



Serious Incident Response Team

Civilian Director's Report
SIRT-NL File No. 2025-0029

Stephen Ring
Director
December 15, 2025

Introduction

On August 5, 2025, the Serious Incident Response Team of Newfoundland and Labrador (SIRT-NL) was notified by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) about a complaint of excessive force that had been brought to their attention by the RNC Public Complaints Commission (RNC PCC).

Mandate

SIRT-NL is a civilian led oversight agency that conducts its own investigations into serious incidents. Serious incidents within this context are those involving serious injury, death, sexual offence, domestic violence, or any matter of significant public interest arising from the actions of a police officer in Newfoundland and Labrador. Because this matter involved an allegation of serious injury being caused by police officers, it fell within SIRT-NL mandate. I directed an investigation into this matter on September 11, 2025.

The strategy for the investigation was a traditional one focusing on interviewing witnesses and obtaining any corroborating and/or refuting evidence that was available.

Terminology

I have made the following substitutions to protect the privacy of those involved:

- “Affected person” or “AP” for the individual who alleged he was assaulted.
- “Subject Officer” or “SO” for the police officers who is the subject of this investigation.
- “Witness #” or “W#” for any civilian who provided relevant information.

Investigation

The SIRT-NL investigation began on September 11, 2025, and concluded on November 17, 2025.

During the investigation, SIRT-NL took the following steps:

- Collected and reviewed:
 - RNC PCC complaint form dated August 14, 2025.
 - Royal Newfoundland Constabulary investigative files 2025-5953, 2025-5981, 2025-5989, and 2025-6171.
 - RCMP SIRT referral letter and notification to SIRT-NL.
 - AP’s medical records.
 - Paramedic’s report dated January 27, 2025.
 - Report from St. John’s Lock-up.

- Subject Officers' police notes and reports.
 - Communication Center recordings associated with the calls for service related to AP on January 27, 2025.
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- Obtained audio recorded statement from AP.
 - Obtained audio recorded statements from SO1 and SO2.
 - Collected and reviewed audio recorded statements from W1.

Overview

In the early hours of January 27, 2025, RNC patrol units received multiple calls from W1 regarding her son, AP. The consistent concern across these calls indicated that AP was causing disturbances at W1's residence.

RNC officers responded to W1's residence on three separate occasions. During the third visit, SOs took AP into custody and transported him to St. John's lock-up.

AP was released from custody the following day. Later that same day, AP called for an ambulance from his home and was taken to the hospital. AP remained hospitalized for several days, during which time it was confirmed that he had sustained a broken rib and a spleen injury. The timeline established through SIRT-NL's investigation links AP's injuries to an altercation involving SOs.

Scene Survey

After obtaining W1's statement, the SIRT-NL investigator conducted a walkthrough of the property to clarify the location of key events. The residence is a two-story row house with the main floor comprising of the entrance, living room, and kitchen. The second floor, accessible by a staircase enclosed by walls, contains bedrooms, a bathroom, and a rear door leading to a fenced backyard with a wooden deck. W1 identified a window adjacent to the rear door in AP's bedroom. The layout allows for easy access between the bedroom and the deck via the window.

The Affected Person (AP)

On October 1, 2025, the SIRT-NL investigator obtained an audio recorded statement from AP. The following is a summary of AP's account of what happened:

On January 27, 2025, AP was at his mother's home when police arrived following her call for assistance. AP explained that he had argued with his mother over money and was outside near his bedroom window when officers approached. According to AP, SOs told him he had to go with them, but he questioned why and argued he had done nothing wrong. AP stated he turned toward his open window, at which point the SOs tackled him from behind, slammed him to the ground, and pinned him, causing injuries including a broken rib. AP emphasized that he did not resist or

assault the officers and noted that charges of assaulting a peace officer and resisting arrest were later withdrawn¹.

