to work after I think
about the three-and-a-half-hour mark. Chief Sloly was asked to
remain to answer questions. But does it refresh your
recollection to know that at that meeting you and Deputy
Ferguson spoke about the steps -- and Chief Sloly, spoke about the steps that were being taken to initiate enforcement activity, to protect the community and stabilize the circumstances that residents were experiencing?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I'm going to apologize, but, no, we had many -- between Board meetings and Council meetings, we had many, many meetings during the period, so to be able to recall specifically what occurred during one of the meeting, I would need some sort of reference point.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Okay. I won't -- I'll take -- I'll leave it there. Suffice it to say that it's a fair conclusion that the policing solution that was required to be implemented to deal with the convoy protest involved more resources than the Ottawa Police Service had.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** And additional statutory or government action in the form of the emergency measures that you told my friend about.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Now then a couple of things, if I can quickly, and last -- maybe the last thing based on my time being up, the Superintendent Abrams told us that he brought to your attention a number of issues from time to time. Is it fair to say that you exercised your judgment as to whether you would take those issues to Chief Sloly or not? They didn't all go to Chief Sloly, for example?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Oh, absolutely.

**MR. TOM CURRY:** Okay. I have no other questions
for you. Thank you, Chief, sir.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you. Next call on the City of Ottawa.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Good afternoon. Alyssa Tomkins, Counsel for the City of Ottawa.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon, Ms. Tomkins.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Interim Chief Bell, I want to start by having a quick chat about intelligence and planning. And I've heard you mention a number of times today the behaviour that was not anticipated was the behaviour of the protestors in relation to the community, the actions vis-à-vis the community. Just to clarify for the record, what are the behaviours that were unanticipated?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the general dynamics of what our community and ourselves were experiencing in that location. It included honking of horns excessively, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; the idling of the vehicles; the much of the engagements that we saw between our community members and members of the protest, whether it be intimidating, hate or biased crime, behaviour, assaultive behaviours; the feeling that people were trapped within their residence, within the place that they live and couldn't move around unfettered. It was almost constant conflict between the members of this community and people that were occupying our streets.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Thank you so much. And on the issue of the potential closure of Wellington Street, am I
correct that the reason Command requested a legal opinion on the
ability to close the streets is that they had never closed
Wellington Street or downtown before to protesters?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So you'll have to help
me because we sought many legal opinions through this and we
have sought many legal opinions since specifically around
Wellington Street. Are you speaking of the January 28th?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Correct. Correct. In terms
of why was the legal opinion obtained in this instance, and I'm
just asking whether it's because it was not the general practice
of the police to close streets to protests in Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So it -- and I think
it's an important point of clarification. The police alone
don't close the streets as it relates to protests. That's a
cooperative -- it's actually under the City Manager's delegated
authority to be able to close those streets. We give
recommendations and help assist them. So it's unfair to
characterize it that it's the police that closed the streets.
But it was a practice that we hadn't largely engaged in prior to
that, so we wanted to make sure that we were getting the best
legal advice around what potential steps could be as we have
this group come in and then as we moved forward.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And I agree with your
characterization. What I was getting at was indeed the
practice. So it was not a practice that was generally engaged
in. Had it been engaged in the past?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Not to my
recollection.
MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Thank you.

Now my understanding is that you were present when the City Solicitor David White provided a briefing on the possibility of obtaining an injunction?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Are you able to provide me a date and a reference document?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: It would be January 30th. We can bring up -- I was going to lead into another point, but we can bring it up. OPS00004878.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

Scroll down ---

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: At the very least, you received this email of the Command briefing; am I correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that's correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. And just -- I just wanted to highlight some of the concerns that Mr. White had put forward. If we can go to page 2? And I just note that the third bullet down he noted that "injunction normally associated with labor disputes." Then two down from that, "how [the] injunction will be enforced will be important to outline." Then if we can scroll right down, right at the end ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, can I -- was there more points on there? Can ---

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Well, no, I was just ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- am I able to read it?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: --- going to ask you to confirm that these were, in fact, concerns that Mr. White
brought to your attention, to OPS's attention?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Okay. Could -- you can scroll down.

Okay.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And the last few points I wanted to highlight were that an injunction is a more assertive step and that it might aggravate the situation. That's a concern that you are familiar with?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's a concern that was raised by Mr. White, absolutely.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And that the injunction might give a platform or an outlet to protesters.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Another concern he raised, for sure.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And if we can now go to document OPS I think it's 4 0s, maybe 000004927. Maybe four, sorry.

These are scribe notes, if I'm not mistaken. Is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If you can go to the bottom, please, I'll be able to tell you. If you go -- if you scroll right to the bottom, I think there should be a notation there.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Oh.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, you can go back to the top.

So I'm not sure whose notes they are.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. Do you remember a
briefing to the RCMP and the OPP? It would be a Teams meeting on January 31st.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Can you scroll down, please?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: If we go to page 3, it's indicated SB.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah. Yes.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Do you think that's you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is me, yes.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you. That's what I was looking for.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: I just wanted to -- if we can scroll up now to page 2?

Here, if we can stop here. Again, talking about an injunction, so I believe BL, is that Commissioner Luckie?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I believe so.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And it states:

"Concern. If injunction, now it's an official movement to another stage. This will involve the whole country. Anything official will spark a national response." (As read)

Do you recall that concern being expressed by Commissioner Luckie?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do recall that.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And if we can scroll down a bit further, we have TC. Is that Commissioner Carrique?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe that's Commissioner Carrique.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And concern with injunction, you would have a legal obligation to enact it, continue to build, for -- I believe it's supposed to be injunction -- mass arrests and then removal of.

And I believe there's a comment above. I apologize. I missed it. The fifth bullet:

"BL is spot on. Must remain cautious. This is local. Careful not to become national or international." (As read)

Then if we can go down to page 3, BL again, third bullet, "De-escalation, negotiation, up to legal for injunction but better not to have it."

Do you recall Commissioner Luckie saying that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don't recall her specifically saying that, but if it's in the notation, I would imagine she did.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. And then we'll just go to another document, OPS00005194. And this is another command briefing?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: You received this command briefing?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. That's on -- sorry, this is the -- can you tell me what date this is?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: This -- so it's sent February 1st, but I believe that it's referring to events on
January 31st.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And if we can just go to page 2, one bullet after -- or sorry, after the redaction, if we can -- here we have what I believe to be a summary of the call which confirms that both Brenda Luckie and Tom Carrique did not seem to be in favour of going the injunction route, and that's what the OPS took from that briefing, correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Now, I just want to talk you to about the negotiations between the City and the protestors. And if we could just bring up OPS00008418? And I'm not sure whose notes these are. Are you aware?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Potentially. Scroll to the bottom? If you go right to the bottom, I could probably have -- there should be a name on them.

No, I'm unfamiliar whose notes these are.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. Well, we'll go to them and see if it refreshes your memory.

So on page 4, again, there's a redaction, and then it says -- and this, I believe, follows the correspondence that Commission counsel took you to where there was an exchange from John Ferguson to Mark Patterson, and then you followed up.

And it states here:

"Redaction. One of the biggest advocates, organizers, demonstrators negotiating with PLT members last night. Going to be meeting with Steve
K, with City -- wanted to meet with him
-- win situation -- told will be some
trucks that will be moved."

So the idea that trucks would be moving came from
the police, not the City; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:  So just for my
clarification, these are notes of the 9th?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:  I believe it was the 8th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:  The 8th, yes, I'm
sorry.  I messed that up as far as well.

Yes, that’s accurate.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:  Okay. And if we could go
back, I see, "Superintendent -- it says Bell -- will have update
in two seconds."

I believe that’s you.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:  Yes, that’s correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:  And then we get an update
from Superintendent Patterson, "Steve K. assigned to work with
PLT members to negotiate with Trans Mountain."

So I assume that’s Mr. Kanellakos?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:  I don’t believe we
assigned him to work with -- I believe that he indicated he ---

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:  Agreed. I was more making a
little joke.

Okay. So then we're going to follow through. So
in terms of -- we'll go down to your notes and those are at
OPS00014525.

And just in the interests of time, your evidence
is that on the 12th, you got an update from the former Chief Sloly about the City's negotiations, and it was told to you to be highly confidential?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's accurate.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would assume that's accurate. I'd need to see my notes in order to verify that it was on the 12th. I don't recall the date.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: If we can go to page 52, just quickly? So here we have -- this is a meeting with the chief. If you want to scroll up and see that it's the 12th, we can.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, that would be appreciated.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Yeah, no problem.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Yeah. So this is the quick update that you got from the chief.

Then if we can skip ahead to page 64, and this is the meeting at noon. And I just wanted to scroll down a little bit.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This isn't the same day, I don't believe.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: No, you're quite right. It's the next day.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This is the 13th.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: It is the 13th.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry.
MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: I apologize. This is the meeting at noon on the 13th.

So this is -- if we can just scroll down. One thing I wanted -- keep scrolling -- the comment here, "Premier is very supportive of the action."

Do you have any recollection of who said that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t have recollection of that.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. And then if we can scroll down a bit more, "Two core scenarios. What is the outcome of the new footprint? Are we able to take out the remainders?"

Do you recall this being discussed?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. And then if we can just go down? This is a briefing from the chief, and is it just you and the chief at that point?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t ---

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: It's coming from the chief, though? And the chief ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It's coming from the chief. I don’t -- there would have been other people involved in this, but I don’t -- didn’t note who they were.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And it's clear from the direction from the chief that you've noted is to maintain our concept of operation, that’s correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. Now, if we can just
scroll down a little bit more? We have another meeting at 2:30. This, you're starting to get into more of the logistics.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s -- into some of the activities that need to occur in order to be able to make this happen.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And under number 4, there's an arrow that says, "Elgin to Lyon is what is being looked at"?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: And then it says, "At something footprint. Can you assist?"

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Looking -- looked at or attempted an at symbol.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. And then there's Rideau and Sussex has been developed, but the next bullet says, "Looking at how we can manage a reduction of the footprint"; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Now, there's one other meeting that I didn’t see in your notes, but I'm going to take you to, because I think you were there. It refers to Bell. So it's OPS00011039. And maybe these one are scribe notes. Can we check the last page?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, that’s -- I've -- we've been unsuccessful on another one. I believe they are scribe notes.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Okay. So ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: This is the 13th now?

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Yes, February 13th, and if
we can go to page 6? And if we scroll up, we'll see the notes are from the -- there's a -- oh, there's Vicky Nelson, the scribe.

If we can scroll up, we'll just see that there's notes from the call with the City at noon.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS: Then it appears there was a call with Commissioner Carrique. And then there appears to be another discussion, the one I'm interested in at -- on page 6 and it says “negotiating update meeting”. And this is where, if we go about seven bullets down, we see:

“Bell all indication[s] that the city got through the negotiating the groups is trying to separate from the other group - we do not expect backlash”

Can you explain what that meant, if you can?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, so one of the concerns as this unfolded was, as I indicated earlier today, there were many pockets and different groups within the overall occupation. One of the concerns was that if a number of people move, there could potentially be backlashes from others that didn’t want that to occur.

And again, I’ll go back to this is a time, from a context perspective, that there’s much higher -- there’s an escalation in tensions within the group. There’s more violence that we’re seeing on the street, particularly relating to our members. So it is a much more volatile time. So we were looking to make sure that something like this, or trying to
anticipate whether something like this could spark something internally.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** And then Deputy Chief Ferguson says:

“This does not change the operations. We can make this work to our advantage.”

Do you recall that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I do.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:**

“Those remaining behind will be there [by] their [...] choice

JOHN - this is happening at 3pm.

John Steinbeck; I assume?

Now, after the reaction, we have Bernier. Is that Supt. Bernier?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That would be Supt. Bernier.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** So when my friend put to you that there was no discussion with Supt. Bernier about how this worked and with his plan, we actually see here there’s a meeting with him and Supt. Bernier says:

“the plan aligns with what we planned and accelerates it. No concerns”

Do you see that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I do see that, but I think there’s clarification that needs to happen around this. We had our first briefing on this potential deal on the 12th later in the day. This is on the 13th at the point at which we
would have informed Supt. Bernier. So this is later. There is
a lag and a gap between the time that we knew and the time that
we brought the incident commander up to speed.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** But there is a discussion
here about the plan, and at the time, he expresses no concerns
about how it’s going to work with his plan; correct?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, that’s --
absolutely.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** And in the end, the
agreement -- well, unfortunately or fortunately, the fact is,
the agreement did not have an impact -- not have the impact on
reducing the footprint that it was intended to?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It did not reduce the
footprint as was intended, but did lower the temperature.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** And the move had very little
impact on operational planning?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That’s going to be a
question better asked to Supt. Bernier.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** Okay. But I’ll just put it
to you in your witness summary, that was your evidence.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I don’t believe it had
it, but ---

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** Okay.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** --- the actual impact
on operational planning would better be quantified by Supt.
Bernier.

