

Commission Site Visits August 23-27

By *Barbara McLean*

Members of the Mass Casualty Commission team conducted visits to Portapique, Wentworth, Glenholme, Debert, Shubenacadie, Onslow, Enfield, and surrounding communities from August 23-27. The exact schedule will depend on the weather, but we expect our team's work to take about three days.

These site visits will include the use of aerial drones and other camera equipment to take accurate and respectful footage for use during public proceedings and throughout the Commission's work. Drones are being used as they are efficient investigative tools that save time and require fewer people. Some of the footage will be taken after dark. Our team will use the footage to gather more information about terrain, routes, and locations.

We know that the current conditions, particularly the foliage in the area, do not match how it would have been in April of 2020. This footage is not intended to represent direct reen-

actments. Rather, these images will help to provide context as we establish what happened on April 18-19, 2020. We are doing this work now because we have enough information to inform what footage is required for our proceedings. It is important to us to minimize disruption in these communities, and it is our intention to complete this work next week.

We will be sending a small team for the site visits and they will be mindful of the time they spend in the communities while completing their important work.

If you have any questions or information you think would be helpful to our work, please do not hesitate to reach out to info@MassCasualtyCommission.ca or 902-407-7532.

If you are experiencing distress and overwhelming emotions please remember, you can reach the Nova Scotia Provincial Crisis Line 24/7 at 1-888-429-8167.

Barbara McLean is Investigations Director, Mass Casualty Commission



Investigations Director, Barbara McLean briefs Scott Spicer, a team member during the Mass Casualties Commission drone investigation in the Enfield area. (Submitted)

Commissioners Update - August 16, 2021

The following is an update from the The Mass Casualty Commission on August 16th. Because of the complexity and sensitivities surrounding the commission hearings, we have reprinted in its entirety, without editing, their submission.

The update was authored by: Hon. J. Michael MacDonald, Chair; Leanne J. Fitch (Ret. Police Chief, M.O.M.) and Dr. Kim Stanton. The beginning of the submission listed the following: Quick summary: Rules of Practice and Procedure shared on our website; Continuing to receive production and prepare disclosure and Community outreach ongoing

We are making steady progress with our investigation, and we remain committed to working in ways that are transparent and consultative. This approach informed the development of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure that are now available on our website. The Rules of Practice and Procedure (also known as the "Rules") will guide the Commission's various public proceedings—including public hearings, roundtables, witness panels and community meetings. These Rules will ensure everyone taking part in our public proceedings has a common understanding of roles, process and approach. Thank you to all Participants who provided comments and suggestions; this input was reviewed and considered by the Commissioners before the Rules were finalized and shared on our website.

As part of our work investigating the April 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia, our team has collected tens of thousands documents and information from a range of sources. These are collected through a process called production (see definition below). The Commission continues to receive documents and information. Consistent with our trauma-informed approach, each document is reviewed for content such as privacy, personal information and graphic content. Documents and information are then disclosed to Participants (through a process called disclosure, which includes the signing of undertakings that ensures the information received remains confidential until made public) and will be used to create foundational documents.

Foundational documents allow us to summarize a large volume of documents and information from a variety of sources and introduce them into evidence. They will help make the work of the Commission more transparent and efficient for everyone involved. We are preparing to share the first foundational documents with the Participants as they are developed and with the public this fall.

Our investigations team continues to conduct witness interviews, review documents provided in production/disclosure and conduct site visits in the areas most affected. The next phase of this work will include the use of aerial drones and other equipment to capture accurate and respectful footage of the communities for use during public proceedings and throughout the Commission's work. This footage will help provide information about terrain, routes and locations to better understand what happened. We will share more detail in the coming days and weeks so

community members know what to expect and when we will be in their communities.

We remain committed to helping you understand what to expect and how to be involved in our work. Over the coming weeks, we will share a brief introduction to the Commission by mail with people living in the communities that were most affected. We will include details about where to learn more and how to get in touch with us with questions or information that could assist our work.

Given the easing of public health restrictions during the pandemic, we are beginning to plan for in-person community engagement in the most affected communities. This will be another way for interested community members to learn more about the Commission and our work, and share information with us. We will provide more information in our regular updates and online at MassCasualtyCommission.ca.

To help you stay up to date, we will keep sharing regular updates and posting answers to frequently asked questions on our website. We encourage you to follow the Commission on Facebook and Twitter, and to help spread the word about ways to engage by sharing our posts.

Respectfully submitted: The Mass Casualty Commission, Hon. J. Michael MacDonald, Chair; Leanne J. Fitch (Ret. Police Chief, M.O.M.) and Dr. Kim Stanton.

The following is a table of explanations, which has been reformatted to our publishing standards. Information was not edited or changed in any way.

Production and Disclosure: This is a legal process where individuals, organizations and institutions are compelled to share information. Through the production process, the Commission has the ability to subpoena documents and information from various sources. When documents are shared with Participants, this is called disclosure. Disclosed documents will be used to create foundational documents.

Rules of Practice and Procedure: Developed collaboratively with Participants, these Rules ensure everyone understands the roles, processes and approach for public proceedings.

Foundational Documents: Summarizes large volumes of documents to allow facts to be placed in evidence without requiring each document to be presented orally by a witness during a public hearing. Foundational documents are intended to promote efficiency in the inquiry process and form the basis for our ongoing work. We expect to share foundational documentation this fall (2021).

Participant: Individuals and groups who applied for and have been granted the opportunity for appropriate participation in the Commission's proceedings.

Trauma informed: A commitment to work in ways that minimizes harm, recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms, and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's life.

Casualty Commission Updates Public on Activities

Barbara McLean

Our priority is to find out what happened during the April 2020 Mass Casualty and we are making steady progress. This week (August 21), a small group of Commission team members are taking aerial footage in the most affected communities to give us more information about

terrain, routes, and locations. We are using drones to do this work, which will give us clear, accurate footage with minimal disruption to the communities.

This work is part of our independent investigation. As our investigation continues, we are gathering information from many sources and there is no

fact too small. We encourage the public, if they have any information they think the Commission should know, please phone or email us at info@MassCasualtyCommission.ca or 902-407-7532.

Barbara McLean is Investigations Director, Mass Casualty Commission



Dr. Stephen Ellis

Cumberland-Colchester
Canada's Conservatives

1-866-673-0346

drsdelliscc@gmail.com

ON SEPTEMBER 20TH,
SEND DR. ELLIS TO OTTAWA
TO FIGHT FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE!

Authorized by the Official Agent for Dr. Stephen Ellis