

# Brazen disdain for accountability starts at the top with Chief Palmer



IAN MULGREW

Vancouver police Chief Adam Palmer obviously is a shining example to his officers given how they emulate him — unfortunately, it's his brazen disdain for public oversight that they mostly follow.

Recent events have brought to the fore the insolent attitude toward civilian accountability displayed from the top down by the force that costs taxpayers more than \$1 million a day.

On Monday, an inquest began into the death of Nicole Chan, a 30-year-old constable who died by suicide in 2019, after intimate relations with senior officers.

Her family claims those officers sexually harassed and sexually assaulted Chan, who was reputedly “in a vulnerable state, mentally and emotionally.”

Another inquest has been scheduled because seven of the nine officers at the scene of the August 2015 death of Myles Gray initially refused to co-operate with the Independent Investigations Office.

Four of them already were under investigation for another assault six weeks earlier.

Gray, 33, died in a Burnaby backyard making a delivery for his florist business after police were called because he had confronted a homeowner watering her lawn during that summer's drought.

His injuries, including a fractured voice box, several broken bones, and a ruptured testicle, were so extensive that forensic experts were unable to determine the cause of death.

The civilian oversight agency concluded a crime may have been committed and sent a report to Crown prosecutors.

Palmer, appointed in May 2015, said the IIO was incompetent.

In October 2018, nevertheless, B.C. Supreme Court Justice Miriam Gropper said the mute cops were out of line.

“An obligation to co-operate fully with the IIO must be an essential element of the functioning of a police oversight agency that exists to investigate police-related fatalities and



“I don't report to any politician. I don't report to the City of Vancouver, I don't report to the province of B.C., or the federal government,” Vancouver police Chief Adam Palmer says. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

incidents involving serious harm. ... There will be no arm's-length investigation of an incident if it is at the discretion of the witness officers.”

The officers restrained Gray's arms and legs, punched, kicked, pepper-sprayed and struck him with a baton, the B.C. Prosecution Service said in a report.

In December 2020, the Crown decided none would be charged, in part because of the lack of witnesses and uncertainty surrounding the cause of death.

In the intervening time, three of the officers had received commendations for their response to a November 2016 robbery at a Canadian Tire store on Bentall Street that ended in the fatal shooting of Daniel Peter Rintoul, a six-foot-one, 380-pound 38-year-old who resisted arrest.

The IIO cleared police of wrongdoing, as Rintoul “posed a threat of deadly force to members of the public.”

Last week, the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner was informed an off-duty VPD officer was injured in a traffic accident and perhaps as many as a dozen police colleagues responded, allegedly hampering a Burnaby Mountie's investigation.

“My understanding is they were all off-duty and we're doing a review of the situation,” Palmer shrugged, adding he was “not that concerned. ... It's a very emotional situation any time somebody's been injured in a car accident and emotions run high.”

You or I likely would have been charged with obstruction of justice.

Of course, there is also the treatment of a First Nations grandfather and his 12-year-

old granddaughter because of confusion over her status card in December 2019.

Constables Canon Wong and Mitchel Tong marched them out of the bank and placed them under arrest in handcuffs.

The officers were later found guilty of discrimination, but they did not, as expected, attend a reconciliation event with the First Nation to apologize in person.

Other officers searching for a suspect similarly treated a well-known Black retired Supreme Court justice.

Still, Palmer maintained officers didn't wear the thin-blue-line patch with racist intent.

“The thin blue line means service, sacrifice, esprit de corps. It's recognizing fallen officers and officers injured in the line of duty, so it has deep meaning for police officers.”

In 2020, the RCMP banned the divisive symbol, while the city police board only recently emphasized wearing the patch on the uniform was not allowed.

The VPD also thumbed its nose at COVID health orders and mandates.

The federal government made all of its employees get vaccinated, including the RCMP. The province issued a similar mandate that included health care workers, and the city, too, required staff, including firefighters, to be fully vaccinated.

Yet unlike most Canadian police departments, the VPD only “encouraged” vaccination — officers who didn't were “fit for duty” if they had a negative rapid test. So who can blame the force for feeling special — especially given the pay?

