

# SiRT

SERIOUS INCIDENT  
RESPONSE TEAM

## Summary of Investigation

SiRT File # 2012-009

Referral from Bridgewater Police Service

August 1, 2012

Ronald J. MacDonald, QC  
Director  
November 5, 2012

## **Facts**

On Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the SiRT was contacted by the Chief of the Bridgewater Police Service (BPS) to investigate a complaint of domestic violence involving one of their officers. Allegations were made against Constable Christine Marion Bonnell, of Bridgewater, NS. Cst. Bonnell has been on leave from the force for the past four years. The alleged victim in this matter is Joseph Wiley Ross.

The investigation in this matter took place between August 1, 2012, and August 22, 2012. SiRT investigators took statements from two civilian witnesses, and spoke to seven others without taking formal statements. As a result of the investigation, two charges of assault contrary to section 266 of the *Criminal Code* were laid against Constable Bonnell. These relate to allegations of common assault, between the dates of July 1 and July 31, 2012.

## **Relevant Legal Issues**

Section 266 of the *Criminal Code* makes it an offence to commit assault on any person. The charge can proceed as an indictable or summary offence. In this case, the matter is proceeding as a summary offence.

An assault is committed whenever a person intentionally applies force against another without their consent. In this case there is no allegation of lasting bodily harm and therefore the charge is what many refer to as “common assault”.

## **Conclusion**

This matter is currently before the courts. The first count is due to be tried on March 22, 2013, and the second on March 25, 2013. The matters will be heard in Bridgewater Provincial Court.

As the matters are awaiting trial, in accordance with SiRT policy, this report will not discuss the facts of the matter in any further detail. To do otherwise might compromise the fair trial interests of Ms. Bonnell. The SiRT Regulations under the *Police Act* state that the Director may provide a supplemental summary of the investigation at the conclusion of the prosecution, which I will determine at that time.