

BUILD BACK BETTER: the security industry's response to Harshandeep Singh's tragic death

Edmonton, Alberta • 06 December 2025

One year ago, 22 year old security guard Harshandeep Singh was killed while patrolling an apartment complex in Edmonton. He had been on the job for only three days, had no field or practical training, was working alone, and had no immediate backup. His basic training did not provide the skills needed to recognize or respond to escalating violence. His death exposed longstanding gaps in how guards are trained for the increasingly challenging, dangerous, and litigious work they perform.

Singh's death has become a catalyst for change in the security industry.


The *Canadian Association of Security Professionals* (CA★SP) formed in March 2025 to advance professional standards across the security industry through training, research, and advocacy. Since its formation, CA★SP has consulted extensively with guards, trainers, supervisors, and executives. These consultations informed position papers on *National Basic Security Training* and *Security Professional Rank and Pay*, and guided the development of advanced training programs to better prepare guards for the challenging, dangerous, and litigious situations they are expected to engage in.


In Canada, only six provinces require a basic security training (BST) course, ranging from 32 to 54 hours, all theory, and often completed online. In the remaining provinces and territories, no training at all is required. In contrast to the training requirements, security guards are increasingly being assigned posts that were once the responsibility of police: patrolling high-risk areas, walking beats, enforcing bylaws, issuing transit tickets, trespassing individuals, and responding to alarms. Police officers undergo approximately one year of comprehensive classroom and field training, plus require regular recertification and continuing education. Guards receive zero to one week of training, with no ongoing training requirements. CA★SP is working to close this gap.

The increased danger shows in the statistics. CA★SP's investigation identified *one* on-duty guard death from 2000 to 2019. From 2020 to 2025, there have been *seven* on-duty deaths. (Guard deaths are not tracked like other first responders.) Contributing factors include the increased responsibilities assigned to guards and increased violence directed at guards.


These statistics suggest that BST was satisfactory when it was introduced, but it is no longer sufficient. Consultations confirmed that BST does not prepare guards for the challenging,


dangerous, and litigious situations they are expected to engage in. Consultations also identified the knowledge and skills required for safe and effective performance, and organized these competencies into a basic and advanced training framework. Improved training will better protect guards and enhance public safety.

CA**SP** proposes a *National Basic Security Training Standard* that provides learners with knowledge and skills needed to perform safely and effectively. Several provinces are currently reviewing their BST, presenting an opportunity to adopt the national BST standard. This would ensure consistency in instruction, allow for easy movement between jurisdictions, and prepare guards for advanced training.


CA**SP** is also collaborating with industry trainers to develop advanced courses to prepare guards to take on more complex and specialized roles. This will establish a strong, professional industry, and serve as a foundation for accrediting security training programs nationwide.


Quote

“Harshandeep Singh’s death was a tragedy, but it also revealed the urgent need for improved and standardized training for security professionals across Canada. Everyone must have the knowledge and skills to be safe and effective in their duties. **CA****SP** is committed to building a national training framework that protects and empowers security professionals, to ensure that what happened to Mr. Singh never happens again.”

— Dr. Roy Jensen, **CA****SP** Director

Calls to action

CA**SP** encourages governments to adopt the *National Basic Security Training Standard*, and to support the development of training, recertification, and continuing education standards that reflect the realities of modern security work.

CA**SP** strives to increase visibility and outreach. By partnering with security guards, security employers, and clients, we become a strong voice advocating for positive change.

More information

Position papers, current courses, and future training programs are available at www.CASP.ca

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