The Vancouver Sun's updated B.C. public-sector salaries data-

base revealed nearly 200 constables made more than \$150,000 in the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Another dozen made more than \$200,000.

A recruit earns roughly \$80,000 and a first-class constable, a status reached after four years, makes more than \$110,000, not counting overtime.

The police budget has increased from \$317 million in 2019 to \$367 million in 2022 — that's 21 per cent of the city's overall budget.

Palmer, who just had his contract extended until 2025, clearly feels he can do no wrong.

In November, after releasing a flawed report by Alberta consultants on the city's worsening poverty and social decay that slammed responses by government as well as independent organizations and health agencies, the chief boasted:

“I don't report to any politician. I don't report to the City of Vancouver, I don't report to the province of B.C., or the federal government. To me, the government of the day doesn't matter. I'll just call it how it is and be quite frank about it.”

Enough, already.

Every inquiry and study of the patchwork quilt of policing in the Metro area for half a century has concluded a regional force is needed.

The exorbitant costs, the ridiculous competition between municipalities for officers that drives up wages, the duplication, the lack of accountability ... there are a host of reasons that change is long overdue.

Add the VPD's performance and attitude to the list.

imulgrew@postmedia.com  
twitter.com/ianmulgrew

# Watchdog says police union told officers to avoid co-operating in oversight probe

Directive appears to contravene Supreme Court ruling on police note-taking

MIKE HAGER VANCOUVER

A group of Vancouver police officers responded to a call about a distressed man on the city's south side, then followed him into a hidden yard to make an arrest. Minutes later, he was dead, with a broken nose, eye socket, rib and voice box, as well as brain bleeding and a ruptured testicle.

That much is clear, but the rest of what happened on that day in August, 2015, remains murky. An RCMP investigator has recently revealed a key reason for the uncertainty: Four of the officers involved say they followed a directive from their union not to take notes about the incident.

The lack of prompt note-taking appears to contravene a 2013 Supreme Court of Canada ruling



Myles Gray died in August, 2015, during an encounter with a group of Vancouver police officers. British Columbia's police watchdog agency has been looking into Mr. Gray's death. RAFAL GERSZAK/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Kaisers as the union representative who, months later, counseled her to upload her notes. Mr. Kaisers, who is now the union's president, declined a request for an interview about the continuing disciplinary matter, saying he is bound to confidentiality under the provincial Police Act.

One of the four officers who said they had been instructed by the union not to make any notes about the incident told Sgt. Nash he believed this directive came from Tom Stamatakis, who was the union's president at the time. (Mr. Kaisers succeeded Mr. Stamatakis in the role in 2019.)

Mr. Stamatakis, who is president of the Canadian Police Association, a federal lobby group for front-line officers and their unions, denied that he or anyone else at the union had issued any orders against note-taking after Mr. Gray's death.

"That's not our practice. It's not the training we provide," Mr. Stamatakis said. "You're talking about a pretty traumatic event that happened in very challenging circumstances

The lack of prompt note-taking appears to contravene a 2013 Supreme Court of Canada ruling and is now a subject of disciplinary proceedings against some of the responding officers, who are also accused of using unnecessary force. Experts say the alleged union meddling with the recording of notes, a core responsibility of good police work, is unusual and unsettling.

The RCMP investigator, Sergeant Robert Nash of the force's Richmond detachment, began looking into the case in 2021, after British Columbia's Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner tasked him with interviewing nine constables as part of a professional-misconduct probe into the death of the man, Myles Gray.

Provincial Crown prosecutors had already declined a recommendation from the B.C. Independent Investigations Office – which investigates deaths or serious injuries at the hands of police – to lay criminal charges against the officers who responded that day. The Crown had announced that it was hamstrung by the “incomplete” and “inconsistent” accounts police had given investigators probing Mr. Gray's death.

After that criminal process ended, the OPCC, an independent body that handles complaints against municipal police in B.C., pursued its own investigation into whether some of the officers should face job-related penalties under the provincial Police Act.

