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Will Say of Retired VPD Sergeant R. J. (Ron) Joyce (PIN 215)

Sgt. Joyce was engaged and sworn as a member of the Vancouver Police Department on February 14, 1972 and worked in many capacities throughout the Department and in the Joint Forces Operations of the Coordinated Law Enforcement Unit before retiring in March 2001. Following his promotion to sergeant in 1995, he was posted to the Regional Control Centre ("RCC") or Communications Centre ("Comm Centre"), and assumed supervisory responsibility for one of four "teams" answering Emergency calls (E911) to the Police, Fire, and Ambulance services in the former Greater Vancouver Regional District on a 24/7 basis. During his assignment to the RCC, he was the NCO in charge of Team 1, at times acted as Staff Sergeant (2nd i/c RCC), as well as acting on fewer occasions as Officer (Inspector) in charge of the RCC. Sgt. Joyce was transferred from the RCC to the Patrol Division, District 4, on or about May 18, 1997.

Rae Lynn Dicks has made the following allegation against Sgt. Joyce:

That in response to Ms. Dicks' concern for the manner in which the Communications Centre was taking reports of assaults against sex trade workers ("STW"), Sgt. Ron Joyce responded by saying "*Who cares, it's just another hooker*".

Sgt. Joyce says that Ms. Dicks' evidence is either completely inaccurate or false. Sgt. Joyce did not, and would not make such a statement, or make any demeaning or degrading remark about sex trade workers, aboriginal peoples, persons of other ethnic backgrounds, or anyone else.

Sgt. Joyce's recollection is that Ms. Dicks was not on his regular team of Communications Operators on Team 1, but was a temporary, on-call relief employee or "temp".

The Comm Centre applied the policies that were in place. In cases where exigent circumstances existed, including but not limited to, young children, the elderly, persons of limited physical or mental capability, reports were taken and a unit would be assigned in the first instance. Where suspicious circumstances were present, reports were always taken and an appropriate response was authorized. Where no suspicious circumstances were present, and where there was some question about whether a missing person report could be taken, it was generally taken anyway as an "Interim Report" because it was not a drain on patrol resources. Where a full Missing Persons Report was completed, the file would be assigned a case number and the particulars would be placed on CPIC so that if the person were checked by police in the field, the missing report would be brought to the officers' attention. Unless the person was immediately located, the report would be subsequently handled by the Missing Persons Unit, usually after a 24 hour period.

With respect to the sweeping statements made by Ms. Dicks that the response of Sgt. Joyce was "*typical*" of other sergeants in the Comm Centre, that these were statements she heard "*more than once with regards to more than one file*", and that the view that sex trade workers were not worthy of concern was "*common*" is disputed by Sgt. Joyce. Those comments are entirely inconsistent with Sgt. Joyce's experience and the conduct of his career, especially where First Nations persons are concerned, the documentation of these significant events that support his contention are well published and available.

With respect to Ms. Cameron's testimony that "*throughout the Department*", people said that sex trade workers were just "*a waste of space*" and Ms. Dick's testimony that officers said things like, "*she's just a hooker, she can't be raped*", Sgt. Joyce says these statements are also untrue. He denies ever referring to anyone as a "*waste of space*" and of applying the notion that a sex-trade worker cannot be raped. He knows that the paramount issue in such cases is one of consent and not the occupation of the alleged victim. Officers or civilians at the VPD under his supervision or command, whether sworn or unsworn, did not act in a degrading or demeaning manner toward sex trade workers or anyone else.

With respect to the specific allegations offered by Ms. Dicks, Sgt. Joyce cannot recall any conversation with her on this or any other significant subject. In fact, until he saw her image on a television news program, he could not even recall her at all.

Sgt. Joyce maintains that there was no culture in the Vancouver Police Department or the RCC that would lend itself to regarding a sex trade worker as being unworthy or disqualified from reporting an assault or any other offence.

Will Say of Retired VPD Sergeant Ted Yeomans

Mr. Yeomans was sworn as a member of the Vancouver Police Department on September 2, 1975 and worked in many capacities throughout the department before retiring in October 2003. In the years 1995 – 1997 he was a Corporal/Chief Dispatcher then Sergeant in the Communications Centre.

Rae Lynn Dicks has made the following allegations against Mr. Yeomans:

That in response to Ms. Dicks' concern for the manner in which the Communications Centre was taking reports of assaults against sex trade workers, Sgt. Ted Yeomans responded by saying "*They're just hookers*" and "*when scum of the earth goes missing, we're not going to spend valuable time and energy trying to find them*".

That she heard Mr. Yeomans say this on "*more than one occasion*", perhaps not those exact words each time, but words to that effect.

That Mr. Yeomans "*would pretend to be a drunk aboriginal woman and make funny jokes about how they speak or talk or those kinds of things*".

Mr. Yeomans says that Ms. Dicks' evidence is simply untrue. For whatever reason, she has either lied to the commission or has fabricated memories.

Mr. Yeomans' recollection is that Ms. Dicks was not on his team of Communications Operators, but was a temporary employee. As a "Temp", or part-time employee, Ms. Dicks would be called in to work on any one of four Communication Teams and their Supervisors.

