

# Police association calls for SIU director's resignation

By RICHARD VIVIAN  
The Champion

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) is going beyond its mandate and unnecessarily costing taxpayers money, charges the Halton Regional Police Association.

The Halton association joined the Police Association of Ontario (PAO) in requesting the resignation of SIU Director Peter Tinsley Thursday — stating many SIU investigations are unwarranted.

"The Halton Regional Police Association certainly supports asking for the resignation of Mr. Tinsley — unequivocally support it," said Paul LaCourse, association administrator. "We don't have a problem at all with civilian oversight — we really don't. We just want to ensure that our members are treated fairly."

At issue is how strictly the SIU sticks to its mandate under Mr. Tinsley's direction. According to its mandate, an investigation is to

be "conducted into the circumstances of serious injuries and deaths that may have resulted from criminal offences committed by police officers."

The police association believes the SIU has gone beyond that mandate, investigating many incidents involving injuries not related to police involvement.

"There has to be some reasonable cause or reasonable belief that the citizen's injuries or death were caused as a result of a criminal action by a police officer, not simply because somebody's hurt," said Mr. LaCourse. "When they come in to investigate, it costs the taxpayers money."

In a written statement released by Mr. Tinsley, he expressed frustration at the news of the police association's call for his resignation. The PAO, he said, backed out of two opportunities to discuss the issue with him in recent months.

"In regards to accountability, it seems to be that any real or serious efforts to resolve issues must be approached through communication to ensure that there's an under-

standing of the facts on part of all parties," he said.

"Unfortunately, the PAO leadership has not availed itself of that opportunity, but on the basis of unexplained concerns they apparently wish to unilaterally define the scope of operations of the SIU while at the same time espousing support for civilian oversight."

The best way to resolve the issue, Mr. LaCourse said, would be to establish a code of conduct for SIU staff, investigators and the director.

"We want their investigators held to the same standard our members are, which is high. There's probably not too many professions who are scrutinized as much as the action of police officers," he said.

Halton Regional Police Chief Ean Algar commented, "I certainly support the independence of the Special Investigation Unit and the need for a Special Investigation Unit. I know there's issues that need to be better clarified, but with the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police we're working with the Special Investigations Unit and Mr. Tinsley to address the issues."

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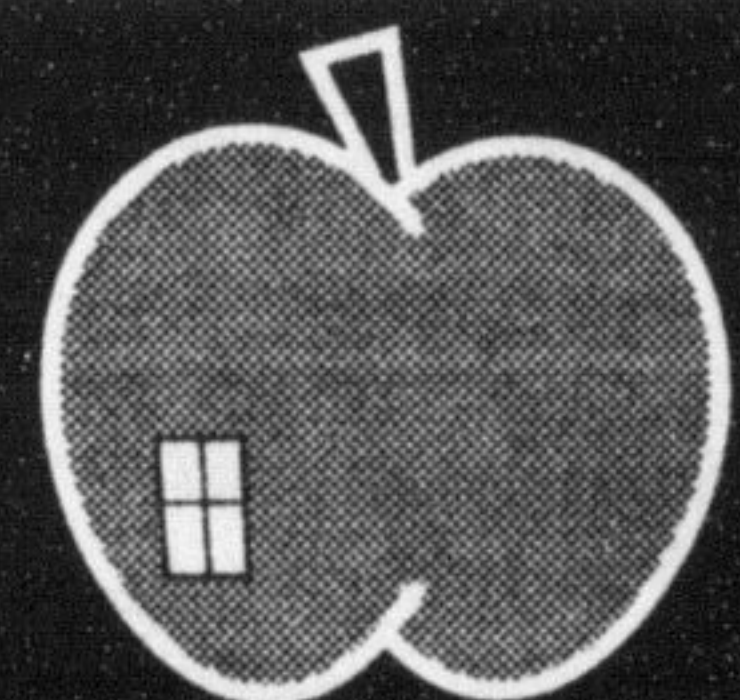
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