In a February report to the OPCC, a copy of which was obtained by The Globe and Mail, Sgt. Nash concluded that several officers involved did take notes and upload them to the prov-

**Myles Gray died in August, 2015, during an encounter with a group of Vancouver police officers. British Columbia's police watchdog agency has been looking into Mr. Gray's death.** RAFAL GERSZAK/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

ince's police record-keeping database in a timely fashion. But, he wrote, four constables had told him that their union representatives had counselled them against taking notes about the arrest. The report calls this a direct contravention of a 2013 Supreme Court ruling that said officers must prepare “accurate, detailed, and comprehensive notes as soon as practicable after an investigation.”

Sgt. Nash also found that union representatives had edited a different officer's statements, which were later uploaded to the internal police database – though the report says those edits were minor.

Another officer told Sgt. Nash the union had directed him to wait seven months to file his account of the failed arrest, as well as a special use-of-force report. He said his normal practice was to write these up and file them as soon as possible.

The OPCC recommended those six officers face penalties under the provincial Police Act of up to a month's suspension without pay, for not taking detailed notes or not submitting them in a timely fashion. Those six, as well as one other officer, are also accused of abusing their authority by using unnecessary force on Mr. Gray. They could be fired for that alleged misconduct.

A coroner's inquest into the case will begin later this month. Its aim will be to determine the facts surrounding Mr. Gray's death and to make recommendations for preventing similar deaths.

The Vancouver Police Department would not comment on the

alleged union meddling, but said that all the officers remain on active duty.

A recent Globe and Mail investigation found that provincial watchdogs established to investigate when officers are involved in deaths or serious injuries are frequently stymied when police refuse to co-operate. In B.C., just four of 198 officers under investigation fully co-operated with the IIO in the past five years, the poorest record of participation in Canada.

In its 2013 decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that police lawyers can't help officers draft their notes or review them after incidents that are being investigated by Ontario's Special Investigations Unit. The ruling has been interpreted to apply in similar situations across the country.

“Permitting police officers to consult with counsel before their notes are prepared is an anathema to the very transparency that the legislative scheme aims to promote,” the ruling says. “It is imperative that the investigatory process be – and appear to be – transparent.”

Little is known about what happened to Mr. Gray on Aug. 13, 2015.

He ran a business on the Sunshine Coast supplying ferns and other greenery to florists in the region. On that unseasonably hot day, he was making deliveries in southeast Vancouver. While out for a walk, he encountered a woman violating the region's rigid water restrictions by watering her lawn. He said something to her, then either grabbed or kinked her hose, causing it to

spray her, according to witnesses.

The woman's son called police, saying Mr. Gray seemed upset and unwell. Mr. Gray retreated to a secluded yard in nearby Burnaby, and eight officers eventually ended up struggling with him in the yard, where he died.

Sgt. Nash noted that the first constable to respond that August day was on leave for six weeks afterward. She finished a digital statement on the incident two days after speaking to her union representative in December, 2015. She didn't upload it to the provincial police record-keeping and intelligence database, known as PRIME, until January, 2016.

Her required use-of-force report wasn't uploaded until February, 2016. She is now one of the six officers facing neglect-of-duty allegations over their note-taking practices.

Since 2020, it has been Vancouver Police Department policy that officers must submit use-of-force reports within 48 hours of an incident, unless a superior grants an extension in “exceptional circumstances,” according to the VPD internal standards guide, which is posted on its website. But at the time of Mr. Gray's death, Sgt. Nash noted, there were no rules around how quickly an officer was required to upload this information. He wrote that that the officer's notes “did not appear to have been completed as soon as practicable.”

“However, it would appear that the Vancouver Police Union was controlling the pace at which these documents were to be completed and uploaded to PRIME.”

The report says the first responding officer identified Ralph

Stamatakis said. “I'm talking about a pretty traumatic event that happened in very challenging circumstances.

“These officers were interviewed some time later, and if that's their recollection, that's their recollection.”

Mr. Stamatakis said several other officers told the OPCC they weren't given that advice and submitted their notes promptly after the incident. He disagreed with the watchdog's finding that the union had stopped some constables from immediately uploading their notes to the internal database.

