

MEDIA RELEASE

27 May 2021

Commission finalises an investigation into a police officer's excessive use of force

The Corruption and Crime Commission (the Commission) has tabled a report in State Parliament today detailing an incident where a police officer excessively used force as he arrested and moved a young man across a Northbridge car park.

The man (Mr A) sustained lacerations, scratches, a black eye and other bruising, and likely lost consciousness, during the incident.

The matter was first investigated by the WA Police Force and then by the Commission. The police investigation found the arresting officer, Senior Constable Valleekanthan, had breached the Police Manual by using a neck restraint to physically control Mr A, but the force used was not considered excessive.

The Commission formed the view that the arrest was justified, but the force used was excessive and was serious misconduct. During its investigation, the Commission examined graphic vision captured by one of Mr A's companions, CCTV footage, and additional vision captured by Senior Constable Valleekanthan's body-worn camera, which self-activated during the incident.

The Commission also gathered the accounts of witnesses, and examined the police officers involved in the arrest on oath. The Commission sought expert advice on the WA Police Use of Force policy, training and guidelines.

A neck restraint should only be used in very limited situations. In the incident Mr A did not try to escape, he was not resisting arrest, and was not threatening at the time. In the Commission's view, any belief by Senior Constable Valleekanthan that he was at risk, was not reasonable in the circumstances.

The Commission's report also reveals significant serious misconduct risks associated with Mr A's treatment. These included the officers' own report of the incident; the length of time before Mr A was taken for medical attention; inaccurate recordkeeping by police officers; and the length of time that Mr A was detained.

The Commission accepts that an arrest situation is dynamic and the officers were confronted with a difficult situation. However, there may have been more effective ways to deal with Mr A, such as a move on order or summons rather than a formal arrest process.

The Commission also formed a view that the move on order issued by First Class Constable Harrison to one of Mr A's companions was not justified and constituted reviewable police conduct, which amounts to serious misconduct.

ENDS

Contact the Corruption and Crime Commission

Watch the incident

[Vision - Review of a police use of force incident in Northbridge on 10 November 2019](#)

Read the report

[Review of a police use of force incident in Northbridge on 10 November 2019](#)

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