



Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and
Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Location/Phase: Parts 2/3 St. John's
Witness: Danny Smyth
Submitted by: Kimberly Carswell
Add'l info: P02-03 P04 P0401
Date: OCT 18 2018

Initials

I/D

Entered

53

73

Winnipeg Police Service Division 41

Specialized Investigations Division

Vice Unit – Establishment of an Anti-Exploitation Team

Pilot Project Proposal

HISTORY:

On June 4, 2013, Sgt. Gene Bowers presented a proposal to Chief Devon Clunis and Superintendent Danny Smyth in regards to a new approach in dealing with the visible sex trade in Winnipeg. In brief, the proposal involves a new philosophy whereby the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) will move away from targeting the sex trade workers and concentrate enforcement efforts in targeting the johns. A part of the vision would involve creating a safer environment for sex trade workers by building trusting relationships between the police, sex trade workers and the community. Part of the proposal was the establishment of an "Anti-Exploitation Team" to create this environment. This vision and proposal was supported by Chief Clunis and Superintendent Smyth. The focus of this pilot project proposal will be the establishment of this team.

As detailed in the report by Sgt. Bowers;

"Prior to the last decade the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) focused its enforcement initiatives on the sex trade workers. In the last decade WPS enforcement initiatives have shifted towards a more balanced enforcement approach. This approach ensures that the same level of enforcement addresses both the exploiters (johns) and the sex trade workers.

We know that the johns (exploiters) who go to known sex trade areas predominately live and work in other areas of our city. These exploiters travel to the areas with ambiguity for the sole purpose of exploiting members of these communities. It is exploiters (john's) money that fuels the gang/drug/sex trade and violence. It is for these reasons that greater attention is required in the identification and apprehension of the exploiters.

During the last decade enforcement efforts have seen averages of 80 arrests for both the exploiters (johns) and sex trade workers. When enforcement initiatives are conducted they do alleviate sex trade activity, albeit for short periods of time. When enforcement initiatives are reduced or stopped the activity quickly resumes as it was.

We have seen that sex worker focused enforcement ultimately moves the sex trade activity around a given neighborhood or in some cases moves it to an entirely new neighborhood.

As mentioned most of the sex trade workers in Winnipeg are dealing with underlining issues of drug/alcohol addictions, history of abuse, and/or mental health issues. Arresting sex workers does not address the underlining issues resulting in most sex trade workers returning to the streets shortly after release.

Arresting sex trade workers ultimately creates an "us versus them" mentality and intensifies their mistrust of the Police. Instead of seeking the assistance of the police they avoid police at all costs. Many sex trade workers fear reporting crimes perpetrated against them to police out of the fear that they will be arrested.

As a result we need a change in our philosophy towards sex trade workers. We need to be sensitive to sex trade workers and the circumstances which have brought them to where they are. We need to use our Police discretionary powers to better serve them to ensure their safety is our number one concern.

In order to achieve a shift in philosophy the WPS should use their discretion when deciding to charge sex trade workers for any offence in relation to prostitution related offences under section 213 Criminal Code. Our Service's primary goal should be the wellbeing of the sex trade workers and the detection and apprehension of sex trade exploiters. When dealing with sex trade workers we should present them with other alternatives such as engagement in outreach programing.

In order to reduce the street level prostitution activity in our communities we require a more robust exploiter (John) focused approach. A persistent enforcement strategy aimed at the sex trade exploiters is required in order to deter anyone from coming to these areas for the purposes of exploitation.

A new strategy in Winnipeg is needed, it should be one that targets the exploiters while recognizing the vulnerable position that sex trade workers are in. It should promote the development of trusting relationships between police and sex trade workers. It should strengthen our current relationship with outreach programs currently assisting sex trade workers here in Winnipeg. The WPS will more than ever need to rely on our community partners in order to successfully assist sex trade workers exit the sex trade.