“In my experience over many years of advising and supporting members, you want the information to go in as soon as possible. It's an opportunity for the police officers involved to explain and provide context around what happened,” Mr. Stamatakis said. “So there's really no upside to withholding information.”

Howard Morton, a former Crown prosecutor who headed Ontario's Special Investigations Unit for three years in the 1990s, said the duty to take comprehensive daily notes is a core principle of Robert Peel's 19th-century system of British policing, which was adopted across the Commonwealth.

“It's critical, it's primary evidence. These are the people who were there, these are the people who saw what happened. These are the people that applied force, whether justified or not,” Mr. Morton said.

If the allegations that the union advised its members not to take notes in the wake of a deadly incident are true, he said, this would be a new and troubling phenomenon.

“I've never heard of a union doing this before,” he said.



Jennifer Chan, front left, the sister of late Vancouver Police Constable Nicole Chan, leaves a coroner's inquest in Burnaby, B.C., on Monday. She told the inquest her sister's mental-health problems stemmed from sexual assault and extortion by a co-worker. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

## VPD officer who ended own life was angry over response to extortion claim, inquest hears

Superintendent testifies that Nicole Chan, who accused another officer of blackmailing her for sex, was frustrated by handling of complaint

**BRIANNA CHARLEBOIS**  
BURNABY, B.C.

One of the last members of the Vancouver Police Department to see Constable Nicole Chan before her suicide said Constable Chan was angry about the treatment of her complaint that a co-worker was extorting her for sex.

Superintendent Shelley Horne told a coroner's inquest Monday that she spoke to Constable Chan at Vancouver General Hospital the day before she died.

"She was frustrated because she felt that it was unfair that she wasn't able to work and Dave Van

Patten was able to keep his job," Supt. Horne said. "She [thought that] if it was a member of the public that he had done this to, that he would have lost his job."

The inquest heard that Constable Chan was arrested and brought to the hospital under the Mental Health Act.

Jennifer Chan told the inquest earlier Monday that her sister's mental-health problems stemmed from sexual assault and extortion by her co-worker, Sergeant David Van Patten, culminating in her suicide.

"I might be paraphrasing but in my mind I thought an officer was blackmailing her to have sex with her basically, and I knew that the officer was in HR," she said.

Ms. Chan said her sister Nicole struggled with anxiety and depression after she complained to the police chief in 2017 about inappropriate relationships that she had with two senior officers.

"She really wanted to get back

and she felt that Dave was helping her with that and that it would affect her career negatively if that relationship broke down."

Ms. Chan told the coroner's jury that her sister was "very ambitious." She said Constable Chan had joined the Vancouver Police Department to "speak up for victims," but that she felt other officers may no longer want to work with her after she made the complaint.

She said her sister felt aimless about where her life was headed before her death, that her career had stalled and she had no other job prospects. She added that her sister was hired by the department when she was "just 19 years old."

"She felt that she couldn't do anything else because she stopped schooling as soon as she got hired by the VPD," Ms. Chan said.

Constable Chan was on stress leave from the Vancouver Police Department when she died.

to work and get healthy again, into a mental state where she could go back to work,” Ms. Chan told the inquest Monday.

Supt. Horne said in her testimony that she met Constable Chan in October, 2017, when she worked in the sex-crimes unit. She said she interviewed Constable Chan about the complaints she had made against Sgt. Van Patten.



She really wanted to get back to work and get healthy again, into a mental state where she could go back to work.

**JENNIFER CHAN**  
SISTER OF CONSTABLE  
NICOLE CHAN

Supt. Horne said Constable Chan raised concerns about being “manipulated or coerced” into having sex with him and about how her file was being handled by the department’s human-resources section, where Sgt. Van Patten worked.

She said Constable Chan told her that Sgt. Van Patten had taken a screen recording of another member’s phone and threatened to send the video to Constable Chan’s husband. Supt. Horne did not explain the contents of the video at the inquest.

Constable Chan was distressed about the recording and went to Sgt. Van Patten’s apartment in New Westminster to talk to him about it, Supt. Horne testified.