AP alleged that he made repeated requests for medical attention which were ignored. When specifically asked whether he was seen by paramedics at the lock-up, AP stated that he had not. AP told the SIRT-NL investigator that he had to seek hospital care after release, which led to a five-day hospitalization. Initially AP stated that SOs had told him he was under arrest, however, when he gave details of the incident a second time, AP was adamant that the officers did not tell him he was under arrest. When asked by the SIRT-NL investigator whether he had consumed any alcohol or drugs, AP stated “no”.

Civilian Witnesses

Witness 1 (W1)

On September 25, 2025, the SIRT-NL investigator obtained an audio recorded statement from W1. W1 is AP’s mother. The following is a summary of W1’s account of what happened:

The incident began that night when AP asked W1 for ten dollars which she could not provide, leading to tension and arguments which she admitted was partially her fault. W1 called the police twice that night out of concern for her safety and the safety of others in the home. During the second police response, W1 reported that she observed AP with his back to the officers when they grabbed him forcefully and threw him face down onto the patio, causing his head to bounce off the ground. W1 stated that it happened so fast that AP did not have the opportunity to resist and he was immediately subdued, with one officer kneeling on his lower body and the other restraining his upper body. W1 felt her pleas for exercising caution due to AP’s medical condition were ignored. After AP was handcuffed, the officers quickly pulled him down the stairs and out of the house.

W1 disputed SOs claim that AP had assaulted them, insisting he never had a chance to resist or assault anyone. She recounted that AP was badly hurt, suffering a broken rib, a damaged shoulder, and a spleen injury that required hospitalization, surgery, and blood transfusions. W1 expressed regret for calling the police, she perceived the incident as police brutality. In a later phone conversation, W1 acknowledged that AP struggled with addiction and was likely seeking money that night to buy drugs.

Witness 2 (W2)

On November 3, 2025, the SIRT-NL investigator spoke to W2 who declined to provide a statement.

While W2 declined to provide a formal recorded statement, he did speak briefly with the SIRT-NL investigator by phone. On the night of January 27, 2025, he had been arguing with AP because

¹ In his statement SO1 advised that the Crown reached out to him to gauge his interest in proceeding with the assaulting a peace officer charge. SO1 told the Crown it did not matter to him, and the matter was withdrawn.

AP wanted money, and the situation became heated. W2 stated that he was unaware of the arrest until he saw AP being taken out of the house by police. He did not witness the physical altercation between AP and the officers and offered no further details.

Subject Officers

Subject Officer 1 (SO1)

On October 23, 2025, SO1 participated in a non-custodial cautioned interview with the SIRT-NL investigator. The following is a summary of SO1's account of what happened:

SO1 recounted attending several calls on January 27, 2025, involving AP which were initiated by his mother, W1. The first call was a suicide complaint, with W1 reporting that AP was threatening to kill himself by anaphylaxis (i.e. eating a banana). When SO1 arrived, all parties were calm, and AP did not appear to be under the influence of any substance. Later, at around 3:00 a.m., another call came in reporting that AP was causing issues and throwing things around the house. SO1 responded, but AP had already left the premises. While parked nearby, SO1 encountered AP, who was now yelling and appeared to be under the influence, displaying a marked change in behavior from earlier.

During the final call, SO1 and SO2 responded to reports of AP fighting with his stepfather, W2. Upon arrival, W1 indicated that AP was jumping out a bedroom window. The officers found AP outside on the rear deck, where SO1 informed him he was being detained for breaching the peace. AP verbally resisted, pushed SO1, and was physically restrained by both officers. SO1 pinned AP to the wall, and SO2 assisted in taking AP to the ground, which was harder than intended due to slippery conditions. AP complained of rib pain, was handcuffed, and escorted to SO2's vehicle, continuing to yell and resist.

