



Civil forfeiture is a critical tool in the fight against organized crime. The goal of CPF is to ensure criminals do not profit from their unlawful activity. Very recent amendments to the legislation will assist in that fight. Those profits are forfeited and then distributed to programs and initiatives focused on reducing and preventing crime, promoting safer communities and supporting services that benefit victims of crime.

MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

Leadership Bulletin

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OVERVIEW OF BRANDON POLICE SERVICE \$2.2 MILLION DOLLAR SEIZURE AND CPF FORFEITURE

Accused: Cole Donald MORIN
28yrs
Resident of Alberta

Property: **\$2,200,200.00 Cash CDN**



(2015 Kia Sorrento with hidden compartment and GPS tracker)

On June 16, 2021 a Brandon Police Service member was conducting traffic enforcement in the area of 18th Street North and Highway #1 in Brandon, Manitoba. He observed a silver Kia Sorrento with Ontario license plates travelling eastbound with a single male occupant. He conducted a police check on the plate and discovered it was registered to a numbered company out of North York, Ontario. The officer conducted a traffic stop of the vehicle to ensure the driver had a valid driver's license. The vehicle was stopped in the parking lot of the Husky Gas station on 18th Street North in Brandon.

Police noticed the lone occupant of the vehicle appeared to be nervous as his hand was shaking and he was breathing heavily when he was handing over his driver's license. The male driver was identified as Cole MORIN. Police engaged in a conversation with MORIN. This conversation added to the officer's suspicion of possible criminal activity. While speaking with MORIN police noticed a single pack of unstamped tobacco cigarettes in the middle console. MORIN was arrested for possession of unstamped tobacco. He was placed in handcuffs and removed from the vehicle. Police searched the vehicle incident to arrest. Three additional packages of unstamped tobacco were located.

While searching the vehicle for contraband tobacco, the astute officer noticed several anomalies within the vehicle's back hatch area which gave rise to suspicions of the existence of an after-market hidden compartment. Upon further examination, two suspicious electrical wires were discovered. After consulting a certified mechanic, the officer applied a power source to the wires. Once power was applied, a sophisticated hidden compartment door opened via an electric motor and two hydraulic actuators. Once this door opened, a number of vacuum sealed bags full of Canadian cash could be seen in the hidden compartment. Police later discovered a GPS tracking device hidden in the vehicle (not installed by any police agency). MORIN was arrested, charged and cautioned for possession of proceeds of crime.

In total, there were 44 packages of vacuum sealed bags of currency. Written on each of the packages was the number 50. It is believed that the total amount of cash located in the vehicle is \$2,200,200.00 (Exact amount of cash yet to be determined).



MORIN was charged with Possession of Proceeds of Crime and Possession of Unstamped Tobacco. His criminal charges are currently before the courts.

The Criminal Property Forfeiture Unit (CPF) filed a Statement of Claim in civil court with respect to the seized cash and the 2015 KIA Sorrento on July 5, 2021. The defendant MORIN did not file a Statement of Defence and was found in default. On October 6, 2021 the Honorable Justice Rempel awarded Judgment of both the cash and vehicle to CPF. This is believed to be one of the largest cash seizures for the Brandon Police Service and the largest cash amount forfeited on one case by CPF. Thanks to the investigator's skills and training, these proceeds of crime have been forfeited to CPF and will eventually be disbursed to law enforcement agencies to fund initiatives and programs which reduce crime and promote safer communities.

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