**MS. ALYSSA TOMKINS:** Thank you. I just wanted to
contextualize that statement. So thank you so much for your
time today, Interim Chief Bell.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. Thank you. If I could call on the Ontario Provincial Police at this stage?

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Good afternoon, Supt. Christopher Diana for the OPP.

I’d like to start by asking about the Hendon Reports. I believe your evidence was that you did not start receiving them until, I believe, January 27th? Is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Of course, you would acknowledge, as we’ve heard from other witnesses, that OPS as an organization was in fact in receipt of these reports basically from the inception of Hendon?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Oh, absolutely. We were a partner and a very engaged partner in Project Hendon and did receive all the reports widely within our organization.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Right. And so I think from Supt. Morris’ evidence, I think he name checked around six individuals who were receiving them. There were a couple of others that were referenced in Supt. Drummond’s witness summary. So there were at least eight members in OPS that would have received these reports; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t know the specific numbers, but beyond the numbers, what I can say is that they did go -- from my review, they did go to the Chief of Police, they did go to Intelligence, and they did go to our event planning. So they were widely distributed and

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.
disseminated in the organization.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. And if I
heard your evidence correctly, I believe that when you started
to receive them, you didn’t go back and read the earlier ones.
So is that your evidence?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. I was
-- from the 27th moving forward, I did daily review them. I’ve
had the opportunity since then to go back and review the
entirety from the 13th on.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: But considering the
nature of the report, do you think maybe in retrospect you
should have went back to review the earlier reports?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes. I think that
could have been beneficial. But I think it’s also very
important to realize that is an analytical document that one of
my responsibilities would be to make sure that it was properly
brought into the organization, properly reflected and analysed,
and then put into the operational planning people. So it would
-- it’s always a benefit the more as you get on something like
that, but it wasn’t absolutely necessary for that to happen to
ensure that the information was brought in and shared within the
organization.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Right. Although that was
your bureau at the time; correct? You were in charge of
intelligence?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That was one of the
areas within my command. Correct.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: One of the things that
you said in your evidence in chief, and you may have repeated it
since then, was that there was no intelligence to indicate there
would be any significant community impact. Was that your
evidence?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe my evidence
was that it wasn’t reflected within the Hendon Reports the
activity that the protestors would engage in that caused the
community harm or community violence that existed when they got
here. There was no reference to that within the Hendon Reports.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Okay. I wrote down
“significant community impact”. So maybe I misheard, but that
was my understanding of what you said.

You would agree that the Hendon Reports did make
reference to certain things, such as, as early as January 20th,
there was reference to an elective strategy in the Hendon
Reports; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I’m sorry. I missed --
-- there was ---

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Sorry, as early as the
January 20th Hendon Report, there was reference in that report,
and subsequent, that there was no exit strategy for the
protestors; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: And the reports also
reference that the protestors would not leave until their
demands were met; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, but I think it’s
important to put that in the context of it’s -- it does
reference those statements within the Hendon Reports, but there are many, many statements within the Hendon Reports. Was that there? Absolutely it was there.

M. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Sure. And the demands articulated include the demand that all mandates would end, but that was what the protestors were, at least according to the Hendon Reports, that’s why they were coming to Ottawa; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Is it possible to pull that Hendon Report up so we can review it specifically so I can see the reference to make sure I’m getting it correctly?

M. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Well what I’ve done, to try to save some time, is to refer to the Hendon summary. Supt. Morris prepared a Hendon summary which may be useful. So if we could go to OPP349?

All right. So this is -- rather than try to bring up a bunch of different reports, this was a summary put together by Supt. Morris that reviews some of the relevant excerpts from the Hendon reports.

So if we could go to page 3? All right. So there’s some points here that ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Sorry, just a moment.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: I did have ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: If you could just identify yourself again?


I, you know, had some concern when this document went in that it’s a summary of sentences that are taken out of
context. I believe what the witness asked for when he was asked the question is, “It would be helpful if I could see the full report.” So rather than give him an extract, which has selected pieces of information, why not give him the document that he asked to review so that he can fairly answer the question?

**COMMISSIONER ROULEAU:** Well, maybe I misunderstood, but I thought the question with a request was and the witness will answer that he wanted the actual words of the report. I don’t -- I didn’t take him to say he wanted to see each of the reports, but that’s up to the witness.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I would prefer to see the reports, Your Honour.

**MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:** The point that I’m trying to make, because I don’t have the control number for every single of these reports to take you to, nor was that my intention. My intention was to put to you that there were a number of items in these Hendon Reports that are already on the record. I don’t need to go through each one, in my opinion. And if you’d review them, then you would probably remember the fact, as you’ve testified, that they do indeed say there’s no exit of strategy; correct? You’ve already confirmed that.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That is correct. Yes.

**MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:** And they do also say that the protestors do not intend to leave until their demands are met; correct?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That is one of the things the report says, yes.

**MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:** And the reports also say
that the protestors may disrupt the workings of government?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So again, I go back, yes, it does -- it does indicate all of these, but as we’ve had the discussion, there are other statements in there as well and it’s the balance of the interpretation of the entire report that is important. It’s the growth of the report.

And please, sir, don’t hear me say that I don’t absolutely appreciate all of the intelligence and information that was provided through the Hendon Report, but to take individualized statements through it, I think, doesn’t really reflect the flavour of the intelligence that we were receiving.

There was also statements in there that said they would be completely lawful in all ways. There was statements in there that said there was going to be a million people arrive in the hill. There was other statements as well.

So I think it’s the entire context of the Hendon Report that’s very important to evaluate.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. I could you to other statements that talk about the potential community impact, but my point is this.

There’s enough information in those Hendon Reports to show that, collectively, all those statements taken together even in that context that you speak of, there’s enough in those reports to paint a clear picture that there could very well be significant potential community impact. The potential was there, wasn’t it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would disagree with that.
There is no reference throughout the documents that look to identify the specific activity that occurs. I think the closest thing that the Hendon Report would be -- would have within it to identify what could occur is the fact that the groups coming together could be very unpredictable. I think that mob mentality and the actions that occurred out of that is exactly what we saw.

But in terms of specifically predicting -- and I wouldn’t expect it to, but specifically predicting --

**MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:** Well, that’s my point.

You wouldn’t expect it to.

You wouldn’t expect an intelligence report would specifically identify every single community disruption that could occur; right?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** No, I wouldn’t, but there wasn’t any, any information included in the Hendon Reports that specifically or generally talked about the activities that we’re going to be -- that were going to occur in our city.

And I think one of those is, there was no reference to any intention that the community would be used as a leverage point within these protests.

**MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA:** Even the large number of people and vehicles, and while those numbers did fluctuate, it did indicate it would be a large number of both vehicles and people; correct?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Absolutely. In varying numbers as it went along, 100 percent. It did -- it did indicate a range of numbers that as the collection of
intelligence came and moved along, was able to be refined up to what would have been the 27th where numbers were starting to be reported and they were more accurately reflected on the 28th.

Now, I understand that is a very difficult task for an intelligence-gathering group. This was an extremely fluid and dynamic situation and I truly believe the intelligence gatherers and collectors did an amazing job in building the system as it went along and refining it, up to and including putting a reliability index as we continued through and having numbers put into those reports as we got closer to the date.

An extremely difficult task, and I don’t want you to hear me being critical of the Hendon Reports.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Right. So I just want to make sure I understand your evidence.

And as I understand it, your evidence was that the intelligence did not set out significant potential community impact.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The intelligence didn’t identify that there would be the type of behaviours that we saw demonstrated in our streets. It didn’t bear it out.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. You also indicated that your planning was predicated on a weekend-long event; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The intelligence reports as we identified them specifically spoke on a regular basis and an increasing basis about the activities that would occur on January 28th, 29th and 30th. As we read them and as we saw them, we identified that to mean that there would be
specific incidents, specific demonstrations and activities around that weekend and that, beyond that, there could be a small number of people that remained, but that was the main focus.

Actually, that is what bore out within our streets. Most -- many people left on the night of the 30th that decreased a number of -- a number of people within our city, so that was accurate.

What we didn’t have was an accurate prediction of the footprint that would remain or the activities that those people were engaged in.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. Can you point out the report that indicates they were only going to stay for the weekend? Because I’m not aware of that.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So ---

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: So you’ve continually said that it was predicated on a weekend-long event. I’d like you to point me to that -- the source of that intelligence because it’s not in the Hendon Reports.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the Hendon Reports regularly discussed weekend activities planning and, in fact, on several points you can identify in intelligence gaps activities for the 28th, 29th and 30th. There is several different examples where that specifically is what is referenced.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Correct, but the reference to intelligence gaps simply means that the intelligence did not know exactly what was going to happen on those days. There's no reference that they were going to leave
after that weekend; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So it -- as you’ve indicated around the behaviours that occurred, it was not that specific that those were going to be the only demonstration days. That is correct.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Right. And part of I think what you said earlier in your evidence in-chief, you talked a lot about experience; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: And certainly it’s acknowledged that OPS for many years has responded to protests large and small. And I believe your evidence was that experience did play a large part in the planning for this event; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So if you’re talking around about intelligence, I think the experience that I was talking about was the experience in engaging and dealing with the groups. Nobody had any experience in dealing with the patriot movement in terms of a large-scale demonstration.

We were the first and, from that experience, we’ve seen other jurisdictions adapt and interpret the intelligence somewhat differently.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. I would put to you that your planning was based more on what you thought would happen based on your experience more than the actual intelligence you had at your disposal.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think it was -- I would -- I would submit to you that it was both.
We do have a plan around experience that we did execute in terms of allowing vehicles into that footprint, in terms of managing how we would look to manage what would be a small number of people that would remain in a localized area in the downtown core.

That was the experience package that we brought into this. That wasn’t what bore out. And that’s why I say in terms of interpreting intelligence, it’s always extremely important to be able to balance the experience you have around that.

Nobody had experience in it at that time.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Right. And you would agree that the operational plan should accurately reflect the intelligence; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with that.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: And would you also agree that the operational plan prepared by the Ottawa Police Service for that weekend made no reference to Hendon, did it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: If we can pull it up.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Sure. It’s OPS3531. Just one second. We’ll pull up the other one, OPP4262.

Thank you.

Now, this is a document I believe my friend had up earlier. No, that’s not it.

Sorry. That’s not the document.

OPP4262.
And if you can scroll down, this is the operational plan; correct? My friend took you to this earlier?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct, yes.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Okay. So if we go down to the index, I believe it’s page 6.

Maybe it’s page 4. Go up to page 4.

Right there. Stop.

Where it says “Threat Assessment”, if you can just scroll down a little bit and allow the witness to take a look at that.

And when you look at it, I’ll be asking you whether or not there’s any reference to the Hendon Reports or whether or not there’s any reference to the fact there was no exit strategy, the potential long-term stay as referenced in the Hendon Reports, the references that there may be interference with the operations of government and those other things that I brought out.

But please, take a moment just to scroll through and take a read of that. You can scroll down. Thank you.

So I absolutely agree there isn’t reference to the Hendon report. I wouldn't specifically expect there necessarily to be references to the Hendon report in that area. What I can tell you is I know that the Hendon reports, as you indicated earlier, were received by these groups and used in developing the threat assessment and in developing the plan.

And I also do acknowledge that it is a gap that there is no reference to the potential of the convoy lasting longer than the three days.
MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: When it comes to planning, you know, you can kind of hope that something might turn out a certain way, but in policing, you always need a contingency; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: I asked Deputy Chief Ferguson whether or not she agreed with my proposition that this plan was not intelligence led and she agreed with my proposition. Do you agree that this plan was not intelligence led?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe -- I would agree with you that this plan was intelligence led, that the intelligence provided was actually shared with the planners, was properly brought into the organization, assessed, analyzed and adequately shared to be assessed and developed into the plan.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Okay. So you disagree with Chief Ferguson then?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Deputy Chief Ferguson.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: Deputy Chief Ferguson.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do believe, and through all the review that I've done, I on several points and frequently identify where there's references between the planners and the Intelligence group to actually look to access intelligence that exists. So I do know that that existed. I do know the planners were very conscious and cognizant of intelligence and making sure that it was put into this plan.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: So even though it doesn't reference Hendon and the various attributes that I pointed out,
you would still say it's intelligence led?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do, yes.

MR. CHRISTOPHER DIANA: All right. Thank you.

No further questions.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. Next is the Government of Canada?

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Good afternoon, Chief Bell. I am Robert MacKinnon, Counsel for the Government of Canada.