Subject Officer 2 (SO2)

On October 23, 2025, SO2 participated in a non-custodial cautioned interview with the SIRT-NL investigator. The following is a summary of SO2's account of what happened:

SO2 described his involvement as backup to SO1 during a police response to W1's residence on January 27, 2025. SO2 had prior dealings with AP and was familiar with the family. On the night in question, W1 let the officers into the house, and AP was upstairs. While SOs spoke with the stepfather downstairs, W1 called out that AP was jumping out the bedroom window. The officers rushed upstairs; SO1 went outside first onto the rear deck, while SO2 briefly checked the bedroom and saw AP exiting through the window. Both officers converged on the deck, where SO1 informed AP that he was being detained for breaching the peace due to several calls about his behavior. AP verbally resisted at first, prompting SO1 to grab one of his arms and SO2 to grab the other. AP shrugged off the officers and pushed SO1, leading SO2 to pin AP to the wall and wait

for SO1 to regain his balance. SO2 then executed a takedown maneuver, believing it was safest to bring AP to the ground as per police training. Due to the slippery deck, both SO2 and AP went to the ground harder than expected, with AP landing on his stomach and chest. SO2 handcuffed AP's left arm while AP complained of rib pain; SO1 assisted in securing the right arm. After sitting AP up to let him catch his breath, the officers escorted him through the house and down the stairs to the police car. AP refused an ambulance at that point but was provided with his rights and caution by SO2. SO2 transported AP to the lock-up, where AP continued to be verbally abusive and physically uncooperative, including cursing, spitting, and kicking at the patrol car door. At the lock-up, Corrections staff considered AP to be a liability and placed him in a cell; paramedics checked him and medically cleared him for incarceration.

RNC Recordings

As part of the investigation, SIRT-NL obtained RNC recordings for the three files where the RNC were called to W1's home along with patrol vehicle recordings. Following is a summary of those calls.

First call

- Call recorded on January 27, 2025 @ 00:30 hrs.
- The dispatchers discuss a call of a suicidal male who is threatening to kill himself by eating a banana (allergy).
- The male was reportedly having a dispute with the complainant's boyfriend.

Second call

- Call recorded on January 27, 2025 @ 03:08 hrs.
- W1 was the caller.
- W1 said her son, AP, was outside of her house trying to break in the door.
- She said that police were already there earlier and told her to call back if she had any further problems.
- W1 said she was afraid to let him in because she was afraid that he would start fighting.

Third call

- Call recorded on January 27, 2025 @ 05:11 hrs.
- W1 was the caller; she wanted police to come back to her house.
- W1 said that her son was fighting with her husband.
- She was pleading for the police to hurry up.
- The recording captures a male yelling in the background.

- W1 told the dispatcher that “he” was beating himself up.

Vehicle Radio Transmissions

- Recordings started on January 27, 2025 @ 05:13 hrs.
- Transmissions were between SO2 and RNC dispatch.
- Call was for a 'priority 1 domestic' - husband and son fighting.
- At 05:26 hrs - an officer advises dispatch that they have "one in custody".
- AP can be heard yelling "idiot".
- SO2 advises male under arrest for assault and on the way to lock-up.
- At 05:40 hrs SO1 was at lock-up with AP.
- At 05:45 hrs SO2 requests an ambulance to lock-up as "gentleman complaining of rib pain".

St. John's City Lock-up Report

On October 6, 2025, SIRT-NL spoke on the phone with staff of the St. John's Lock-up.

Staff reviewed the available records and confirmed that no video footage was accessible. He noted that AP was a frequent detainee at the lock-up facility and often posed challenges while in custody.

According to staff, AP demonstrated signs of potential violence and non-cooperation. As a precaution, he was placed in a cell and had his handcuffs removed through the small access panel in the cell door.

Paramedics Report

On November 13, 2025, medical records were received by consent of AP. The records confirm that paramedics attended St. John's lock-up at approximately 06:15 a.m. on January 27, 2025, assessed AP, and cleared him for incarceration.

Issue and Conclusion

The issue for my consideration is whether there are grounds to believe that SOs assaulted AP causing bodily harm. Assault causing bodily harm pursuant to s. 267 of the **Criminal Code** requires an assault which is an intentional application of force to a person, either directly or indirectly, without the consent of the other person along with bodily harm that interferes with the health or comfort of the person which is more than transient or trifling in nature.