I am recommending that two full time members be assigned to the Vice unit compliment to form an Anti-Exploitation Team. This team will be responsible for proactive initiatives where they will have daily interaction at the street level with sex trade workers. Their objectives are to foster relationships with sex trade workers and develop a conduit between them and the Police Service. The Anti-

Exploitation Team would work hand and hand with other outreach agencies that are assisting sex trade workers in the community. Their duties would include discussing safety plans and with the sex trade workers as well as assisting sex trade workers in reporting violent crimes that have been perpetrated against them. The Anti-Exploitation Team will assist Police with intelligence gathering to ensure we have an early identification of violent offenders, exploiters and other offenders who are preying on sex trade workers. Other intelligence would be generated relating to gang and drug activity which could be passed along to other units within the Service. " i

PILOT PROJECT PROPOSAL

The new philosophy would incorporate and establish an "Anti-Exploitation Team". The Anti-Exploitation Team would consist of two full-time plainclothes constables, in addition to the current complement of the Vice Unit. The Vice Unit currently has five Plainclothes Constables and one Detective Sergeant, supervised by a Sergeant. The Sergeant is in charge of both the Vice Unit and the Missing Persons Unit. The Anti-Exploitation Team would not take part in undercover operations and would serve the purpose of developing relationships with the sex trade workers and working with community agencies to assist the sex trade workers on a short and long term basis. The Anti-Exploitation Team would report to the Sergeant in charge of the Vice and Missing Persons Unit.

The primary functions of the Anti-Exploitation team will be as follows;

- Liase and have a proactive approach with frequent interaction with sex trade workers
- Build trust between police, sex trade workers and the community to create a safer environment
- Identify sex trade workers in a non-enforcement capacity
- Gather information for the Project I.D. program which is currently housed within the Sex Crimes Unit. (Project I.D. is the voluntary gathering of DNA samples from sex trade workers or persons at risk of being sexually exploited)
- The ability to partner and engage with government, non-government organizations to develop and deliver exit strategies for the sex trade workers using both short and long term measures
- Partnership building and committee work with existing community agencies, around the issue of sexual exploitation and prevention strategies.
- Introduce sex trade workers to intervention and intensive case management offered by the different agencies.
- Gather intelligence and information in regards to criminal activity. If applicable any garnered information would be passed on to respective units for investigation.
- Receive, assess and liase with community stakeholders which includes residents and businesses in regards to complaints, issues and/or concerns in regards to sex trade workers.
- Develop and utilize the DISC program on RMS Niche for documenting interactions with sex trade workers for the purpose of intelligence and statisticsⁱⁱ

- Respond to sex trade related complaints for calls for service originating from the Communications Centre.
- Liase with General Patrol membership including the Community Support Units for the purpose of information gathering, and strategizing in regards to addressing community issues and seeking appropriate solutions.

DURATION OF PILOT PROJECT

Although the vision is to see this Anti-Exploitation team operating full time, year-round in collaboration with other stakeholders, there is recognition that resources are unavailable at this time for permanent full time implementation. A pilot project would serve the emergent need for this team to be established during the busy summer months, when sex trade workers are more visible, residents are out in the community, and complaints in regards to sex trade workers increase.

The proposal involves temporarily assigning members from existing resources, to fulfill the needs of a pilot project during the summer months. In the short-term this pilot project will commence on June 17, 2013 and will end September 30, 2013. The evaluation date will be October 1, 2013 and at that time the Vice Unit will have the ability to evaluate and measure the effects and successes of the program.

The timing of this pilot project is paramount, based on the on-going complaints being voiced at the community forums held by the Chief of Police. There is also recognition that the General Patrol members and the Community Support Units are dealing with complaints in regards to the visible sex trade frequently, and the expectation is that this Anti-Exploitation team will decrease the demands placed on these resources. In conclusion, this pilot project proposal also supports the Strategic Plan of the WPS, in implementing a violent crime reduction strategy by being “proactive and fluid in the approach to policing higher crime areas” and focusing on relationship building .ⁱⁱⁱ

Submitted by Insp. L. Pilcher

Division 41

ⁱ Taken from document prepared by Sgt. Gene Bowers Winnipeg Police Service

ⁱⁱ DISC (Deter and Identify Sex Trade Consumers), housed on RMS Niche

ⁱⁱⁱ Winnipeg Police Service “The Roadmap ”A strategic Plan for 2012-2014