You were the intelligence -- head of the Intelligence Director at the end of your position there, and you spent several years in that directorate; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, that's not correct. I was the Deputy Chief in Charge of Intelligence Information and Investigations from mid-December 2021 to up and to the point that I was assigned as Interim Chief of the Ottawa Police Service. Prior to that, I was the Chief Administrative Officer for a year, then prior to that, I was in the Community Policing Command.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Okay. What I'm getting at is how many years of experience in the Intelligence area have you had; would you say?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So my experience is in -- within -- at the lower levels within drug investigations and intelligence, where I had a number years of experience. Then as I've gone through, I've had different command positions within the Intelligence -- that would oversee the Intelligence...
MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Okay. So you would have reviewed -- apart from the Hendon reports up to January 27th, you would have reviewed intelligence reports coming concerning the convoy in mid to late January before it arrived?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So, no. As I indicated in my evidence, I started to receive the specific Hendon reports on the 27th of January.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Apart from the Hendon reports are you saying you received no other kind of intelligence reports before then?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would be briefed on intelligence reports from my command.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Okay. And at the time you started receiving those reports plus the Hendon reports, there were conflicting reports on the number of vehicles and people coming to protest; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: There was a wide range of reporting on who would be coming to the city for sure.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And how long it would last as well.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And would you agree that the nature of intelligence generally is that it is seldom black and white? It's more -- mostly in the grey area, put it that way.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Oh, I would agree with that.
MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And that you have to assess the intelligence as best you can with others and other perspectives and sources, as many sources of information as you can; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with that.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And in the intelligence reports that you had received, the later incidents of horn blaring, criminal activity and hate-based incidents that occurred were not captured in these initial intelligence report?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with that. I don't think they were captured in any intelligence reports.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And according to your summary interview, there was approximately 3,000 to 4,000 vehicles that the OPS was expecting to arrive in that first weekend; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct. As it drew closer.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And as you have said in your interview summary, there was limited organization within the Freedom Convoy overall?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The organizational structure was extremely challenging because it was non-existent. There was pockets of different groups. I think as the convoy and as the occupation moved through the weeks, it began to coalesce a bit, there was some leaders that could have been identified as we move along, but that's part of the negotiation.
challenges that we had was there was many different pockets of leaders with many different perspectives and many different ideologies.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: You mentioned 8 to 10 different groups representing 50 to 100 different political agendas; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That would be accurate as an estimate.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And that the OPS found it hard to identify any one particular leader or group who could speak for them all.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's accurate.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And you were also aware that there were former police and military members as part of the convoy participants?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is accurate.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And that they had raised a significant amount of money through crowd funding platforms such as GoFundMe, later on GiveSendGo?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's accurate.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And you were aware of some warnings concerning participants in the protest, and in that respect, you were taken to a document earlier which I'll make quick reference to. It's by -- it's the intelligence assessment by Sergeant Chris Kiez on January 29th, the OPS 00004039. If we could pull that up for a second?

And if you could go to page 5? And under "lone actor concerns," go down to the heading just below the middle.
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: M'hm.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Yeah. So you can see there it says, "As the event becomes larger and larger, OSCINT..." -- that's Open-Source Intelligence; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Open-source information.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: "...is revealing the occasional (and not unexpected) online instigators, lone actor-instigators, who advise others to use violence if encountering police barricades."

Is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And on page 6 there's a warning at the top of the page, yeah. The third bullet point, "The open nature of this event, coupled with the high concentration of attendees may further add to [the] potential appeal among certain individuals who may embrace extremist ideologies."

Do you see that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: So there was some warning in advance as to some things to be worried about; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: There was some notations here that raised concerns that we should be looking
MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And you have mentioned in your summary that as January 30th progressed into Monday, OPS was not prepared for what developed into an occupation. So it soon began from a protest to an occupation; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And with elements demonstrating lawlessness; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Harassment?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Intimidation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And threats to Ottawa residents and public officials?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: I just want to mention one thing that you said in -- with the convoy coming initially, that you did try to keep out large tractors, farm equipment that could have posed difficulty. Is that correct, you kept those -- tried to keep those out from the core?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: However, there was a huge crane that made it into the core that was sitting right next to the Prime Minister’s office. So do you know how that got there?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So it -- I wouldn’t characterize it as a huge crane, and I’m not trying to minimize what it was. It was actually a boom truck that had what would
be a much shorter boom than what a crane would have, and a flatbed back on it. It was extended and had a flag hang from it and was used as a stage.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** I expect you’ll hear evidence, if it hasn’t already come out, if I remember, that it was right outside the top window of the Prime Minister’s office; do you accept that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I do.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** Now, you mentioned a few areas in questioning of powers under the *Emergencies Act*, the *Federal Emergencies Act*, through its Regulations that were instrumental in assisting the police to resolve the situation. Do you remember earlier in your testimony?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, I do.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** Okay. And those powers were instrumental to the OPS in ending this occupation.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So I don’t think I used the terminology, “Instrumental”; I don’t believe that’s the words I used, but they were absolutely of a benefit to allow us to end this occupation, and were widely leveraged.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** Okay. You do mention -- you did mention four areas, I’ll just mention -- I think there may have been one that was missed, so I’ll just mention three quickly and -- that come from your interview summary, and you can just confirm or not.

One very important power was the authorization to create an exclusionary zone, both the four zones that were used and the red zone; correct?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And which, to your mind, was the most important power because it allowed OPS to stop the movement of more people into the downtown core when it came time; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It created a very clear legislative framework that was clearly articulable to our members as to their powers to create the exclusion from that zone.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And it allowed OPS to create a stable atmosphere in advance of launching the operation to clear the downtown core.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is absolutely true. Had we not been able to limit or stop the flow of pedestrians into the area, it would not have created the stability that we would need to launch the operation. And I think part of that stability is what led to the safety that we were able to use while we did it that resulted in a very low small number of injuries.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And it allowed the OPS to execute this operation slowly, deliberately, and safely.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: It also provided the power to freeze financial accounts, which you made mention. This is also under the Emergencies Act Regulations; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And that provided an incentive to convoy participants to leave voluntarily; correct?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: But it also deterred others who may have been thinking of coming downtown from coming downtown; would you agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don’t have any direct examples or knowledge of that, but it seems to be that it could have provided a deterrence factor for people attending.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And the PL teams used this power in advance of the enforcement action to try to shrink the footprint of these protesters, demonstrators, in the downtown core; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I think you’re specifically referring to a letter that our Police Liaison Team members handed out that specifically referenced the authorities and powers under the Emergency Act, so yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: That’s right. So there’s -- I’ll take you to that in a second but that’s what I’m referring to. Both in a media release and in a leaflet, there were certain actions, and I’ll refer you to them in a second, but that’s exactly what I’m referring to.

And you also learned of others whose accounts were frozen who left downtown, after which their accounts were unfrozen; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is. I don’t have specific examples but that’s my knowledge, that’s my general knowledge that that occurred.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Okay. And the other important -- one of the other important powers that you’ve
touched on before, was to make it possible for the OPS to obtain the tow tucks that were absolutely essential in order to move these trucks; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: They removed barriers or any -- seemed to remove hesitation for people to actually be cooperative with us because they were directed to under the Act.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Right. And we’ve heard evidence, that you may not be privy to, to say that they had no trucks to convince other tow truck drivers to drive because of threats and because of damages that they might incur. And so the indemnity provisions of the Emergency Regulations also eased that aspect in convincing and compelling these tow-truckers -- tow truck drivers to come and assist; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe so, yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: I’d like you to refer to OPS00014438; it’s the February 18th iteration of the Integrated Plan. And at page 5, at the bottom of the page, yeah, so you see where it says, “As a result” -- and this is dated February 18th, but this is an iteration of an evolving plan:

“As a result, delivery of information, education and enforcement response was lead [sic] by the Police Liaison Teams...”

Do you see that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And:

“The subsequent response was based on a negotiation approach with the primary
Do you see that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And so that was to reduce the footprint to make it easier for the officers to enforce whoever was left; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. We wanted to have as many people voluntarily leave, knowing that there was going to be an imminent police action so we could shrink the footprint as much as we have, and have less people to remove.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Okay. The last point there, it says:

“On Wednesday, February 16th, 2022, a media release provided ‘a further notice to Demonstrators’...”

And this is the one that’s also in the pamphlet. It has the same points, so if you go to the next page.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, sir, am I able to reference -- what document is this?

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: This is the integrated response, February 18, “Concept of Action Plan Approval”; okay?

So in here, there’s nine bullet points. We’ve made reference to some of them already, but these are the -- this is what was handed to the demonstrators; correct? These
points, these bullet points in a pamphlet form. It’s also in this media release as well.

So the first bullet points deals with the criminal charges; that’s provincial.

The second point deals with, “Vehicle and property may be seized [and] removed.” That can be both provincial and the federal, that includes the tow trucks.

“Your driver’s licence may be suspended” and the, “Certificates may be suspended”; that’s provincial. And then the next four encompass Federal Emergency Regulations. So your personal bank accounts:

“...may be subject to examination and restriction. If you bring a minor...with you to an unlawful protest site, you may be charged...”

That’s specifically in the Emergencies’ Regulation; do you agree?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, but the only clarity I would provide is around point number 1, you indicated that the criminal offences would be provincial. That would be -- because the Criminal Code is a federal piece of legislation, it would be federal.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** Sorry; federal. Sorry; I’m thinking just of the regulations under the Emergencies -- the respective Emergencies Act here.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Okay.

**MR. ROBERT MacKINNON:** So that’s what I’m -- I’m distinguishing that in this pamphlet there are a number of these
warnings and facts given to the protesters that come directly from the Emergencies Act Regulations, is what I’m pointing out.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I agree with that.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And that the OPS used because they were essential in dispersing these protesters.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: We definitely used the authorities granted to us under the Emergencies Act.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: All right. And bringing fuel and other supplies, that also is encompassed by the essential provision of goods as well. That’s encompassed by Emergencies Act regulation as well?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe so, yes.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Yeah. And again, persons travelling to an unlawful protest site to participate or support an unlawful demonstration, that also comes from Emergencies regulation. And the last one, that’s from the provincial regulations but it also is encompassed with the federal regulation, which added more sites. It added Parliament and government buildings to that.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: So there -- just see if you’d agree with this statement, that there was no realistic expectation that negotiation through the PLTs, as much as they are useful and helpful, would have led to the voluntary dispersal of all those demonstrators.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: There was no indication in any of the efforts that we had made that that
would be a way that we could successfully negotiate the end of this.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: After 20 days of occupation, correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: And you agree that the illegal occupation in Ottawa was having not only a direct deleterious affect on the residence of Ottawa but was also acting as an example, an incentive, and an inspiration for other illegal protests and blockades that were popping up around the country, do you not?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t know that I could make the nexus that it was Ottawa that caused others to want to occur. What I can say is that it was a phenomena or an occurrence that we saw at several locations across the country.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Others have said a “more interconnectedness”. For instance, Supt. Abrams said one event had an immediate impact on another. Would you agree that areas of coverage, such as, you know, in Windsor, Fort Erie, Emerson, Coutts, Surrey, among others?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I absolutely agree, there was an interconnectedness between all of the protests that were occurring. My exception that I was taking was I don’t know that Ottawa was necessarily -- that they were doing it because Ottawa was still existing. I think there was absolutely just an interconnectedness between all of the movements that were being undertaken at that point.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: But it was the prime
location; it started in this -- would you agree?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It was the first and
it was the largest.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: That’s right. And it
acted, would you now agree, as an example to others?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree that it
was the first, that it was the largest, and that people watched
what occurred here on an ongoing basis.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: You agree that -- you said
it. You said that this situation -- the volatility of the
situation in reference to Ottawa, correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Would you also agree that
these other pop-ups that had, in similar fashion to Ottawa,
maybe not to the same extent, provided an escalating situation
across the country concerning these type of protests?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with
that.

MR. ROBERT MacKINNON: Thank you.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay, well, this may be a
good time for the afternoon break. People may need to stretch
their legs so we’ll take 15 minutes and come back in 15 minutes.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission is in recess for
15 minutes. La Commission est levée pour 15 minutes.

--- Upon recessing at 4:31 p.m.

--- Upon resuming at 4:50 p.m.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission is reconvened. La
COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. I’d like to call on the convoy organizers. Go ahead.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Thank you, sir.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. BRENDAN MILLER:

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: For the record, my name’s Brendan Miller. I’m counsel for Freedom Corp, which is the incorporated entity that is representing the protestors that were in your City in January ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Can you speak up a bit. It’s not ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Sorry. They were -- the protesters that were in your city in January and February of 2022.