I have reviewed the investigative file and have not formed reasonable grounds to believe that SOs assaulted AP. I base my opinion on the following. In the early hours of January 27, 2025, W1 made several calls to the RNC regarding her son, AP. The first call, at 12:30 a.m., was about a suicide

threat, but no intervention was needed as the situation was calm when SO1 arrived. At 3:08 a.m., W1 called again, reporting that AP was trying to break into her front door, but he had left before police arrived. The third call, at 5:11 a.m., reported a fight between AP and his stepfather, W2. SOs responded, encountered AP exiting the house from his bedroom window, and took him into custody after an altercation in which AP alleged that SOs used excessive force.

In his witness statement AP stated that on January 27, 2025, he was at his mother's home when police arrived following her call for assistance. AP explained that he had argued with his mother over money and was outside near his bedroom window when officers approached. According to AP, SOs told him he had to go with them, but he questioned why and insisted he had done nothing wrong. AP stated he turned toward his open window, at which point the SOs tackled him from behind, slammed him to the ground, and pinned him, causing injuries including a broken rib. AP emphasized that he did not resist or assault the officers and noted that charges of assaulting a peace officer and resisting arrest were later withdrawn. AP also alleged that he made repeated requests for medical attention which were ignored. When specifically asked whether he was seen by paramedics at the lock-up, AP stated that he had not. AP told the SIRT-NL investigator that he had to seek hospital care after release, which led to a five-day hospitalization. When asked by the SIRT-NL investigator whether he had consumed any alcohol or drugs, AP stated "no".

In her statement, W1 stated that she observed the arrest from an upstairs window. W1 stated that AP had his back to SOs and things happened so fast that AP didn't have the opportunity to resist. SOs grabbed AP forcefully and threw him face down onto the patio, causing his head to hit the ground. W1 stated that one officer knelt on his lower body while the other restrained his upper body, ignoring her pleas to be careful because AP had bad legs and needed surgery. W1 later learned AP suffered serious injuries and expressed regret for calling the police, describing the incident as police brutality.

In his statement, SO1 stated that he responded to multiple calls at W1's residence on January 27, 2025, concerning AP's escalating behavior. The first call was regarding a suicide complaint, when SO1 arrived AP was calm and did not appear to be under the influence. When SO1 arrived in response to the second call, AP had already left the house. SO1 parked in a nearby parking lot speaking with another RNC officer when AP came onto the parking lot and approached the officers. AP was yelling at them and now appeared to be under the influence. His demeanor was completely different from earlier that morning. During the final call, SO1 and SO2 responded to reports of AP fighting with his stepfather. Upon arrival, W1 indicated AP was jumping out a bedroom window. The officers found AP outside on the rear deck, where SO1 informed him that he was being detained for breaching the peace. AP verbally resisted, pushed SO1, and was physically restrained by both officers. SO1 pinned AP to the wall, and SO2 assisted in taking AP to the ground, which was harder than intended due to slippery conditions. AP complained of rib pain, was handcuffed, and escorted to SO2's vehicle, continuing to yell and resist.

In his statement, SO2 described his role as backup to SO1 during the last call to W1's residence on January 27, 2025. SO2 had prior dealings with AP but was not familiar with the specific circumstances that night until arriving on scene. Upon entry, SO2 and SO1 were informed by AP's mother that he was upstairs; moments later, she called out that AP was jumping out the bedroom window. SO2 briefly checked the bedroom and then joined SO1 and AP on the rear deck. SO1 told AP he was being detained for breaching the peace. AP verbally resisted, shrugged off the officers, and pushed SO1. SO2 pinned AP to the wall and, finding AP uncooperative, decided that the safest place was on the ground and executed a takedown maneuver as per his training. Due to the slippery deck, both SO1 and AP went to the ground harder than intended. SO2 handcuffed AP, who complained of rib pain, and after assisting AP to catch his breath, escorted him to the police car. AP refused an ambulance at the scene and was verbally abusive, spitting and kicking the car door during transport to the lock-up. At the lock-up, AP continued to be uncooperative and was medically cleared by paramedics. SO2 emphasized that the force used was consistent with training and not intended to cause harm, and that he acted appropriately given AP's resistance and the challenging conditions.