Mr. Yeomans did not and would not have said demeaning or degrading things about sex trade workers or aboriginal people.

Mr. Yeomans' wife is a status aboriginal woman. They have been married since August 1988 (24 years). She was also a civilian employee of the VPD for many years. Mr. Yeomans did not treat any civilian employee as a "second class citizen".

At times there was humour in the Comm Centre, some of which might have been described as "black humour", but it was not demeaning or degrading. The humour was largely generated from the Comm Centre employees and was understood as a means of dealing with the stress of the work that was being done. It did not impact in any way the conduct of the work, which was to take calls, generate incident reports and dispatch police services.

The Comm Centre applied the policies that were in place. Where suspicious circumstances were present, reports were always taken. Where no suspicious circumstances were present, and where there was some question about whether a missing person report could be taken, it was generally taken anyway because it was not a drain on patrol resources – the name would simply be flagged on CPIC so that if the person was checked by police, the missing report would be brought to the officers' attention. Unless the person was immediately located, the report would subsequently be handled by the Missing Persons Unit.

With respect to the sweeping statements made by Ms. Dicks that the response of Mr. Yeomans was "*typical*" of other sergeants in the Comm Centre, that these were statements she heard "*more than once with regards to more than one file*", and that the view that sex trade workers were not worthy of concern was "*common*", those comments are entirely inconsistent with Mr. Yeomans' experience.

With respect to Ms. Cameron's testimony that "*throughout the Department*", people said that sex trade workers were just "*a waste of space*" and Ms. Dick's testimony that officers said things like, "*she's just a hooker, she can't be raped*", Mr. Yeomans says these statements are simply untrue. People at the VPD, whether sworn or civilian, did not talk like that, nor did they act in a degrading or demeaning manner toward sex trade workers.

Mr. Yeomans served with the VPD for 28 years. About half of that service (14 years) Mr. Yeomans was assigned to the Downtown East Side area in the capacities of Patrol Constable, Drug Squad Detective and Patrol Team Sergeant.

During these years in the DTES Mr. Yeomans interacted on a daily basis with residents and people who frequented or lived the area. These individuals included a broad cross-section of the population including drug addicts and dealers, alcoholics, sex trade workers and mentally ill persons. People of all races were present in the DTES, including many Aboriginal people. Mr. Yeomans never had an allegation or complaint of sexism or racism made against him either internally or from the public. Ms. Dicks' allegations, from over 15 years ago, are the first time Mr. Yeomans has been accused of such attitude or behavior toward any member of the public.

Since Ms. Dicks' testimony and the news coverage it generated, Mr. Yeomans has received hate-mail referring to himself, as well as other members of the VPD.

Will-Say of Retired VPD Communications Centre Employee Bonnie Thiele

Ms. Thiele commenced employment with the Vancouver Police Department in 1962. From 1962-1976, she worked in the Report Centre, which took calls for police services from the public. When the 911 service was established in 1976, the Report Centre became the "Communications Centre", and between 1976 - 1986, Ms. Thiele worked full-time as a Communications Centre Operator. Following her official retirement, she contracted back to the department and worked almost full-time as a Temp, or auxiliary employee, in the Communications Centre from 1986 to December 1996.

Upon reading about Ms. Dicks' testimony in the newspaper, Ms. Thiele wrote letters to the editors of the Province and the Vancouver Sun explaining that Ms. Dicks' testimony was in her view inaccurate and "vastly different" from her experience. Those letters were not written at the request of the department and it was only after the letters were published was she asked if she would be willing to speak to the Commission about her experience working in the VPD.

Because of her years of employment and that she was working across different teams of operators, Ms. Thiele knew most of the civilian and sworn members in the Communications Centre, including Sergeants Ted Yeomans and Ron Joyce. She never heard them make the kind of remarks that Rae Lynn Dicks has attributed to them, nor did she hear any sergeants or other members make demeaning or degrading comments about sex workers or Aboriginal people. To the contrary, her experience was that in the Communications Centre, and across the department more generally, members of the department were respectful and professional toward people of all walks of life.

Will-Say of Former VPD Communications Centre Employee Dawna Marshall-Cope

Ms. Marshall-Cope commenced employment with the Vancouver Police Department in September 2, 1982. Between August 17, 1986 and January 30, 1999, she worked in the Communications Centre as an Operative [Communications Operator I/II]. Dispatch and call taking services were transferred to E-Comm in June 1999. Ms. Marshall-Cope accepted a Team Manager position with E-Comm in February 1999 and remained in that position for five years. In July 2004, she returned to VPD and currently works in the Information Management Section.

Ms. Marshall-Cope will explain that the VPD was not, and is not, a police force that is pervaded by racism and sexism as Ms. Dicks and Ms. Cameron have suggested. Ms. Marshall-Cope does not agree that degrading or demeaning comments about sex workers were the cultural norm. She was never told that "a hooker can't be raped". She worked with both Sgt Ted Yeomans and Sgt Ron Joyce and never heard them tell a staff member how to manage a call based on gender, race, sexual preference or social status.