First, thank you for your service. I just have a few questions for you.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you. Good afternoon.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Thank you. So I take it, sir, that you were aware of the February 8th, 2022 media briefing that the Ontario Police Service gave where it was said to the media and in the public that OPS had concerns for the children of the protesters in Ottawa and OPS wanted to discuss enforcement with the Child Aid Society of Ontario. You’re aware that happened?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: You said the Ontario Police Service. I believe you mean the Ottawa Police Service?

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes.
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Do you have a document that you can reference for that media release, or is that a clip?

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: It's a clip.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I do recall, I don't specifically recall references to enforcement, but I do specifically recall the discussion around our concerns with children in the footprint, particular as the situation there was becoming more volatile.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. And -- but I understand, sir, from reviewing just the disclosure generally that with respect to that media announcement that you were in fact not supportive of it, it being announced to the media in that way. Do you remember that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So no, I don't recall that.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. Now, with enforcement of child protection laws, which in this province is the Child Youth Family Services Act, you agree that enforcement is essentially either the threat or the actual apprehension of children from parents; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don't specifically recall the references to enforcement that you're speaking of. I do specifically recall us raising the issue of the potential danger that the children would be -- would, could or would be in in the red zone footprint.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Now, this was, of course, done when Chief Sloly was still Chief, and I, of course, will
have questions for him in the same regard. But I understand it
that you had nothing to do with it but you now know that it was
the firm, the political firm, Navigator, that recommended that
such and announcement be made. Do you know that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don't recall
where the genesis of the announcement was, but I do stand behind
I had grave concerns with the fact that there were children
within the footprint of an area where the activity that was
occurring was occurring, but beyond that, within the area where
there could be enhanced or would be enhanced enforcement
activity.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So regardless of where
it came from, I had and shared those concerns.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Were you aware that the
Child Aid Society of Ontario had no idea that announcement was
being made and were quite unhappy about it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I was the one who
was liaising with the Children's Aid Society, and they were --
that was something -- in gaps, we identified there was a gap
that we identified I should have had conversations with them
prior to that announcement being made. But as a result of the
announcement, we were able to work together to identify the
proper mechanisms that we would use in the event that we did
identify children who needed support within the red zone.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: So weren't aware that
Navigator completed a report for February 5th that talked about
some social media commentary about how they could be using --
the protesters could be using children as human shields, and
that based on that they recommended that this announcement be
made. You're not aware of that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I'm not aware of
any report that was actually generated by Navigator. If you
could take me to it I can ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. It's anticipated that
our witnesses are going to say that the day after that
announcement, on February 9th, is when the workers from Child
and Family Services started to intervene with the protest. Do
you agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I wouldn't because
I don't believe that the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa ever
directly engaged or intervened in the protest. What I do
understand is that we set up mechanisms in order to be able to,
in the event that there was an enforcement action and children
needed to be removed and then reunited with family, we set up
the processes that would be put in place for that.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: But that was at the
enforcement stage, as I understand it. You had set up, from my
review of the records, an empty gymnasium of some kind to take
children to and then the plan was to give them back to their
parents. That was what you were thinking of; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I didn't develop
that specific plan, so we'll -- you'll need to ask the Planning
Team what the specific plan was.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. So you're going to
hear evidence eventually from some of the protesters when they
eventually testify that some of the ones that were arrested,
on their release they were essentially kidnapped by OPS
officers, driven out of town in the middle of February winter by
OPS officers, and left in various rural areas and parking lots
outside of town with no shelter or resources. Are you aware of
that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, because I don't
know the specifics of what they're speaking about. What I do
know is that we, as part of our planning, and Inspector Lucas
tomorrow will be able to provide more details, but we did have
remote arrest processing sites, not in rural Ottawa, in the
south end of Ottawa in a residential, mixed commercial area,
where they were protests and then released to be able to find
transportation to wherever they needed to go, which is a common
-- which is common with the police.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. So one of the areas,
there were several as I understand, one of them was a municipal
parking lot where the trucks were being towed to.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's in the south
end.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. And that parking lot
doesn't have a building you drop them off at, it doesn't have a
phone, it doesn't have any of that, does it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I don't know what
the logistics at the building were. I would imagine it would've
needed to have a phone because you have to be able to call your
lawyer, so ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Well, I can tell you it didn't. So -- and these people are driven out there. They were already told they weren't charged and they weren't being charged, they were being released. But they were driven and forced outside of Ottawa, or on the outer skirts, and dropped off in the snow. Now, are you aware this happened; yes or no?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I'm not aware, and it wasn't outside of Ottawa, it was still within the geographical boundaries of the City of Ottawa.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: In your evidence in-Chief you kept using the word "violence" regarding protesters; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. And you've heard the evidence of Superintendent Morris already, you sort of touched on that, and he had stated that the lack of violence in Ottawa during the protest was actually shocking.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don't recall that statement.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. So is it fair to say that when you use the phrase "violence" you're not actually describing any form of physical assaults, are you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I'm -- well, physical assaults do contribute to what I'm describing. I was specifically describing the violence that our community felt as a result of the culmination of actions that the occupiers engaged in.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: So the violence that they
felt, not actual violence, is that what you're saying?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct, not
the Criminal Code definition of violence, but the violence that
they felt by having excessive horns blared ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right, and not ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- and having trucks
run 24/7 a day.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: By having people
intimidate them and follow them, and by having people rip masks
off their head. By feeling sheltered in their homes where they
couldn't be ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Well, I -- thank you, I
understand what you mean. But you're not talking about violence
under section 2 of the CSIS Act, are you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I'm not.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Thanks. Now, I'd like to
take you to a document right now if I can.

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: If we could pull up document
POE.HRF.0000001. Is it possible to turn that so that it's
the...

(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Thank you.

So Chief, this is an email exchange of
February 15th, 2022, between one of your officers, Cameron
Hopgood, and Mathieu Gravel of the Mayor of Ottawa's staff. You
know who both of those individuals are; correct?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And what is Cameron Hopgood's job as an OPS officer?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: He's a manager within our data section. So he does a lot of data collection. He works on uniform crime reporting.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. If we can just scroll down just a little bit?

So in this email, Mathieu Gravel asks for all the stats in the previous email with respect to criminal investigations, arrests, and charges. And Cameron Hopgood responds and says that there had been a total of 31 people arrested, but only 16 people charged as of February 15th, 2022. Would you agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I would agree that the email states that, yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. And of course, you just said he's in the data section, so he would know that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right? So you have no reason to disbelieve that there were only 16 charges laid as between January 28th and February 15th, 2022, regarding the protestors; isn't that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what I would agree is that the data analysis that he would have done would have represented that. There may have been more that were in the terms of being processed, and I think this is on February 15th. There's a better table within our institutional report that more
MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- clearly identifies the numbers that would have occurred.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. And that is -- if I can call the next document -- it's the POE.HRF00000002. And it's a copy of this -- the table, but I've added some highlighting to it, and some numbers. If we can zoom in on that? And this has been provided to all the parties.

So what I've done is the sections that are highlighted, okay ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. I'm sorry. There's an objection.

Yes?

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: David Migicovsky, counsel for the Ottawa Police.

Perhaps I missed it as well as the previous document, but I do not see them in the witness documents.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: That's correct. I had sent them out, I think, this morning.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: I appreciate that, Mr. Commissioner, but the whole point of having the documents beforehand is that the witness has an opportunity to review the documents before they testify. So the documents, under the rules, were supposed to be posted on the ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Well, I can do it with your document. It would just be easier for everybody to understand. It's up to you.
COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Just let him finish his objection, then we can try and solve it.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: So the previous document, by the time I checked and realized that was also not in the witness section of the documents, so just in fairness to the witness -- I appreciate sometimes things come up at the last minute, but the whole point was so that he would be familiar with it.

So I don't know if my friend intends to continue asking about documents that are not in the database, but if so, I would suggest that that would not be a fair way of proceeding.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Sorry, you were about to add something?

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes, sir. So all this document is the exact document he just referred to except I highlighted the stats between January 29th and February 13th, and then calculated three times, double checked the total number of charges and what they were for that time period. That’s all it is. I'm happy to ask him the same questions, if the Commission is inclined, but I think it would help everybody to essentially see. It's essentially a cross-examination tool, per se.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Do you have any objection to reference to this document? It seems to me it's the police document you referred to earlier.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do believe it is just an adaptation of the report in our institutional report, so once I'd be able to see it, I'll be able to assess, but I don’t
believe I have any challenges with it or problems with it.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. On that basis, is that -- can we proceed with this at the moment?

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: I'm not sure what the document is, but I believe that my friend may have highlighted it.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: It has some annotations on it as well, and I guess I'd be concerned about what's the annotations on it. But ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: They're just the numbers to that date. That's it, and added up.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. If you could make clear when we put it up, just so the record is clear?

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay. Go ahead.

So -- and just so I know, so you've -- what is your annotations here?

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: So the only thing is, I have highlighted in yellow every type of charge between January 29th and February 13th, and in red, at the end of that, I added the amount of charges that existed as of February 13th, 2022, at 11:59 p.m.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: So the red column is simply your addition or ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: --- lining up all the numbers?
MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: So what I want to do is take you through this, sir.

So we've got that up, and I've explained it already.

So I understand the protest begins at January 28th, 2022, and in that entire time period until February 13th, 2022 at 11:59 p.m., there are a total of 4 charges laid for assault; is that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. And so that’s a period of 17 days?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t believe from the 29th to the 13th is 17 days.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Well, it's 29th. They put the first charge first as you'll see that it doesn’t have every single date on it. They only put the dates on it with respect to when charges were laid. There were days that went where no one was charged at all?

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: I think it's just simple math; 29 to 13 is not ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yeah, it's not ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: --- 17, it's 16.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Is it? Okay. That’s why I went to law school. I can't do math.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: But -- and you can agree
with me that between January 29th to February 13 there was a
total of 4 assault charges laid then? We can agree on that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And with respect to assaults
with a weapon from that same time period, there was a total of
one assault with a weapon charge laid, correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. And if we can
scroll down -- or no, just back up, sorry. My apologies.
Can you agree with me that in the entire same
time period, there was no charges under the Criminal Code for
caus[ing] a disturbance by fight or shouting or swearing?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s -- yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And there was no charges
laid against any of the protestors in that same time period for
caus[ing] a disturbance by impeding or molesting a person?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. And there were
also no charges laid with disturbing an occupant of a dwelling,
apartment, or complex, under the Criminal Code either, was
there?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. Can we scroll down?
Perfect. And can you agree with me in that time period, that
is, from January 29th to February 13th at 11:59 p.m., there was
no charges of inciting hatred in a public place ever laid, was
there?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.
MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And you can agree with me that in the same time period that only one charge of intimidation by threat of violence was ever laid?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: If we can -- last one, there was no charge either in that same time period for taking a weapon of a police officer in execution of his duty?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And in that same time period, there was never any charges of uttering threats to property to damage -- or to damage property under 264(1) of the Criminal Code either, right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Correct.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. So there's a total of five violent offences charged between January 28th, 2022 and February 13th, 2022; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, I'm not sure how you're classifying violent charges. We'd have to go through them again to identify.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: So anything dealing with an assault or threatening to cause bodily harm or to kill someone. Those are -- there's five charges in relation to that.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I'll take your word for it. We'd have to go through the list again.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay. So you'd agree with me that that's not unprecedented violence, is it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: What I -- so as I defined violence, it wasn't strictly Criminal Code violence, and
I'm happy to again go through the definition that I was using when I was talking about community violence. This is a part of it, threats, charges under the Criminal Code was a part of it, but it was the trauma that the community felt. It was the extreme circumstances that they were exposed to and the duration of time that they were exposed to that has very clearly been described to me by community members as violence inflicted on them and towards them.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: And so that’s the honking, right, as one of them?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Honking would be one of them.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: The -- I believe the exhaust coming from trucks?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So what I think -- but I think it’s important you put it in context. It’s the honking of large airhorns ---

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- of approximately three, to four, to 500 trucks simultaneously for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It’s not just tooting a little horn. It’s the incessant noise pollution that is being inflicted on the people that we were referring to.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. And we’ve already heard evidence that, as of February 7th, when Mr. Champ and his client, Zexi Li, obtained an injunction with respect to silencing those horns, things got better; do you agree?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I think they got
better for a period of time, yes.

MR. BRENDA MILLER: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: But that was on the 7th. That was nine days, 10 days into the circumstance.

MR. BRENDA MILLER: Right. And it’s also the fact that the trucks that were blocking up downtown Ottawa in that area -- we’ve heard some evidence that there’s about 18,000 people; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That would be -- that would be accurate, I believe.

MR. BRENDA MILLER: And what’s the entirety of the population of Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Just over a million.