“When she got there, she said Dave told her that he needed to feel close to her and that they needed to have sex,” Supt. Horne told the inquest. “So, Nicole told me that she had sex with him, but that she really felt disgusted by it, but felt that she had no real option but to do that.”

Supt. Horne said Constable Chan told her that she was worried about Sgt. Van Patten’s ability to harm her career, so they continued the sexual relationship.

“She was motivated to get into the emergency response section

A civil lawsuit filed on behalf of Constable Chan’s family last year claims she died during a severe mental-health crisis after being “extorted” by an officer to continue a sexual relationship.

The action was filed against the B.C. government, the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Police Board, the police department, its union and four officers. However, a notice of discontinuance was filed in the case in September relating to one of the officers.

None of the allegations have been proven in court.

The statement of claim says B.C.’s police complaints commissioner asked the New Westminster Police Department to investigate the claims and it recommended charges against Sgt. Van Patten.

The lawsuit says the Crown prosecution service later said it wouldn’t pursue a charge.

The lawsuit, filed last January, says Constable Chan provided an impact statement to the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner just three weeks before she died.

“She’s really just kind of pleading for justice,” Jennifer Chan told the inquest, summarizing the statement.

“It outlines that she was suffering from mental-health challenges, and [it] basically changed her as a person,” Ms. Chan said. “She believes it stems from sexual assault inside David [Van Patten’s] apartment, and she’s unable to develop and maintain personal relationships because of that.”

She said her sister was “very disappointed with the whole process” and had been actively seeking mental-health treatment.

“The conclusion wasn’t what she had hoped for, so she was feeling very defeated and did not have much to look forward to in the future,” she said.

When the coroner announced an inquest would be held, it said the jury would make recommendations and ensure public confidence that the circumstances in the death won’t be overlooked, concealed or ignored.

# Nicole Chan feared she'd never work again after hospital stint: VPD sergeant

**BRIANNA CHARLEBOIS**  
BURNABY, B.C.

Constable Nicole Chan believed she would never return to work at the Vancouver Police Department because human resource officers went to the hospital when she was apprehended under the Mental Health Act, a police sergeant told a coroner's inquest Monday.

Sergeant Corey Bech, who described himself as a friend and mentor of Constable Chan's, said he spoke with her the night before she died of suicide.

She was anxious about workplace rumours, he told the coroner's jury.

"It got so bad that she couldn't even, she didn't want to be around members in uniform, or members at all towards the end of her life," he said.

"She had zero contact with

anybody from the VPD, other than myself, at the end."

He said Constable Chan still remains a topic of the department's "rumour mill."

"That part of our work culture is not healthy, but it's very difficult to confront," he said.

Constable Chan was also angry that Sergeant David Van Patten had been able to keep his job, Sgt. Bech said.

The inquest has heard that Constable Chan accused Sgt. Van Patten of extorting her to continue a sexual relationship.

"If he was there, she was just in an untenable situation for her to try and get back into policing with him being in the organization," Sgt. Bech said.

He said he didn't know how serious her situation was when he talked to her the night before she died.

"I wish that somebody had given me a heads-up on how she was [and] what happened that night. Had I known more details, I probably wouldn't have ended with a phone call," he said, referring to her apprehension and hospitalization under the Mental Health Act.

Constable Chan died Jan. 27, 2019.

Adam Irish, a paramedic with BC Ambulance Services who responded to Constable Chan's apartment that morning, described how he and his partner found her unresponsive with no possibility of resuscitation.

Other first responders, including VPD officers, who attended Constable Chan's condo told the inquest that the scene looked like

a well-planned suicide.

Constable Chan had laid out several items, including a suicide note, her passport, a B.C. driver's licence, her police identification, a wallet and a notebook.

---

A civil lawsuit filed on behalf of her family last year says that around January, 2016, Constable Chan approached Sgt. Van Patten to 'help her in her pursuit' of a position on the department's emergency response team and he began extorting her in July that same year.

The note asked that her dog Ollie be given to her sister, Jennifer.