W2 declined to provide a formal recorded statement but spoke briefly with a SIRT-NL investigator by phone. On the night of January 27, 2025, he had been arguing with AP because AP wanted money, and the situation became heated. W2 stated that he was unaware of the arrest until he saw AP being taken out of the house by police. He did not witness the physical altercation between AP and the officers and offered no further details.

RNC recordings provide a timeline of the escalating situation that SOs encountered and their response. The first call, recorded at 00:30 hrs, involved a report of a suicidal male threatening to kill himself by eating a banana due to an allergy; officers attended and found the situation calm. The second call, at 03:08 hrs, captured W1 reporting that her son was outside trying to break into her house, expressing fear of letting him in because she anticipated violence. The third call, at 05:11 hrs, was urgent, with W1 pleading for police assistance as AP was fighting with her husband and "beating himself up" - a male could be heard yelling in the background. Vehicle radio transmissions began at 05:13 hrs, noting a "priority 1 domestic" call. At 05:26 hrs, officers advised dispatch that they had "one in custody," and AP can be heard yelling "idiot." The officers' reported AP was under arrest for assaulting a peace officer and were enroute to the lock-up. At 05:45 hrs, SO2 requested an ambulance to attend the lock-up because AP was complaining of rib pain.

A telephone discussion with staff at the lock-up along with a Correctional Service Report indicates that lock-up staff considered AP a safety concern due to his aggressive and uncooperative behavior, which included verbal hostility. As a precautionary measure, AP was placed in a cell, and his handcuffs were removed through the cell door's access panel.

I have credibility and reliability concerns regarding AP. AP stated that he requested medical attention on several occasions but was refused. This claim is refuted by evidence collected during

the investigation which indicates that AP was seen by paramedics who cleared him as being medically fit to be housed in cells at the Lock-up².

While AP denied consuming alcohol or drugs on the night in question, the investigation found multiple references suggesting that AP was struggling with substance abuse. W1 acknowledged that her son had an addictions issue and was likely seeking money that night to purchase drugs. Both SOs described AP's behavior as erratic and SO1 noted a dramatic change in his demeanor between the first and last police call, which he attributed to possible drug use. SO2, a drug recognition expert, specifically stated that, based on his training and experience, he believed AP was under the influence of a stimulant during the arrest. This assessment was supported by AP's aggressive and unpredictable actions, including property damage, verbal hostility, and physical resistance. The timing of the incident—early morning hours—and AP's request for a small amount of money further reinforced the likelihood of drug-related behavior.

While W1 was adamant that AP had not resisted arrest and did not have the opportunity to do so, I have reliability concerns with her statement. Based upon my assessment, it appears that W1 did not witness the first part of the interaction between AP and SOs.

From the above, it is apparent that the police were dealing with an AP whose behavior had become increasingly erratic throughout the course of an evening sparked by his mother's refusal to give him money. SO1 formulated grounds to arrest AP for breach of peace which resulted in AP verbally resisting, turning towards an open window, and physically resisting when SO1 grabbed him by the arm. SO2 assisted with the arrest which resulted in: (i) both AP and SO2 falling hard on an icy surface; and (ii) injuries to AP. It appears that SOs' actions would have been consistent with their training and the situation they encountered.

Section 25(1) of the **Criminal Code** allows a peace officer to use as much force as necessary for the enforcement of the law, provided they act on reasonable grounds. Given the totality of the circumstances outlined above, I believe SO1 and SO2 were acting within their lawful authority, and the use of force was proportionate. I have not formulated reasonable and probable grounds to believe an assault occurred.

SIRT-NL will now conclude this file.

Final Report prepared by:

Stephen Ring, Director
Serious Incident Response Team - Newfoundland and Labrador
December 15, 2025
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² Paramedic notes confirm that AP was seen at the Lock-up.