MR. BRENDA MILLER: Just over a million. So 18,000 residents were the ones being put through the “violence”, as you define it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t think the size of the amount of people that were being exposed to it minimizes the trauma that those community members felt and very clearly expressed. On the general population of Ottawa, it was a smaller number, but it doesn’t minimize the impact it had on that number of people or that group of people.

MR. BRENDA MILLER: Thank you. And this is last document I want you to refer. I’ve given very short notice. It only became relevant because of questions my friend from the federal government asked. It’s PB.NSC.CAN.00003256_REL.0001. So if you could scroll down just to the second page, please.

Thank you.
So just so you know, this is -- and I’m not -- I
know you haven’t seen this before but this is an email from
Commissioner Brenda Lucki to the Chief of Staff for the
Minister, Public Safety, and she has a discussion about her
views on the invocation of the Emergencies Act there. I just
want to read it to you, and you can read it as well. There, she
states:

"I’m of the view that we have not yet
exhausted all available tools that are
already available through existing
legislation. There are instances where
charges could be laid under existing
authority for various Criminal Code
offences occurring right now in the
context of the protest. The Ontario
Provincial Emergencies Act, just
enacted, will also help in providing
additional deterrent tools to our
existing toolbox."

Then she goes on:

"These existing tools are considered in
our existing plan and will be used in
due course, as necessary."

So you’ve had an opportunity to read that and
hear it. And you also, I take it, heard the evidence from Supt.
Morris regarding there being no credible threat under Section 2
of the CSIS Act; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.
MR. BRENDAN MILLER: All right. Do you agree with me that Supt. Morris is the most senior intelligence officer in the provincial apparatus; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It’s difficult for me to scale exactly -- he’s a seasoned, and experienced, and senior intelligence officer, yes.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: You’re pretty well out of time.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yes, I just have one -- two last questions.

Do you agree with what Commissioner Lucki said in the email I just read to you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe it’s a perspective, for sure, and I think it’s one that would be more appropriate to question her on. I’ve been very clear about how we utilize the provisions under the Emergency Act to actually execute our plan and create stability around the execution of our plan.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Right. Do you agree with her perspective?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do believe there was other -- there could have been other opportunities. There was provisions within all of those. What I have said, and I say again, is, we leveraged the Emergency Act as it came out to create a very stable platform, to be able to access tow-trucks, to be able to do the four or five different that I identified. So while these abilities do exist, absolutely, in what
Commissioner Lucki has identified, the Emergency Act created a very stable platform, a stable environment for us to execute our plan.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: But -- last question, just because I just want to get this clear -- but -- so you’re saying that there was existing laws that you could have done the same thing under; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: We had a plan.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: We were going to execute a plan.

MR. BRENDAN MILLER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay, next is the Ottawa Residents and Businesses.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Thank you, Commissioner.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. PAUL CHAMP:

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Paul Champ for the Ottawa Coalition of Residents and Businesses. Thank you very much, Chief Bell, for coming in and speaking to us today.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Champ.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Good to see you again.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good to see you again.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Chief Bell, just following on one of the questions that you just got before about the harm and how many people live in downtown Ottawa. It’s about 18,000 residents but you would agree with me, Deputy Chief Bell, there are several thousands of people who live in Ottawa who work
downtown who were unable to work during the duration of the Convoy?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I absolutely agree. And beyond being unable to work, there were businesses that were severely impacted by the consequences of the occupation.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Yeah, the businesses and their employees?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: And their employees, yes.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Yeah. So I want to ask you now questions about the role that you were playing during the Convoy demonstrations, and around intelligence operations in particular. I understand from your testimony that you’ve given that the intelligence did not indicate that the Convoy planned to use the Ottawa community as, I think you used the words, “leverage point” to achieve their objectives. I just want to ask you about that. By “leverage”, did you mean that the Convoy protestors were trying to make life difficult for residents in Ottawa as leverage with political leaders to achieve their objectives?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That would be my assessment of the situation. The different protests, as they went, or occupations across the country, had didn’t leverage points. The Ambassador Bridge leveraged economy. Coutts, Alberta, leveraged economy and access to the United States. Ottawa leveraged the citizens and the discomfort that it created with -- for our community as the leverage point to be heard.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right. People of Ottawa were,
in a sense, being held as hostages until their political demands were met?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It could be characterized as that, yes.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Now, in terms of the intelligence, Chief Bell, there was intelligence about the phrase “Bear Hug”, or “Operation Bear Hug”; do you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And what did you understand was meant by that term, “Bear Hug”?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: My understanding of what “Bear Hug” was is it was to be a protest that would incense -- encircle of Ottawa to, in essence, close down the entirety of Ottawa.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right, to encircle downtown to apply pressure to them?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I think it was larger than downtown. It was supposed to be a large geographical area up to and including all of Ottawa.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: I trust you’d agree with me, Chief, that a lack of a contingency plan for a prolonged occupation was a tactical error by the police?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think that the level of depth that we had attributed to contingency planning was an area that we need to be better on moving ahead and one that we’ve identified and improved on.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Well, here, there was none at all. That’s what we’ve heard from Deputy Chief Ferguson. There
was no contingency plan for what to do if these big rigs decided
to stay longer than the weekend; you’d agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I would agree
that if Deputy Chief Ferguson feels that there wasn’t a properly
developed contingency plan, she was in charge of the planning,
so yes.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And in retrospect, Chief Bell, we
can agree that the Ottawa Police Service, unfortunately, was
exceptionally unprepared for this protest?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the Ottawa Police
Service was absolutely unprepared for the unprecedented
circumstances that we were faced with on the 28th through to the
end of February, middle of -- middle to end of February.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Now, Chief, I want to ask you
some questions about the intelligence during the protest. You
were receiving intelligence and were aware that there were
former police and military members who were participants in the
Convoy; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And some of them were involved
in some of the planning and logistics for the Convoy protests?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And these individuals, I gather,
the police assessed were quite sophisticated logistically and
had knowledge of police tactics?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And I presume that caused some
concern for the Ottawa Police in terms of how to manage or
respond to what the Convoy was doing?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, I think it caused concerns for all of the police agencies who were involved because it wasn’t just Ottawa Police members. It was police members, military members from across the country in a small number. But the knowledge that that group would have about our operations was concerning.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right. Now, this is a different question, but on a related point, Chief, were there any concerns, or was there any intelligence about current police members from the Ottawa Police or other police forces who were sympathetic to the protestors and may have been sharing information with them?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So there was concerns raised around that regularly. And there was investigations conducted into that. And as a result of those investigations, we didn’t find any circumstances where there was a compromise of information or actions because information was shared from inside our organization into the protestors.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: But your investigations did confirm that a number of Ottawa Police members were very sympathetic to the protestors and, for example, were donating funds to them?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So there was two circumstances where members had donated funds beyond -- to GiveSendGo, sorry, ---

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- GiveSendGo
accounts, and those were followed up on through discipline.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right. Now, in terms of other intelligence that you had, Chief, what about -- like, we know that the broad number of people who came to Ottawa were from, you know, all kinds of different backgrounds and so forth, working folks and so forth, but there were also different elements who were participating in the protests who were of greater concern. Isn’t that so, Chief? Bad elements? Bad actors and groups?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So can you be more specific?

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Well for example, the seizure of firearms in Coutts, Alberta and the arrests that were made for attempted murder of RCMP officers, those individuals were associated with a group named Diagolon. It’s my understanding the leader of Diagolon was in Ottawa for the duration of the demonstrations. Isn’t that correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And that was of concern to the Ottawa Police?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That was of concern.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And there were other elements, others who were affiliated with known white supremacist groups in Ottawa during that period of time?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And that was of concern to the Ottawa Police?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it was.
MR. PAUL CHAMP: Now, I want to ask you some
questions about some concerns that others had with the OPS plan
and the use of policing resources. We heard from Supt. Abrams
last week that he raised concerns with you on a number of
occasions about OPS plans or the deployment, or what he viewed
as misuse of OP resources. That’s all true, Chief Bell?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I believe through
my testimony today, we’ve gone through the individual
circumstances. There was an occasion where OPS did not deploy a
number of OPP officers. That was rectified shortly thereafter.
The concerns about our plans were raised, communicated, and as
we progressed, and as we had the integrated planning team come
in, that was rectified. So I believe, from my perspective, all
of the concerns that Supt. Abrams were raised to me were
appropriately channeled and dealt with.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Well how about with respect to
the plans? We heard evidence from Mayor Watson last week that
he was hearing from the Prime Minister and the Solicitor General
and the Minister, Federal Minister of Public Safety, that there
were concerns from the OPP and the RCMP about providing
resources to the Ottawa Police because they had some doubts or
concerns about the OPS plans and whether it was the right plan
or whether it was safe. Were you aware that those concerns were
being raised at the higher levels?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I wasn’t aware that
those conversations were occurring.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Did you yourself have any
concerns about the readiness of the OPS plans in the first,
let’s say, 12 days of the protest?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I had -- I would have concerns about the time that it was taking to develop the plans. I do think, particularly once we had the Integrated Planning Team, with the amazing assistance of the Ontario Provincial ---

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Sure.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- Police and the RCMP, that we did develop the fulsome plans that we needed. That took some time to get to. So while this is occurring in our streets, the time it’s taking to plan, coordinate, and then execute is of concern to me.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And was it your impression or your understanding, Chief Bell, that Chief Sloly was a bit resistant to the integrated command? I think we’ve heard some evidence of that already.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe Chief Sloly was raising concerns or kicking the tires on what an integrated commander planning team would look like that would have indicated he had some resistance to it.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Well he made comments to you and Deputy Chief Ferguson that he felt the OPP and RCMP were not help him, or taking directions for their political masters, or comments like that? You recall that meeting?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And you and Deputy Chief Ferguson didn’t agree with him and you raised concerns about that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.
MR. PAUL CHAMP: You also had concerns, did you not, Chief, that Chief Sloly appeared to be taking operational advice from the PR firm Navigator? That was your impression?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry, I don’t believe it was that he was taking operational advice. It was the fact that a PR firm, a crisis communication firm was involved in that level of operational discussions. It was atypical to me. It was ultimately, at the end of the day, Chief Sloly’s prerogative and choice to make as the Chief of Police. It was just something that I hadn’t experienced before.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: But as the crisis in Ottawa continued and became more prolonged, Deputy Chief, did you have -- you had some concerns about the leadership of Chief Sloly, did you not?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well I had -- not specific concerns about his leadership overall. I’ve identified the areas that were of concern to me around the incident command and his involvement at a lower level than I ---

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right. Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- believed it should be.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: There’s another one. Yeah.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So there was different areas of concern that I had, yes.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And Councillor Deans, the Chair of the Police Services Board at the time, testified last week that she called you at one point about one week before Chief Sloly’s resignation. And she testified that she asked you
whether you would be doing anything differently if you were chief. Do you recall that conversation?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Is that roughly what she asked you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that is what she asked me.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And she testified that you told her that you wouldn’t have done anything differently? Is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe she testified that I said I wouldn’t have done anything differently, but that a plan was coming together and we needed to support the chief as we led through that plan. I think when you listen to her testimony, that’s the ---

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- more fulsome explanation of what I said.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Fair enough. So you don’t disagree with her testimony on that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely not. What I would go on to say is my perspective is, particularly as a Deputy Chief, my responsibility is to support the Chief of Police, the Office of the Chief of Police, regardless of who is sitting there, and that my obligation is to make sure that that person is successful as we move ahead.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Certainly, Deputy -- or at that time, as Deputy Chief, your obligation was to serve your chief,
but did you not also have an obligation to serve the people of Ottawa, Chief Bell?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: But I do believe I was serving the people of Ottawa by ensuring that we, as an organization, through the Chief of Police, had success moving ahead.

At every opportunity where I had concerns with Chief Sloly, I raised those. Ultimately, he’s the Chief of Police, so he makes the decisions on how we move ahead. But to have him fail, particularly in the middle of a crisis, would not have benefited anyone, particularly the citizens of Ottawa.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Precisely. And that’s the point though, Chief Bell. So if you saw Chief Sloly, from when I, you know, heard your testimony today and reviewed your interview summary, it sounds like you had many points of concern, shall we say, about Chief Sloly’s leadership and that this perhaps was the reason why this occupation was so prolonged.

