

Police hearings begin for Ontario officer who shot aboriginal protester

LONDON, Ont. (CP) — A provincial police officer convicted of shooting and killing an unarmed aboriginal protester pleaded guilty on Monday to a charge of discreditable conduct under the Police Services Act.

The Police Act hearing, which began Monday, will find whether acting Sgt. Kenneth Deane should be fired or reprimanded for his actions at Ipperwash Provincial Park in 1995.

When testimony ends Tuesday or Wednesday, adjudicator Loyall Cann must decide on Deane's sentence, which could range from a reprimand up to dismissal from the police force.

To avoid dismissal, lawyer Ian Roland must prove Deane is an asset to the OPP and poses no danger to the public.

“Ontario is a better and safer place”

because Deane is on the provincial police force, Roland said.

During the hearing, Roland read from several documents praising Deane as an instructor at the Ontario Police College in Aylmer and training academies in Orillia and Ottawa.

Deane was part of a group of OPP officers who confronted aboriginal protesters occupying Ipperwash Provincial Park on Sept. 6, 1995.

He was convicted in 1997 of criminal negligence causing death for shooting Dudley George and sentenced to two years less a day, to be served in the community.

Immediately after his sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court this year, Deane was charged under the Police Services Act.