"I love him, I love you, Jenn. I'm so sorry. There's nothing anyone could have done," Constable Chan wrote.

The notebook, which was left on her kitchen counter alongside her other personal items, included pages that read, "How can I return. No boss would want to work with me" and "I don't want you to take me to court and hold it over my head for the next few years. I can't do this any more."

Constable Chan, who was on stress leave at the time, died three weeks after she wrote a victim impact statement about Sgt. Van Patten.

The letter, addressed to New Westminster police who were investigating Constable Chan's allegations against Sgt. Van Patten, said she was sexually assaulted by him in his apartment.

She detailed her anguish that Sgt. Van Patten, who was a senior officer, had "taken advantage" of her in an "imbalance of power" while she was severely depressed.

Constable Chan said she was already suffering from mental-health challenges, but the sexual assault by Sgt. Van Patten aggravated her condition, stalled her career and affected her ability to maintain relationships.

Her sister told the inquest last week that Sgt. Van Patten was "blackmailing" Constable Chan to continue a sexual relationship.

A civil lawsuit filed on behalf of her family last year says that around January, 2016, Constable Chan approached Sgt. Van Patten to "help her in her pursuit" of a position on the department's emergency response team and he began extorting her in July that same year.

The legal action was filed against the B.C. government, the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Police Board, the police department, its union and four officers. However, a notice of discontinuance was filed in the case in September relating to one of the officers.

None of the allegations have been proven in court.

The statement of claim says B.C.'s police complaints commissioner asked the New Westminster Police Department to investigate the claims and it recom-

mended charges against Sgt. Van Patten.

Transit Police Chief Dave Jones, who was previously at the New Westminster Police Department, told the inquest Monday that the Crown prosecution service determined it would not pursue a sex-assault charge against Sgt. Van Patten.

Chief Jones, who conducted the Police Act investigation, said he concluded four allegations of discreditable conduct by Sgt. Van Patten were substantiated.

He said his investigation concluded in December, 2018, but because Sgt. Van Patten denied the allegations, a hearing was set for March, 2019.

He said he did not know what Constable Chan knew when she died, but that Sgt. Van Patten was ultimately dismissed from the force about a year after her death.

Sgt. Bech told the inquest Monday that he believes the biggest systemic change the department could make would be mandatory mental-health check-ins for all first responders.

He said the department has implemented mechanisms like increased peer support since Constable Chan's death, but having health professionals check and document officers' mental state "would be a good thing for the department."

The inquiry is expected to conclude Tuesday and while the five-member jury can't place blame, it can make recommendations to prevent deaths in similar circumstances.



**THANK YOU  
FOR RECYCLING  
THIS NEWSPAPER.**

# Video shows VPD cruiser slamming into pedestrian

## Area resident installed security cameras on East Hastings Street for extra safety

**NATHAN GRIFFITHS**

The man in dark pants and jacket stands hunched over in the east-bound lane of East Hastings Street, a dozen or so metres west of Main Street.

It's about 3:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 20. A taxi passes, but the man doesn't move.

Seconds later, a VPD cruiser slams into him, knocking him onto

the hood of the car before sending him flying several metres.

Footage of the collision was captured on security cameras installed by an area resident about a year ago in an effort to provide additional safety on the block.

Scott Gilbert, the owner of the cameras, said police often ask for his footage.

Scrutiny of the collision is intensifying after the Vancouver Area

Network of Drug Users posted video clips and still images Friday of the moments before and after the impact and encouraged witnesses to come forward. The pedestrian was left with serious injuries but has been released from hospital, police said.

The Independent Investigations Office of B.C., the province's civilian-led police oversight agency, is investigating.

"VANDU is helping to mobilize a community investigation into the VPD vehicular assault on Sept. 20 because time and time again in the Downtown Eastside, the VPD

manage to skirt all accountability for their near-daily misconduct in the neighbourhood," Vince Tao, community organizer for VANDU, said in a statement.

Tao said VANDU and the City of Vancouver collaborated in 2010 to study pedestrian safety in the Downtown Eastside.

