

## SIU clears officers in G20 probe

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Police move in on protesters just south of the Legislature in this file photo from June 26, 2010, during the G20 summit in Toronto.

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORONTO STAR

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### Toronto G20 Summit

Brendan Latimer was knocked down by a herd of fellow protesters during a G20 demonstration at Queen's Park.

Lying on the ground, police moved in and arrested the delivery worker. That's when one of the officers allegedly struck him in the face, causing a fracture.

The 19-year-old's case is one of six from the June G20 summit that has been probed by Ontario's Special Investigations Unit.

On Thursday, the agency announced no charges will be laid against police officers for injuries to civilians during the G20 protests.

In Latimer's case, the agency interviewed nine witness officers from the Toronto Police Services as well as civilians. SIU director Ian Scott concluded that while there was "reasonable ground" to believe excessive force was used, they were unable to tell which officer caused his injuries.

"I'm let down, I'm very frustrated," said Latimer, who says he also suffered two broken ribs and a deep cut to his head.

"They spent all this money installing cameras and surveillance devices . . . I'm enraged that they could use that stuff to catch protesters but not to catch police.

"It just seems like a double standard," he added.

The SIU has a mandate to probe incidents involving police that result in death, allegations of sexual assault or serious injury.

Frank Phillips, an SIU spokesperson, said that only six complaints from the G20 were investigated by his agency because, "these cases met our mandate of serious injury."

Dorian Barton, 29, was at a demonstration near University Ave. and College St. when he turned around to take pictures of mounted police officers with his cellphone. He was allegedly taken to the ground by a male anti-riot officer and suffered a fracture to his right arm.

Like Latimer, the officer could not be identified. Scott also said that Barton could not fully explain how the injury occurred.

"I ended up suffering a lot because of what happened to me and it's frustrating no one is going to be held accountable," said Barton.

In another incident, a YouTube video titled ["Toronto G20, Peaceful Protester Tackled and Roughed Up,"](#) shows Adam Nobody being chased by a group of about six uniformed police officers.

He is then tackled to the ground.

Because the officers all wore identical helmets and uniforms, it was impossible to identify which one is responsible for causing a fracture below Nobody's right eye, said Scott.

Two officers were identified as having something to do with the incident, but exercised their rights, declining an interview with the SIU.

Nobody, 27, also alleged that two plainclothes officers took him behind a van, and repeatedly kicked him in the head. Scott said he found "no corroborative evidence."

“It’s disappointing that the SIU felt that they were unable to get sufficient evidence to lay charges against any of the officers given the fact that all six of the complainants investigated did receive serious injuries,” said Toronto lawyer Peter Rosenthal.

“One would have thought the SIU would have been able to identify some of the officers.”

The *Star* recently ran a series of [investigative reports](#) examining a lack of results and accountability for police officers probed by the SIU over two decades. The series, “Above the Law,” found evidence that Ontario’s criminal justice system heavily favours police and concluded that officers are often treated far differently than civilians when accused of shooting, beating and running over and killing people.

“The record of the SIU has not been very good at pursuing charges against officers who have seriously injured people,” added Rosenthal.

Norm Morcos, whose complaint was also being investigated, said he wasn’t surprised. But not because the SIU was ineffective.

“The (SIU) officers I was dealing with were diligent and motivated,” said Morcos, who suffered a hand fracture, possibly from a police baton, while being corralled at Queen’s Park during the summit.

“I did not think that it would be likely that police officers would come forward and identify themselves as having contributed to my injury,” he said.

Toronto Police Association President Mike McCormack said it’s important to remember there were officers from across the country who came in to police the G20, “not just ours.” Responding to the SIU’s conclusions, he said: “Mr. Scott put it the best. There was insufficient evidence for him to lay the charges.”

For Brendan Latimer, it’s all very frustrating.

“Just to know that they can say ‘Yes, we know this happened, but there’s nothing we can do about it,’ ” he said.

“If they can’t do anything about it, who can?”