And so what I’m asking you, Chief, is that if you had concerns that Ottawa Police, perhaps, were unable to respond the way that they could, or as effectively as they could, because of the leadership, did you not have some duty or obligation to raise that issue with the Ottawa Police Services Board or some other authority?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So my concerns would not have met to the level where I felt that obligation was necessary. The challenges I had were addressed on a regular and ongoing basis. And if I thought they had surpassed a level that I needed to report it, I would have reported it. It did not
reach that level.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Okay. You learned about Chief Sloly’s resignation from Chair Deans on February 15th? Is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I believe I first learned about rumours of it on social media, but then ultimately Chair Deans did call me at some point during the day to indicate -- to assess out my interest in taking over as interim chief.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Right. And between that conversation and the Police Services Board, many of the members being removed the following evening, did you have any communications with the Mayor or the Mayor’s Office?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: On the Mayor’s negotiations with the protestors, you made the connection between City Manager Steve Kanellakos and the PLT on February the 10th?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And did you know what was happening between February the 10th and February the 12th on those negotiations?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I did not.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And -- but you now understand or now are aware that there were different negotiations going on between the Mayor's Office and the protesters?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Okay. Did you have concerns that no police guidance or assistance was being provided to the Mayor these negotiations?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It was atypical. It would likely have been -- could have been -- facilitated what we wanted to accomplish more easily, but at the end of the day, like I said before, I truly believed it took the temperature of the protest down and that was a good outcome. Could we have arrived at that circumstance better by having police involved, and by advising our Incident Command earlier? Yes. It was an imperfect process, I will absolutely agree with that, but I do believe the outcome of it was beneficial to having the streets remain calm for the time we needed it to execute our operation.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: I hear you completely, Chief Bell, but if that was a way to get any kind of dialogue with these protesters and get any kind of movement or agreement on them to relieve the pressure on the people of Ottawa, that was probably a good idea. But the question I'm wondering is how did it turn out that way that the Mayor's Office was on his own conducting these negotiations with practically no input from the Ottawa Police? How did that happen?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That I don't know. That I can't answer.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: And just finally -- oh, I'm at my 20 minutes, I believe. I'll ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you very much.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Thank you.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you.

MR. PAUL CHAMP: Thank you, Chief Bell.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you.

Next, National Police Federation.
--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. LAUREN PEARCE:

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Hi there, I'm coming in via Zoom.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Sorry. Thank you.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Hi there, my name's Lauren Pearce. I'm attending via Zoom if you can see me.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I can. Good afternoon.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Great. Hi there.
So I am counsel for the National Police Federation, which is the bargaining agent representing RCMP members and reservists. Okay?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: So I understand that you, Chief Bell, met with representatives of the RCMP and the Parliamentary Protective Service on January 28th; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Do you have a document to reference? And I'm going to apologise, I met with several different people on several different occasions.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: For sure. So I can turn it up if it would be helpful. It's just from your witness statement, though. So why don't we do that.

It's WTS00000029. And I think from my notes that it's near the bottom of page 8 is where we see that reference.

So Chief Bell, I see there on January 28th, at 4:30 p.m., you attended a meeting. Do you see at the very bottom of that page?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.
MS. LAUREN PEARCE: And if you could just keep scrolling onto page 9, just that top paragraph there.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I recall the meeting.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay, great.

Thank you, that's enough with that document.

I just want to ask you some questions about that meeting. So first of all, my understanding is that Ottawa is the police of jurisdiction in the Ottawa Region, the Ottawa Police Service I mean.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. And that the RCMP has a much more limited policing mandate in the Ottawa Region; is that fair?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: At a high-level, that's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: And so that limited mandate includes protective policing, which I understand to be kind of ensuring the safety of certain protected persons. Does that sound right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do -- I am not totally versed on what the protective policing mandate is. I think it encompasses more than that, but I'm not best suited to answer that question.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: For sure, for sure. But to the best of your knowledge, it includes the protection of people, such as the Prime Minister and the Governor General and that kind of thing?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It does include that, yes.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Great. Okay. And then the RCMP also has a mandate, including federal matters, such as, you know, national security, terrorism, that kind of a thing, to the extent it's occurring in the Ottawa Region?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. And so I want to turn to the Parliamentary Protective Service, or PPS. I'll use those terms interchangeably if that's okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, for sure.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So my understanding is that they are responsible for the physical security of the Parliamentary Precinct, which includes kind of the grounds and building of Parliament Hill.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So my understanding is that they are responsible for the physical security of the Parliamentary Precinct, which includes kind of the grounds and building of Parliament Hill.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So my understanding is that they are responsible for the physical security of the Parliamentary Precinct, which includes kind of the grounds and building of Parliament Hill.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. And you talked about this a little bit in response to some questions from counsel for former Chief Sloly, but I want to make sure I got this right. So my understanding is that PPS officers are not actually sworn police officers under the Police Services Act; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. And I also understand that they are not peace officers for the purposes of the Criminal Code.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That I'm -- that I am not sure of. I don't believe so, but I can't definitively say.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. But what you can
definitely say is that they don't have the power to lay a criminal charge?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That is correct.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** And so what I think I heard from you is that if there is a criminal offence on Parliament Hill, PPS generally will call the Ontario Police Service to come and address it.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** The Ottawa Police Service, yes.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Excuse me, the Ottawa Police Service. Thank you. And that's the same if there is a major incident on Parliament Hill, that PPS would call the Ottawa Police Service to assist.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So the Ottawa Police Service would be a primary responder to it, but depending on the nature of the incident it may be us, it may be a national security -- if it's a national security issue, it may be the RCMP. So we would be a primary response, and then we would have to decide amongst the other policing organisations in the city who would be doing the follow up.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Right. Okay, that makes sense. But in either case, whether it's Ottawa responding or RCMP responding or some other police service, potentially, it's true that where there's a criminal offence that occurs on Parliament Hill, PPS can't deal with it alone.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That's -- not for the purposes of laying criminal charges, no.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Okay. Is it fair to say that
PPS officers do not have nearly the same kind of training that police officers have?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It would be unfair for me to comment on that. I'm not sure of the curriculum of the Parliamentary Protective Services training.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** That's fair. And -- but at least to your knowledge, you're not aware of PPS officers attending anything that's equivalent to Ontario Police College?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Oh, no, I'm -- I am aware that there is extensive training that is provided to Parliamentary Protective Services, I just -- I can't comment on what the content of it is. But I do absolutely know that they are trained.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Okay, okay. So my understanding is that the Parliamentary Protective Service, their jurisdiction over Parliament Hill, subject to what we just talked about of them kind of needing assistance from other policing partners; otherwise, their jurisdiction is actually exclusive. Is that fair?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** To the Parliamentary Precinct, yes.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Correct. Okay. And so unless PPS invites the Ottawa Police Service to come and respond to an issue on Parliament Hill, your Ottawa Police Service officers are not, you know, conducting routine patrols in the area.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So we actually don't need an invitation if we're called upon to there to provide
police of jurisdiction responsibilities, but in terms of general patrol or general activity within the Parliamentary Precinct, no we don't engage in that, we -- that is the responsibility and left to the Parliamentary Protective Services.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Right. Right. Okay. And my understanding is that during the convoy protests that didn't change; right? That PPS remained of primary responsibility on Parliament Hill.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** That is correct.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Okay. And my understanding, let me know if this is consistent with your understanding, Ottawa Police Service officers weren't actually permitted on Parliament Hill unless they were directed there by the NCRCC?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I can't comment on that. I don't know. I don't know the answer to that.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** Okay.

Maybe we can just pull up a document quickly to assist. A document here, I've got OPP00004262.

And Chief Bell, just while this is coming up, this is the January 29th Operational Plan that you've looked at a couple of times already.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Okay. Thank you.

**MS. LAUREN PEARCE:** And I'm hoping within that document we can please turn to page 32 of the PDF, so quite a bit of scrolling.

So the very -- I'm looking at the very top of that page. Can you scroll up a little bit?

**COMMISSIONER ROULEAU:** You have to scroll down.
I'm sorry, up, up, yes. All right.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Thank you. So Interim Chief Bell, I wanted to ask you about the second paragraph that you can see there starting, "Any decisions regarding support for PPS." Do you see that there?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. And then in the parentheses I see, "No OPS member shall be on Parliament Hill unless directed by the NCRCC." Do you see that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I do.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So does that appear to be consistent with what I just said, which is that Ottawa Police Service officers couldn't have responded on Parliament Hill other than if they were directed by the NCRCC?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No. What I -- and I'm going to suggest this is a question better posed to Inspector Lucas -- but as I read this, what I understand is that all of the movement in and around the area of the Parliamentary precinct will be directed and controlled by the NCRCC. That would be typical and understandable, because it's going to be important that there's communication and deconfliction around activities that are happening between the Ottawa Police Service, the Ontario Provincial Police, RCMP, and Parliamentary Protective Services. That would be funnelled through the NCRCC because there are -- the Incident Commander and representatives from all of those agencies present there.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Right. So I actually don't think we're disagreeing on this point. The point I'm making is
that even in the event of the convoy protests, it didn’t change
that Ottawa Police Service officers were not asserting
jurisdiction over Parliament Hill? It was still PPS
jurisdiction unless directed by the NCRCC?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So my understanding --
I think we're done with that document for now, thank you -- so
my understanding is that PPS' jurisdiction extends to Wellington
Street, and then it shifts to the Ottawa Police Service's
jurisdiction; is that consistent with your understanding?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Comes up to the gate
of Parliament Hill's, yes.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: So beyond the gate of
Parliament Hill, so that the sidewalk and then Wellington Street
is all Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. Well,
Ottawa's Police -- again, Ottawa Police's jurisdiction for the
entire area. PPS has responsibility for safety and security up
to -- on the Parliamentary precinct, which extends to the
sidewalk of Wellington Street.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Just a note, you're out of
time, so you're going to have to wrap up.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. I will make my last
couple of points very quickly.

So my understanding is that during the protest,
there was some construction cladding at that area?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I'm not sure of that.
MS. LAUREN PEARCE: My understanding is that PPS officers generally, during the protest, stayed within their jurisdiction on Parliament Hill. They were not responding on Wellington Street?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don't know that for a fact, but that would be my expectation.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: To your knowledge, were PPS officers a resource that you understood to be available to the Ottawa Police Service in assisting with the police response to the convoy?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So the PPS was part of our integrated command at the NCRCC, and in that, they would be able to be assigned taskings that were appropriate to their responsibilities, particularly in and around the Parliamentary precinct.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Certainly. But in terms of Ottawa's response to the convoy, which I think was generally outside of the Parliamentary precinct, did you or your colleagues knew the PPS officers as a resource that were available to you as a part of that response?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I can't respond to that. That would need to be directed to Superintendent Bernier or Inspector Lucas.

MS. LAUREN PEARCE: Okay. So I think I will leave it there and use my time there. Thanks very much.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you. Next is the CCLA.
--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. CARA ZWIBEL:

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Sorry. Good afternoon, Chief Bell. I'm also coming in from Zoom. Can you hear me and see me okay?

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: We can hear you but cannot see you yet.

CARA ZWIBEL: Oh, that's because I have not turned on my camera. My apologies. There we go.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Okay.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: My name is Cara Zwibel. I am a lawyer for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and I just have a few questions for you.

You were asked earlier about the Ottawa Police Service's authority to really pre-emptively stop traffic from coming into the city. And I think you said that police have the ability to prevent vehicles from entering an area, and you mentioned that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms doesn't protect, you know, vehicles; it protects individuals.

But you also said that it was clear that the truckers were coming to Ottawa and that part of their plan was to be in the Nation's Capital; is that right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: And part of the role of the Ottawa Police Service and any police service in Canada is to facilitate the right to peacefully protest. Would you agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: And in some cases, the manner
in which a protest is carried out is a core part of the message that’s being conveyed. So as an example, if you had individuals who wanted to protest insufficient bike lanes and they wanted to ride their bikes, the use of the bikes is an important part of the message of the protest; would you agree with that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It can be, yes. In the example you gave, yes, I would agree with that.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. And in the case of the convoy, when the trucks -- we heard from other witnesses -- when the trucks entered Ontario, there were some OPP, PLT teams that were in touch with some of the convoy organizers. Are you aware of that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I am.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: And those PLT teams didn’t give the truckers any indication that roads would be closed or that they would not be given access to the City of Ottawa, correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don't know what instructions via Ontario Provincial Police liaison team members gave.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: But certainly, it was the expectation, you understood it to be the expectation of the truckers that they would be allowed to enter the City of Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I can't comment on that. I don't know what the expectations of the truckers were.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: At the time that the convoy started, leaving sort of the legal authority aside, would you agree that the OPS wouldn't have had the operational capacity or resources to prevent this number of vehicles from coming into
the city?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with that.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay, thank you.

Just a couple of questions also about the federal Emergencies Act, and the declaration of the emergency after that Act.