"We successfully advocated for the reduction of speed limits ... to 30 km/h. Nonetheless, the neighbourhood remains a hot spot for pedestrian injuries because this speed limit is hardly enforced. Police officers are allowed to use their on-board laptops as

they're working," the VPD's Sgt. Steve Addison said in response to suggestions that the officers may have been involved in distracted driving.

"It's acceptable," Addison said of the practice of officers using a computer while driving.

"I would hope that the IIO investigation would look at a variety of things, including why there was a man standing in the road in the middle of the night, apparently motionless. ...

"We'll leave it to them to find out the details."

— with files from Sarah Grochowski



Mayoral candidate Ken Sim of ABC Vancouver has earned the backing of the Vancouver Police Union, which calls public safety “the No. 1 issue in this year’s civic election.”

FRANCIS GEORGIAN/FILES

# Vancouver Police Union backs Sim for mayoralty

JOSEPH RUTTLE

In a rare political endorsement for Vancouver’s police union, the group has publicly come out in favour of ABC Vancouver party mayoral candidate Ken Sim.

The union hosted an all-candidates forum addressing policing issues in the city on Monday, and incumbent Mayor Kennedy Stewart took a grilling.

“Public safety is the No. 1 issue in this year’s civic election,” Vancouver Police Union president Ralph Kaisers said in the endorsement. “Vancouverites are afraid to walk the streets of their neighbourhoods. Small business owners are struggling to keep their doors open.”

The union said it based the endorsement on three things: The results of a public safety survey of the mayoral candidates from Aug. 18 to Sept. 2, a review by the union’s board of the candidates’ safety platforms, and the positions candidates presented on public safety issues at this week’s debate.

In a statement, Sim called the support “an honour.”

“ABC Vancouver reached out to nurses, doctors, police officers and front-line social care workers to develop its platform.”

He said the party wants to get city hall working in “a collaborative, productive manner with all stakeholders.

“We feel that this endorsement is a step in the right direction toward repairing city hall’s broken relationship with law enforcement.”

A key part of Sim’s ABC party platform that swung the union was its commitment to hiring 100 new officers and reinstating the school police liaison program. The union noted the party also has pledged to create a task force to look at a “dramatic rise in anti-Asian, antisemitic and anti-Indigenous hate crimes” in the city.

Kaisers said the union, which represents 1,450 officers, “feels safety is a right — for everyone. Electing Ken Sim and an ABC majority will ensure that police and other front-line responders will

have the resources they need to protect and serve Vancouverites.”

In the endorsement, the union also addressed its decision to enter the municipal election fray, a break from tradition. “Vancouverites don’t feel safe in their city. The VPU board and its members are committed to taking action to change that — and if it means getting political, so be it.

“This municipal election, we need to demand accountability

*ABC Vancouver reached out to nurses, doctors, police officers and front-line social care workers to develop its platform.*

out of city hall because safety is a right and everybody deserves to feel safe.”

Sim and Stewart have argued with each other aggressively at both major mayoral debates, and public safety was often the topic.

## WHAT IS A QR

QR codes allow you to access a website without a website address.

## HOW TO SCAN

1. Open the camera app on your mobile phone.
2. Hold your camera in front of the QR code.
3. Click the link that appears on the screen.

## GIVE IT A TRY



La  
ph  
to  
th  
  
JO  
  
A L  
to m  
fam  
to b  
bod  
T  
196  
Jun  
F  
insi  
stab  
na  
wer  
wel  
O  
ian  
na  
the  
cha  
ond  
day  
cha





Premier David Eby, centre left, gathers with other officials to announce the Safer Communities Action Plan on Sunday in Vancouver. The updated policy will take effect on Tuesday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

## VPD chief earned \$493,932 in 2022

The chief constable of the Vancouver Police Department was compensated with more than half a million dollars last year, according to public data posted to the VPD website last week. Chief Adam Palmer collected \$493,932 in salary in 2022, while claiming another \$48,282 in expenses, for a total of \$542,214 in compensation. His salary easily eclipsed Vancouver's top public sector employee, city manager Paul Morchre, who took in a salary \$150,000 lower than Palmer's last year.

415/23