

**Thunder Bay police officer's Facebook post prompts professional standards investigation**

**Police apologize to Indigenous community for 'the hurt these comments may cause'**

By Jody Porter, CBC News Posted: Sep 30, 2016 4:36 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 30, 2016 5:45 PM ET



Thunder Bay police said they 'would like to apologize to our Indigenous community for the hurt' that may have been caused by comments allegedly made by a police officer on social media.

A Thunder Bay, Ont., police officer who posted on Facebook that "Natives are killing Natives" is the subject of an internal investigation launched Thursday by the city's police service.

The comments were posted by Const. Rob Steudle, a director with the police association and a recipient of the Diamond Jubilee medal in 2012.

Steudle was responding to a post on the local paper's Facebook page on Sept. 17.



**Rob Steudle**

**Branden Warner natives are killing natives and it's the white mans fault natives are drunk on the street and its white mans fault natives are homeless and its white mans fault and now natives are lying about how they are treated by white men an explanation is given and it's the white men who are lying. Well let's stop giving the natives money and see how that goes**

10 minutes ago · Like · Reply

Thunder Bay police say this is the Facebook post that prompted their internal investigation. (Facebook)

Steudle does not identify himself as a police officer on his Facebook profile.

CBC News has verified Steudle's identity, and Thunder Bay police spokesman Chris Adams confirmed the post is the one referred to in the media release announcing the investigation into comments "alleged" to involve members of the Thunder Bay Police Service.

- **Thunder Bay police investigate Facebook comments deemed 'not acceptable'**

"These types of comments are not acceptable," Adams said. "They do not reflect the values of the Thunder Bay Police Service. We would like to apologize to our Indigenous community for the hurt these comments may cause."

Here is a timeline leading to the launch of the internal police investigation:

- Sept. 13: CBC News reports allegations that a race-relations trainer was **verbally assaulted by Thunder Bay police officers** while delivering a session on Indigenous issues

- Sept. 14-15: The local paper, the Chronicle Journal, writes **an article** and **an editorial** downplaying the concerns raised by the trainer.
- Sept. 16: Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler **writes a letter to the editor** of the Chronicle Journal about the response by the police and the newspaper to the concerns about the race relations training. The letter is posted on Facebook.
- Sept. 17-18: Rob Steudle posts several comments on the Facebook posting.
- Sept. 29: Thunder Bay police respond to an APTN reporter's request for comment on the Facebook post.

"We would like to thank the reporter from APTN News for bringing these comments forward to police," the force said in the news release issued on Thursday.

The professional standards investigation comes as the **Thunder Bay police are facing a systemic review** by the province's Office of the Independent Police Review Director for the way the service handles investigations into the deaths of Indigenous people.

Earlier this week, Ottawa police launched an investigation into a complaint that **an Ottawa police officer made "troubling" comments** on social media related to the death of Inuk artist Annie Pootoogook.

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