

Thunder Bay police practices need review, Fort William First Nation chief says

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Fort William First Nation Chief Peter Collins says First Nations people need more say in the way Thunder Bay police operate. (Matt Prokopchuk/CBC)

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The Chief of Fort William First Nation says he supports a call for a comprehensive review of the way Thunder Bay police investigate the deaths of Indigenous peoples.

Peter Collins met last week with the the brother of Stacy DeBungee and the chief of Rainy River First Nation, the home community of the DeBungee family.

They're asking Ontario's civilian oversight body, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, to order a new investigation into DeBungee's death and to conduct a review of Thunder Bay police practices.

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"We all feel the pain and we all feel the suffering of the communities when they lose their family members or their loved ones and they're not dealt with adequately," he said.

DeBungee's body was found in the McIntyre River last October.

Thunder Bay police quickly deemed it "non-criminal."

A private investigator later hired by the DeBungee family said he found reasons to be suspicious, such as the use of Stacy DeBungee's bank card after he had died.

The lawyer for Thunder Bay police said the investigation into DeBungee's death is ongoing.

Chief Collins said First Nations people need more say in the way police operate.