There was an operational plan in place that was, I understand, still evolving a little bit before the emergency was declared, but the nature of that operational plan didn’t substantially change following the invocation of the Act; is that accurate?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: And I know you mentioned that one of the more helpful things that the Emergencies Act gave you was the ability to create some exclusion zones?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: But you agree that the police have a common law power to create exclusion zones provided there are grounds to do that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So I would agree that we were developing a plan based on those authorities, but when the Emergency Act came in, it negated the need to rely on those authorities and provided a really well-structured legislative framework for us to be able to enact an exclusionary zone and explain the legal authorities and our officers' legal authorities, so all of our members on the frontline so they could clearly, efficiently carry out their duties to enforce
that exclusionary zone.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: So the Act was helpful in terms of it being sort of something you could show to the protestors and to your officers to say, "This gives us the authority," sort of a good demonstration of that authority?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I would suggest it was much more than just a good demonstration of authority. It was a very clear, legal framework that we could rely on to create the exclusionary zone with direct wording and intentions around creating that exclusionary zone.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. And did the Ottawa Police Service create exclusion zones during the more recent Rolling Thunder event?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So we didn’t create and exclusionary zone in the same way. We created a restricted zone in our downtown core for vehicular traffic.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. So you weren’t clearing individuals out of there but you were saying, “These are areas where vehicles can’t enter”?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. And you didn’t need special legislation to do that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, we worked on the authority of the -- with the City Manager to look at areas that we would look at limiting or prohibiting vehicles from flowing.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Right. But would you agree with me that the authority that the police have to do various things depends on the circumstances and the context. So when we
talked earlier about not stopping the trucks from coming into downtown, you mentioned that there was no previous with an event like this; there was nothing to suggest that there would be the level of disruption that there was. So those were pieces of the circumstances and context that were considered in making a determination that you couldn’t exclude the trucks from the city?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. And I mean in every case, would you agree with me that the police’s authority to do things depend on the circumstances, that police shouldn’t have the authority to stop people or vehicles without some grounds or reason to do so?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would -- I would agree with that in every circumstance that we exercise of authority, the situation and context that we’re in needs to be considered prior to us exercising out authority, yes.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay, thank you. In your witness statement, I think you declined to sort of provide an opinion on whether the use of the Emergencies Act was necessary. And I know my friend for the Government of Canada took you to a couple of examples of how it was helpful. Would you agree that there’s a difference between legislation or an order that is helpful and one that is necessary?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I would agree with that.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. It would probably be helpful to the police’s work to have all kinds of authority but
there are other considerations that we need to consider; right?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. And you stand by the position that’s in your witness statement that you don’t take sort of a position one way or the other on the necessity of the Emergencies Act?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I would believe that this is exactly the forum of the necessity, that that will be fleshed out and discussed. It was exceptionally beneficial to us in the execution of our plan, well-utilized, and created a stable environment for us to actually remove the occupants from our streets.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay, thank you, just one more area. And I think this has been covered so I just want to doublecheck. I apologize. I’ve had some issues with my Zoom so if you’ve answered this, I apologize. The role of Navigator, what was your understanding of their role?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Well, they were a crisis communications firm that were contracted in to provide us crisis-communication advice.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: And my understanding is that they were contracted prior to the Convoy to deal with some of the change management within the organization and then there was a bit of a pivot; is that accurate?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MS. CARA ZWIBEL: Okay. Were they involved in operation decisions?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: They weren’t involved
in making operational decisions, no.

**MS. CARA ZWIBEL:** Okay. And when you became the Acting Chief, did you end the contract with Navigator at that time?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** When I became Interim Chief, yes, I ended the contract.

**MS. CARA ZWIBEL:** Okay. Thank you, Chief Bell. I don’t have any other questions.

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Thank you very much.

**COMMISSIONER ROULEAU:** Okay, thank you.

Next is the Democracy Fund.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. ROB KITTREDGE:

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** All right. Good afternoon, Interim Chief Bell. I’m Rob Kittredge acting for the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms at these hearings and I have just a few questions for you today. And to show my hand a little bit, they’re all geared at, as you say, fleshing out and discussing the necessity of invoking the Emergencies Act.

I’d like to show with these questions that, under your leadership, the OPS was quite capable of clearing the protests even if the Federal Emergencies Act was never invoked.

So as I understand your testimony today, you identified four ways in which the invocation of the Emergencies Act may have been helpful to police in clearing the protest. First, it streamlined the swearing-in of officers from other jurisdictions. Second, it made it easier to procure towing services. And third, it -- the power to freeze financial accounts may have led some protestors to leave Ottawa
voluntarily. Is that a fair characterization of your first three points?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, but I don’t believe I said “may” have been helpful. I believe I indicated it “was” helpful.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Which one, the ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: All ---

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: --- power to raise ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: All of them.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Okay.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: All of them were helpful.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: I’ll admit a little editorial work on my part there. So things were a little bit rushed at the end of your time with Commission counsel earlier and I want to make sure that I properly understand your fourth and final point, which was, basically, you said something like, “The invocation of the Act created a solid legal framework within which police could do their work.” Am I understanding you correctly to think that the framework that you’re referring to there meant the power to create an exclusion zone?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Okay. So going to your first point, streamlining the swearing-in of officers from other jurisdictions, Acting Deputy Chief Ferguson testified that saved a few hours and some paperwork; would you agree with that testimony?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No. And not to
contradict Deputy Chief Ferguson but, as my role of CAO, one of my responsibilities was the processing of those swearing-ins. It is a much more labour-intensive administrative process that has several checks and balances and layers to it so I wouldn’t personally describe it in hours; I would describe it in, normally, days. It likely could be streamlined into 24 hours but there are a lot of people you have to line up to be able to do that.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right. So in short, though, it could likely have been done in 24 hours?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It could likely have been done in 24 hours but I don’t -- I don’t think the benefit was as to when it could get done. I think the benefit was to -- that as soon as a member was boots-on-the-ground in Ottawa, landed in Ottawa, they were operationally ready to be deployed, and that’s what we needed as we were bringing members in from across the country.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: But you don’t dispute that those officers could have been sworn in without emergency powers, do you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Oh, no, they could -- they absolutely could have been sworn in without it. It just could have created a backlog and lag time ---

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: --- particularly with the number of officers we were bringing to the city from all across the country.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right. So in this
regard, though, the invocation of the *Emergencies Act* was
helpful to police but not necessary, strictly speaking; is that
fair to say?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It was helpful to us,
yes.

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** All right, thank you. Your
second point, making it easier to access towing services, in the
end, emergency powers were not used to compel any tow-truck
drivers to provide services, were they?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I don’t know that.

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** Not to your knowledge?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So that could --
that’s a better question directed at Supt. Bernier who directly
interacted on that.

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** Fair enough. And he is
expected to testify to the effect that emergency powers were not
needed to compel towing companies to supply trucks or drivers
because by February 13th, the OPP had retained 34 tow trucks with
willing drivers; do you agree with that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** I’ll let him testify
to that; I don’t know that.

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** But you wouldn’t have any
reason to dispute that if that’s what he testifies?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** If that’s what he
testifies to, yes.

**MR. ROB KITTREDGE:** All right. And I guess, just
to cut to the chase here, again, the invocation of the
*Emergencies Act* was not -- was -- might have been helpful but

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.
was not necessary to police with regard to obtaining towing services; is that fair to say?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Again, I can’t comment on that because I don’t know the structure or the challenges that were -- occurred with towing. That was a planning responsibility.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right. But if it was not used, in fact -- like, if it turns out ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: This is like the fourth time you’re going at that same question so I ---

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right, fair enough. I’ll move on.

On your third point, the idea that the power to freeze financial accounts may have incentivized protesters to leave Ottawa voluntarily, you don’t have any direct knowledge of that, do you?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, I do not.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: And the same with the point put to you by Canada’s counsel that the freezing order may have deterred some people from coming to Ottawa to join the protest?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I don’t have any direct knowledge of that.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: And so you don’t -- you have no direct knowledge of the power to freeze financial accounts being necessary to the clearing of the protest, then, I guess?

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: No, I do not.
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: You speculate that perhaps it helped but ---

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Yes.

Okay. Thank you. And on your final point, the power to create an exclusion zone, there are other non-emergency powers police could have used to exclude people from the area; weren’t there?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, there were.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Yes. And so here again, the emergency power to create an exclusion zone may have been helpful and may have been very helpful to police, but it wasn’t, strictly speaking, necessary; was it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The exclusionary zone and the powers granted around it were very clear. There was no debate about them. And that’s what we leveraged to actually execute our plan. The need for the exclusionary zone was -- it was very important because we needed to be able to limit the movement of pedestrians in and out of that area. That is an uncommon authority that police exercise. So the ability for us to be very clear in how we were managing, striking up, and excluding people from that zone was extremely important to us to be able to execute the plans that we did.

MR. ROB KITTREDGE: Right. But in the absence of the invocation of the Emergencies Act, the OPS would have been able to clear the protests?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: In the absence of the invocation of the Emergencies Act, the OPS, the OPP, the RCMP, as part of a unified command were going to clear the protests.
MR. ROB KITTREDGE: All right. Well thank you very much. Those are my questions.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you. Next we have the Province of Alberta.

MS. MANDY ENGLAND: Good afternoon.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon.

MS. MANDY ENGLAND: It’s Mandy England for the Government of Alberta. The questions that we were going to cover off this afternoon have already been addressed by counsel, so we have no questions.

Thank you very much, sir.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you.

Okay. Next is the Ottawa Police Service.

--- CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: David Migicovsky, counsel for the Ottawa Police.

Good afternoon, Chief Bell.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Migicovsky.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Many of my questions have been answered, but I do have a few areas that I want to talk to you about.

One of the things we heard last week was some information forwarded by Mr. Ball of the Ottawa Hotel Association.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And I believe that was brought to the attention of the police. And did the police
follow up that information to determine whether it was corroborated?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, they did. And as I indicated this morning, we determined that there was no long-term booking of any hotels in the city, that the reference to what Mr. Ball had made was actually a three-day booking, that the 90 days, I forget the actual number, hadn’t materialized.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Sure. Could I ask you please, Mr. Clerk, to turn up OPS14525, please? And it’s page 31. I’m sorry, could you back? I’m sorry. It’s page 3.

These are your notes, Chief, of an update briefing on the 29th of January 2022. So that would be the Saturday after the convoy had arrived.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And you have a note about some information you obtained at that point from the hotels that day. What was the information that you obtained that day?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: What I obtained was that hotels had only been booked for Friday/Saturday and that groups were leaving on Sunday. There was no long-term booking.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Thank you very much.

You can take that off. Thank you.

I want to move on and talk about the question of temporary parking. We’ve heard some evidence in this proceeding about temporary parking or staging for trucks being arranged by the City with the assistance of the police. Do you recall that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, I do.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And can you explain, is
that something new? Or is that something that has been done in
the past with other demonstrations in Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So to my recollection,
I don’t recall us ever establishing temporary parking for other
demonstrations. This was the first time, I believe, that we’d
attempted that.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And has it been done for
other special events, however, in Ottawa?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: For other special
events, yes, it would be a regular and common occurrence.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And why was it done in
this case? What would be the alternative to not doing it?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It was done in this
case to try and limit the footprint that we -- that trucks would
come to for the demonstration and allow people to park in other
areas and access downtown through bussing, through rideshare,
however, so that they could participate in the protestor
demonstration without actually bringing their vehicle into the
downtown core.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Thank you. You talked
earlier in your evidence about heavy machinery, and there was
reference to a crane being in downtown Ottawa. And I believe
you explained that it was not a crane; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct. It
was a boom ---

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And can you just remind me
what the -- what that piece of equipment was?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That piece of
equipment was a boom truck. A truck that would normally be used to lift construction equipment and deliver construction equipment.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And what was it used for?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It was used for two purposes. One is the boom was extended and a flag was raised from it, and I also believed it was used as a temporary set up for stages for speeches and events.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And was it used to cause any damage?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** No.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And apart from that piece of equipment, was there any other heavy equipment allowed into the red zone?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Not to my knowledge, no.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** You’ve talked about the Ottawa Police’s experience with demonstrations and you’ve told us that you have quite a bit, or the Ottawa Police Service has quite a bit of experience.

Can I ask you a question more specifically, does the Ottawa Police Service has experience with protestors using vehicles?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And can you tell me a little bit about that?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** There’s multiple -- had been multiple vehicle-borne protests every year in and
around the area. And I can think of five or six different examples. One, farm, where tractors were brought into the downtown core, another truck related one where tractor trailers were brought in. Vehicle-borne protests in passenger vehicles around the -- around Indian farmers, East Indian farmers. Protests around Sri Lankan and Tamil conflict that is existing. There’s several events that occur, several demonstrations and protests that occurred in the past, where vehicles were used and brought into the downtown core.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And did that result in a staging of vehicles on Wellington Street?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it did.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And prior to the Freedom Convoy demonstration, was it the practice of the City to direct the closure of streets and creation of exclusion zones prohibiting vehicular traffic to groups of protestors?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No, it wasn’t.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And what is the impact -- I understand that is now being done, correct, by ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is ---

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: The City of Ottawa, you indicated has delegated authority, and in consultation with the police, those exclusion zones are being created?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: What is the impact of creating these vehicular exclusion zones on the residents of the community or the people who have legitimate reason to travel to those exclusion zones?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It’s difficult to assess, because as I indicated in my testimony before, community impact is one of the main things that we’re looking at as we’re looking to manage protests and demonstrations in that area.

