



*** For Immediate Release***

Captain Neil Weaver
Government and Media Relations

May 23, 2022

Name:	Program Contact: Carri Gordon <i>WSP Missing Persons Unit</i>	Event Contact: Sgt. Darren Wright <i>WSP HQ PIO</i>	RCMP Contact: Mandy Maier <i>Media Relations</i>
Email:	Carri.Gordon@wsp.wa.gov GRCSKMedias.GRC@rcmp-grc.gc.ca	Darren.Wright@wsp.wa.gov	RCMP.RCMPSKMedia-
Phone:	(360) 280-0403	(360) 239-0619	(639) 625-3605
Twitter:	@WaStatePatrol	@WaStatePatrol	

US and Canadian Law Enforcement Unveil New Homeward Bound Trucks **Featuring Mekayla Bali - Missing Since April, 2016**

Date: Wednesday – May 25, 2022
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Location: Blaine Marine Park - 215 Marine Drive - Blaine, WA
(Trucks and Program will be positioned across the street from Kam-Way Transportation Hub.)

Olympia, WA - The Washington State Patrol (WSP) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) are collaborating on efforts to locate young Mekayla Bali. “Mekayla was just 16 when she was last seen in Yorkton, Saskatchewan,” said Corporal Robert Head of the Saskatchewan RCMP Major Crimes Unit. “Approximately 800 tips from all over the world have been reported to police in relation to our investigation into Mekayla’s disappearance, including tips and information reported from here in Washington. Mekayla has not been found and is still considered missing.”

In partnership with Kam-Way Transportation, WSP’s Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit places age-advanced photos on semi-trailers that travel across North America in hopes of generating leads to help find missing children. The program, called the Homeward Bound Project will unveil two truck/trailer rigs at the May 25th event before departing to travel the roadways of the US and Canada in hopes of finding Mekayla. Corporal Head continued, “We thank Kam-Way Transportation, the Washington State Patrol and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children for considering Mekayla Bali for the Homeward Bound program. All it takes is one key piece of information that will help push this investigation forward so we can bring Mekayla home to her family.”

“Partnerships in missing persons cases occur regularly with Border States and Canada but it’s not an automatic process. It requires leadership, outreach and communications to make this happen. We are proud of our close partnership with the RCMP, share their steadfast resolve in serving the public, and are hopeful that this particularly unique international collaboration can help find Mekayla,” explained WSP Chief John R. Batiste.

The Homeward Bound program was started in 2005 by the late Trooper Renee Padgett. Trooper Padgett tragically died in the line of duty in 2018 after exposure to toxic chemicals while conducting towing yard investigations years earlier. The program has featured 32 missing children and youth to date. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1 in 6 children are recovered due to the public viewing of a photo and both the WSP and the RCMP are hopeful these giant rolling billboards will provide us with fresh leads and possible recovery. We never give up.

###

www.wsp.wa.gov