

CRIME STOPPERS CALLS FOR INCREASED VIGILANCE FOLLOWING GLOBAL TERRORISM ATTACKS

Local citizens and businesses urged to report suspicious or racist activity

Vancouver, B.C. (April 8, 2019) - In support of the RCMP's call on citizens to report suspicious activity in Canada following violent attacks in other countries, Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is reminding British Columbians they can play an important role in preventing such attacks by reporting suspicious activities and the racist behavior that can be a precursor to large-scale attacks.

Of particular concern is hateful activity or statements that willfully promote hatred against any group identifiable by their national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or other similar factor. It also includes mischief in relation to property that is primarily used for religious worship, such as a church, mosque, synagogue or temple, or an object associated with religious worship. In both the New Zealand and The Netherlands attacks, people who knew the suspects said they had exhibited suspicious and/or racist behavior in the past.

"In a country like Canada, where diversity and inclusion are celebrated and encouraged, there is no place for hate crimes or racism," said Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. "Not only are they unacceptable, but as we saw again in New Zealand and The Netherlands, those activities are warning signs that something more serious and potentially tragic could be in the works. As much as we value free speech in Canada, when people cross the line to hate speech, that's when we have a responsibility to report that activity rather than ignore it because it's better to be safe than sorry."

As part of its comprehensive programs to address the possibility of terrorist activity in BC, the RCMP and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service have partnered with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and other agencies in Operation SECURUS, a partnership between law enforcement and businesses that could be used by criminals or terrorist groups to carry out attacks.

Among SECURUS' goals are to provide those business and their employees with education and awareness tools to help them recognize suspicious activities or encounters in their day-to-day operations. Suspicious activity or behavior depends on context. Proprietors, operators and employees have a wealth of knowledge about their businesses and are in the best position to identify what should be considered unusual or odd in their workplaces.

To further increase Canada's capacity to collect, share and analyze intelligence, the RCMP leads Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (INSETs) in major centres throughout the country, including Metro Vancouver. INSETs are made up of representatives of the RCMP, federal partners and agencies such as Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), and provincial and municipal police services. Through shared federal, provincial and municipal resources, INSET members are better able to track, deter, disrupt and prevent criminal activities of terrorist groups or individuals who pose a threat to Canada's national security. In addition, the RCMP's BC Hate Crime Team, along with the VPD's Hate Crime Investigative Unit, have a mandate to investigate incidents where hate is promoted against any identifiable group in British Columbia.

“As dedicated, professional and efficient as the RCMP and our Canadian security and law enforcement agencies are, the public has an important security role to play, and in a place like BC, having 4.7 million extra pairs of eyes on the street is a powerful safety and crime prevention tool,” said Annis. “If you see something, say something.”

To increase the public’s ability to recognize suspicious behavior, Annis pointed to the RCMP’s online [Terrorism and Violent Extremism Awareness Guide](#), which states that, “Although their ideologies, motivations, political convictions and religious beliefs may differ, terrorists share one thing in common — they always go through phases of radicalization and planning of their violent actions. Throughout this process, indicators can be observed by friends, relatives or various stakeholders.” The downloadable guide presents a helpful list of numerous potential warning signs for consideration.

Any member of the public looking to report suspicious activity anonymously at any time is encouraged to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or visit their [website](#). Calls to Crime Stoppers are answered 24/7. Every call is taken seriously, and everyone have the option to remain anonymous. You may also call the National Security Information Network at 1-800-420-5805.

For more information about SECURUS, visit www.OperationSecurus.ca. For more information about Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams, visit <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/secur/insets-eisn-eng.htm>

About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that offers rewards for anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators in the communities of Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is not the police and operates solely on funds donated. Tax-deductible donations are gratefully received anytime by accessing the “donate” link at solvecrime.ca.

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$2,000 for information leading to the arrest of a criminal, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Tipsters stay anonymous by using code numbers to check back later and collect their rewards.

-30-

For media inquiries or interviews please contact:

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers

Trevor Pancoust

tpancoust@pacegroup.com

604-646-3567

Backgrounder: Examples of Suspicious Activity and Radicalization

Look for changes related to behaviour, appearance, habits, relationships, identity, or ideology, including:

- Breaking relational ties, social isolation, change in peer groups and activities
- Rejection of the State (politics and social values)
- Participating in radical activities or demonstrations and using extremist language
- Overconsumption of hate and violent propaganda images and videos on the Internet
- Possession of propaganda material promoting violence
- Adhering to hatred and violence
- Glorification of violence or sacrifice
- Perpetration of minor crimes motivated by the rejection of governments and society
- Use of new names or pseudonyms in social media and personal environment
- Withdrawing large sums of money, emptying accounts
- Selling or disposing of personal belongings
- Communicating on social media with individuals who have already gone or who are in a conflict zone
- Talking about intentions on social media
- Expressing the intention to leave the country for a conflict zone
- Talking about conspiracy theories

Examples of suspicious activity to watch for:

Unrecognized persons:

- loitering near access points, attempts to access restricted areas
- taking photographs
- taking notes, watching the property, or asking questions about the site

Suspicious incidents:

- lost or stolen items (vehicles, uniforms, ID badges, keys, etc.)
- suspicious packages or unattended items on the premise (gym bags, briefcase, backpack, etc.)