

# SiRT

SERIOUS INCIDENT  
RESPONSE TEAM

Summary of Investigation

SiRT File # 2016-022

Bridgewater Police Service

August 4, 2016

Ronald J. MacDonald, QC  
Director  
May 3, 2017

## **Facts**

On August 4, 2016, SiRT received information from the RCMP regarding alleged actions of a member of the Bridgewater Police Service in relation to a teenaged female. Because of those allegations SiRT opened an investigation at that time. The investigation included seeking the production of certain documentary evidence from a third party which was not received until the last week of April, 2017. As a result, the investigation was not completed until May 3, 2017.

During this investigation, SiRT interviewed nine civilian witnesses, and four police witnesses. Many other investigative steps were taken, and evidence relevant to the matter was gathered from a variety of sources.

On May 4, 2017 SiRT will lay one charge of sexual assault, contrary to section 271 of the Criminal Code, and two counts of sexual exploitation, contrary to sections 153(1)(a) and (b), against John William Collyer, 53, Chief of the Bridgewater Police Service. These offences are alleged to have occurred between April 1, 2016, and July 31, 2016. Chief Collyer is scheduled to appear in Provincial Court in Bridgewater on June 14, 2017.

## **Relevant Legal Issues**

Under s. 271 a sexual assault is committed whenever a person intentionally applies force, even if slight, against another person without their consent, in circumstances of a sexual nature where the sexual integrity of the victim is compromised. Consent is only obtained when the complainant has given voluntary agreement to engage in the sexual activity in question.

The offence of sexual exploitation can be committed in two ways. Under s. 153(1)(a) the offence is committed if a person who is in a position of trust or authority towards a young person touches the young person for a sexual purpose. Under s. 153(1)(b) the offence is committed if a person in a position of trust or authority towards a young person for a sexual purpose invites or counsels a young person to touch the person.

Where reasonable grounds exist to believe such an offence has been committed, the Director may charge the police officer. Any offence must be proven in court beyond a reasonable doubt before the accused can be found guilty.

## **Conclusion**

This investigation has led to the conclusion that there are sufficient grounds to lay one charge of sexual assault and two charges of sexual exploitation against Chief John Collyer. However, this matter is currently before the courts. In accordance with SiRT policy, this report will not discuss the facts of that matter in any further detail. To do otherwise might compromise the fair trial interests of the accused.

The Serious Incident Response Team Regulations under the *Police Act* state that the Director may choose to provide a supplemental summary of the investigation at the conclusion of the prosecution.