So I think the impact could be two-fold. One is it may impede their progress in the area at some points in some ways, but on the other side, it will eliminate the potential that such an occurrence would happen in their neighbourhoods again.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And the -- what about the police resources needed now that you create these vehicular exclusion zones?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: The police resources and City resources are considerable to be able to execute that plan.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And was it your -- was your past experience or the Ottawa Police Service’s past experience successful in terms of resolving protests, including those with vehicles, without the type of community trauma we saw in this case?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Past experience since the convoy or prior to?

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Prior to ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Prior to, yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: --- the convoy.

I want to move on and talk about the Hendon Reports. And I want to ask you some information about -- some questions about what information can be gleaned from the Hendon
And just before we look at some specific reports, just generally, can you tell me what the reports said about whether or not the protestors were expected to be peaceful and law abiding?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes, it did indicate all throughout that the indications that had been received from the protestors -- the protest organizers, was that there was a desire and an intention to be peaceful and lawful.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And we’ve heard that there was a traffic plan for protesters, and I wonder if we could please turn up OPP0426, please.

(SHORT PAUSE)

**THE REGISTRAR:** Counsel, if you could, could you repeat that number?

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** Yes. It would be OPP00000426.

**THE REGISTRAR:** If I could just repeat that?

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** I’m going to move on to -- that’s okay.

**MR. JOHN MATHER:** Counsel, it may be 4262.

(SHORT PAUSE)

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** Can we just scroll down, please? Thank you. Can we just scroll down and if we go to the next -- keep going.

And then there is another plan, however, that I’m going to ask that we turn up that was a more detailed plan with a number of subplans; is that correct? And that is OPS04221.
(SHORT PAUSE)

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: I’m going to move on.

As I understand it, we’ve heard that there was an initial traffic plan, and then we heard that there was a more robust plan with a number of subplans prepared for that weekend. Is that your understanding?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yeah, that is correct.

As the intelligence continued to come in and became more refined, in terms of the size of what was going to occur, we moved from a traffic plan, the Planners then pulled together a larger, more complete, fulsome operational plan.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And a question was raised last week as to whether that was something just pulled off the shelf. Do you have any comment in response to that?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So while I wasn’t directly involved in the planning efforts or the development of the plan, all of the information that I have seen; the back and forths between the Planners and Intelligence; the conversations that occurred around how to build it, would indicate it wasn’t just a pulled-off-the-shelf plan; it was one that was fully developed and sounded out around the circumstances that were evolving and developing and coming towards Ottawa.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And did the Hendon reports contain reference to the possibility of fringe groups and lone actors and the possibility of violence?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And were those seen as significant risks?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: As significant risks, ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Were they seen as --

they were significant risks if they materialized. They didn’t
materialize. It was risks that we identified through our threat
assessment and our planning process.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And so did the plan
address the possibility of there being violence or serious
criminality?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, it did.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And we’ve heard about POU
unit who are specially trained. In advance of the
demonstration, did OPS take steps to get additional POU units on
alert to be in Ottawa, if necessary, in anticipation of
potential violence from fringe groups?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, we did.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And was their use, in
fact, necessary?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, their use was
necessary over the course of managing the dynamics that we had,
specifically towards lone actors around issues of violence. I’m
unsure but the POU units, every resource that came to Ottawa was
utilized.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: I’m talking about in the
first weekend.

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: In the first weekend,
POU units were utilized in terms of crowd management.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Thank you.
We’ve -- I want to ask you about a couple of the Hendon reports, and I wonder if we could start with the January 20th report itself, rather than the summary. And so if I could ask you, please, to turn up OPP00001024?

And so you’ll see that is the January 20th one. And we’ve had our attention drawn to certain passages, and I wonder if you could turn to the second page, please. Thank you.

And the second paragraph indicates:

“Open source research has identified a Facebook page titled ‘Freedom Convoy 2022’.”

Then it tells you the number of “likes” and how many it was being followed by:

“All of the comments...expressed support for this event.”

What do we see in the next sentence about the number of people supporting the event and the number who may participate as of the 20th, so eight days before?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That those numbers are unknown.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And I’d like you also to look at the third-to-last paragraph on that same page. So if we just -- what information -- what do you take from the information in that third-to-last paragraph on that page?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: I think there’s two pieces; one that it is the organizer promoting as a safe, lawful, and peaceful protest, while other individuals seem to be
advocating aggressive tactics.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And were the aggressive tactics prepared for?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, they were.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And if you could please go to the Assessment section on page 4? Oh, sorry; perhaps -- sorry, go back to the previous page, page 3. Yes, just the bottom of the page 3 and the Assessment section.

And then you’ll see that each Hendon report has an Assessment section; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That’s correct.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Right. And if we go, then, to the -- I just wanted you to see the heading. If we then go to the next page under that heading, the second paragraph:

“The available information suggests that the convoys may comprise thousands of tractor-trailers. It is possible that a large number of smaller vehicles, including private vehicles, may join them.”

Did that, in fact, materialize?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: There were thousands of tractors. There were very few if -- and I don’t believe any tractor-trailers that made it down into the red zone.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And does the January 20th report tell you how many people are going to attend, and how many vehicles?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No.
MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: How many will stay?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And whether they will engage in the type of criminality or antisocial behaviour we’ve heard about during this inquiry?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And so that’s on the 20th. Based on what we’ve heard here that ultimately the Ottawa Police Service needed, I think, several thousand additional resources, based on what you see here, would it have made sense to mobilize 2,000 additional officers from somewhere else at this point in time and bring them to Ottawa, based on this information?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: No. But I also think it’s very important to note as we go through these that -- I understand the challenges of gathering this information and intelligence, and I understand that it’s imprecise and unrefined, and that’s why I tried to make the -- tried to make the point that the experience we have is so important in assessing these. So I believe every best attempt and great work was done by the Ontario Provincial Police and all the partners in bringing together this information to be able to share with communities through other police services to be able to conduct planning.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Can I ask, please, to turn up OPP00001476, on the first page. That is the Hendon Report from the afternoon of January 23rd. And if we could keep scrolling to the fourth paragraph, the fourth bullet, rather.
"Information...indicates that convoy organizers are cooperating and have developed a thorough and well-organized plan for conducting the event safely."

Is that information important to the Ottawa Police Service in its intelligence assessment?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** It is one of the pieces we take into account, yes.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** And how do you monitor the behaviour of the convoy prior to their arrival in Ottawa?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** So the convoy would've been monitored by other police agencies as it came across Canada, and I know that once it entered Ontario, it was monitored by the Ontario Provincial Police until it came to Ottawa where we took over.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** Can I ask you, please, to turn up the January 27th Hendon Report, which is OPP00000813? So you'll see this is on the Thursday. Is this the first time we have an indication of numbers?

**INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:** Yes. So there were several -- as I indicated before, the numbers and the reporting in Hendon enhanced as we went through and as we got closer to the time, and this, on the 27th, is the first day that we saw actual numbers recorded, and understandably the first day, but the first day that we got a much better picture on the numbers that would be attending.

**MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY:** Thank you.

Can I ask you now to go to the January 28th
Hendon Report, which is the Friday?
And that would be the Friday that the first
trucks start to arrive in Ottawa; correct?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That is correct.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And so if we could please
turn to OPP00000815. Thank you.

And so now we have -- so this is the day of, and
there is an estimate of the total number of vehicles ---

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: --- which indicates that
they are estimates and subject to change?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: That's correct.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And when it says they're
subject to change, does that mean it might go up, might go down?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: It could mean either.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And if you could please
turn to page 7 of the document, and just if we can scroll down
to the Assessment section.

Can you just read the first paragraph in terms of
the information that the OPP provided in this Hendon report with
respect to the duration -- expected duration? Can you just read
that out loud?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL:

"The available information indicates
that protesters plan to remain in
Ottawa at least until 2022-02-04. We
continue to identify indicators to
support at least some protesters
remaining beyond the weekend of 2022-01-29, 30. These indicators include collecting donations of cash, food, and water from supporters along the route."

Mr. David Migicovsky: Thank you. And so what do you take from that sentence in which there's an indication that some protesters will remain beyond the weekend, in the second sentence, and the first sentence which talks about them remaining until the 4th of February?

Interim Chief Steve Bell: So what I would assess from that is that there is an indication that at least some may remain beyond it, and that those remaining would remain -- the intelligence at this point would remain up until as late as the 4th of February.

Mr. David Migicovsky: Just -- thank you very much. Just a couple more questions. I want to talk about the events of the first weekend. And am I correct that the Ottawa Police did not simply allow an endless stream of convoys or vehicles to come into the core?

Interim Chief Steve Bell: That is ---

Mr. David Migicovsky: Is that correct?

Interim Chief Steve Bell: Well, the Ottawa Police, the OPP didn't allow. We did it in conjunction, but no, we didn't allow them to stream into the downtown.

Mr. David Migicovsky: And so were there strategies in place that were used and that were successful in diverting some convoy members from coming into the core of downtown?
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, there were.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And on that first weekend, in conjunction with your policing partners, were there periods of time where other traffic mitigation measures were taken, such as dealing with bridges, off ramps?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, there were.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And finally, we've heard some individuals during this Inquiry talk about officers not coming down hard enough or not taking enforcement actions. I just want to be clear, was any direction given to police officers to ignore criminality?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Absolutely not, and what I will say, and I said it before and I want to say it again, our officers, our officers, the officers of the Ottawa Police Service, the OPP, the RCMP, and every other agency that came in worked in exceptionally difficult and challenging circumstances at an exceptionally difficult and challenging time. So they -- their -- to criticize their activities is challenging for me because they did absolutely everything they could to help support this city and remove this occupation.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: And so just one final question. So are there circumstances, however, where in the exercise of their discretion it may not be appropriate for a police officer to take enforcement action?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Yes, that's correct, and I think I've highlighted a couple of examples today.

MR. DAVID MIGICOVSKY: Thank you very much.

Those are my questions, thank you.
COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you.
Any re-examination?

MR. FRANK AU: Just one or two questions, if I may.

--- RE-EXAMINATION BY MR. FRANK AU:

MR. FRANK AU: Chief Bell, counsel for ---

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Just identify for the record again, please.

MR. FRANK AU: It's Frank Au for the Commission.
Chief Bell, my friend, counsel for the City of Ottawa, put to you the document, OPS00008418. We're calling up the document.

If we can go to the first page so we can look at the title.

My first question will be to ask if you can help us with the nature of the meeting?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So sorry, can you go to the top, please?

MR. FRANK AU: So it simply says:
"Convoy Briefing #18, Tuesday, February [the] 8th, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m."

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So by this point, we had a regular eyes briefing schedule, and I believe we were at two if not three a day, where there was a briefing where all of the heads of areas would come together to get updates and plans, operational targets or issues would be addressed there, and everyone would then go and execute on what they needed to do.

So this was one of those updates.
MR. FRANK AU: All right.

If you could go to page 4. So scroll down a little bit.

Do you see the comment attributed to you in the middle of the page, it says:

"Bell - concerns that City has are political concerns not day to day - if City sits at table is concerned about sitting down as City, Feds will back down and leave it to the City."

What does that mean?

INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: So one of the concerns that we had, and this wasn't confirmed from any discussions with anyone in the City, but one of the things that we were speculating about around the challenges with engaging different levels of government and potentially negotiating or potentially having discussions with convoy leaders, was that when the first one went, and if it was the City, then they would be the ones who would be responsible for conducting the negotiation.

This was never confirmed. We were just wondering or whiteboarding what some of the concerns about different levels of government would be -- would or could have in coming into negotiations.

MR. FRANK AU: Thank you. Those are my questions.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: Thank you.

So that terminates your evidence. Thank you very much Acting Chief Bell.
INTERIM CHIEF STEVE BELL: Thank you very much, sir.

COMMISSIONER ROULEAU: And we will adjourn until tomorrow morning at 9:30.

THE REGISTRAR: The Commission is adjourned. La Commission est ajournée.

--- Upon adjourning at 6:31 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I, Sandrine Martineau-Lupien, a certified court reporter, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an accurate transcription of my notes/records to the best of my skill and ability, and I so swear.

Je, Sandrine Martineau-Lupien, une sténographe officiel, certifie que les pages ci-hauts sont une transcription conforme de mes notes/enregistrements au meilleur de mes capacités, et je le jure.

__________________________
Sandrine Martineau-Lupien