

SiRT

SERIOUS INCIDENT
RESPONSE TEAM

Summary of Investigation
SiRT File # 2020-003
Referral from
Halifax Regional Police
January 30, 2020

Felix Cacchione
Director
June 25, 2020

SiRT was contacted on January 30, 2020 by the Halifax Regional Police Service (HRPS) and asked to provide oversight of an investigation regarding the possible involvement of the Subject Officer (SO) in a child sexual interference case. The referral to HRPS and information about the SO's alleged involvement came from the Integrated Internet Child Exploitation unit (ICE). The original information came from the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in Ottawa which monitors internet communications for potential persons who may be involved in child sexual abuse.

SiRT concluded its oversight on May 18, 2020.

Facts:

NCMEC reported suspicious activity, concerning a message originating from the SO's telephone number and recorded by a call centre to ICE the investigating agency. This call centre offers both a telephone chat service and dating service to its customers in Canada and the United States. It routinely screens its systems for suspicious activity and occasionally discovers voice messages that contain certain information involving sexually explicit contact with children. Such conversations and messages are flagged, recorded and reviewed. If they involve children these are reported to the NCMEC.

Records obtained from the call centre included account information and 93 audio clips. Of these audio clips, two related to the possible sexual interference children.

The SO's residence was searched, under warrant by the ICE team and RCMP Tech Crime unit on January 31, 2020. Various electronic devices were seized and analyzed by the RCMP Tech Crime unit for the presence of evidence relating to the sexual interference or sexual exploitation of children. This analysis disclosed no evidence to support a finding of sexual interference or sexual exploitation. The SO provided a statement. He denied ever having touched a person under the age of 16 years for a sexual purpose.

A photograph of a person of questionable age was found on one of the devices analyzed. This led to the obtaining of a second warrant to continue the search of the device under the child pornography provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada.

Approximately 200,000 photographs and videos were retrieved from the electronic devices and examined. None of the photographs or videos showed a person under the age of 18 years or depicted as being under that age engaged or depicted as engaged in explicit sexual activity. None of the photographs or videos had, as a dominant characteristic the depiction, for a sexual purpose, of a sexual organ or anal region of a person under the age of 18 years. Nothing obtained from the analysis of the seized electronic devices meets the Criminal Code definition of child pornography.

The investigation did not find any affected person (AP).

No basis exists for a finding that any criminal offence was committed. Therefore, no charges are warranted against the SO.