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## **Standing Committee on the Status of Women**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, December 8, 2009**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Hedy Fry**



## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)):** I will now call the meeting to order.

As you can see from your agenda, the orders of the day are, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., the issue of the 2010 Winter Olympics and human trafficking.

We have Bob Usui from the Vancouver Police Department. Welcome.

Can you hear me?

**Mr. Bob Usui (Inspector, Special Investigation Section, Vancouver Police Department):** Yes, I can. Good afternoon. Thank you.

**The Chair:** We are on video conference.

We also have, from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Paul Desautels. From the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we have Michel Aubin and Marie-Claude Arseneault. We also have, from the Department of Public Safety, Barry MacKillop. And from the Canada Border Services Agency, we have Ken Lamonagne.

The usual way we deal with these issues, as you know.... Many of you, at least your departments and institutions, appeared as witnesses before this committee on June 11 to speak about your preparations for the 2010 Olympics in the event of trafficking. So we heard from you and we were relatively satisfied that you were on top of things, even though you said you didn't think there would be an increase because it hadn't been seen to be so in other venues where the Olympics were held.

However, some information has come from the media that suggested some of the plans were not necessarily in place, that the Vancouver Police Department had not been involved in any of the fieldwork and was not given the resources it needed to do some of the education, public awareness, and public training it wished to do. We also heard through that same media from an Ontario sex trade worker—she is not here, we don't have time to do so—who said her pimp was preparing a lot of them to travel. So whether or not there will be international trafficking, there is a question as to whether there will be national trafficking.

We've asked you to come here so we could get an update and so you could perhaps answer some questions as to the veracity of the report we've heard. We have asked the local police, the VPD, to be

here to speak to their readiness and to whether they feel they have been given all the resources needed to also be ready on the ground.

Because we only have an hour, I'm going to give each group five minutes to make a quick presentation, and that includes you, Bob. Then we will have a question period, but I'll talk to you about that when it happens.

We'll start with Bob.

Welcome.

**Mr. Bob Usui:** Thank you.

I really want to thank all of you for inviting me here to address the issue of human trafficking and the Olympics. It seems to be very topical and seems to be in the news a lot. I've been called by different agencies, as well as the media, to give some press conferences or interviews on this issue.

I feel that we are very prepared for this. We work very closely with a lot of other agencies, those being CBSA, the RCMP, and OCTF, the Organized Crime Task Force, as well as other municipal departments. The vice unit, which is one of many units that fall under me, deals strictly with investigations regarding bawdy houses, as well as Internet luring—those are the big ones that we investigate—and those who live off the avails, the pimps who are victimizing these women and really taking advantage of them.

So far we haven't seen an increase in trafficking and we have no intelligence to indicate otherwise. However, we've had some cases—the most recent one was about two and a half years ago—where we did an investigation at a massage parlour and one of the women who was working there had been trafficked. Most of the other ones we see right now in our bawdy house investigations are Asian-based, and they appear, through our investigation and through interviews with these women, to be there of their own free will and they are there to make money.

We do a lot of education and training with outside agencies, as well as with our own members, in regard to these types of investigations. We work very closely with a lot of outside agencies such as WISH and PACE, these groups that support sex trade workers.

We have other avenues to work with and to go to in regard to support. For instance, the Salvation Army just opened a 10-bed safe house at Belkin House, which really assists us. If we have a bawdy house investigation, typically we don't know how many women will be in there, but in the ones I've dealt with, there could be up to six to 10 women. That's a problem at one o'clock in the morning. Where do we place them? Now we have a place we can put them that's safe and where they can get support and be fed, and there are all these other support mechanisms there to really help these women.

Anyway, that's what we're doing on the ground here. As I said, we get lots of support from the other agencies, such as the RCMP and CBSA, and we work very closely with them. We have a very good working relationship.

• (1535)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Bob.

Now I'll move to Monsieur Desautels.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop (Director General, Law Enforcement and Border Strategies Directorate, Department of Public Safety):** With your indulgence, Madam Chair, I am Barry MacKillop, from Public Safety. Perhaps I could kick this off as one of the co-chairs of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, and then we can move to the agencies and departments for their specific activities.

**The Chair:** So you would like to shift the order.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** If you don't mind.

**The Chair:** That's fine. Go ahead.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** Thank you.

Thank you for the opportunity to return before the committee today to provide an update on key federal initiatives that address concerns of a possible increase in human trafficking as a result of the 2010 winter games and to underscore the government's commitment to ensure the safety and security of all Canadian citizens and foreign visitors at this international sporting event.

My colleagues from the RCMP and CBSA will provide an update on their respective efforts to combat human trafficking in advance of and during the winter games, and my colleague from Citizenship and Immigration Canada will discuss immigration policies and initiatives that are in place to protect victims of trafficking.

[*Translation*]

There continues to be increased public attention on whether the government has implemented concrete and coordinated measures to address a possible increase in human trafficking as a result of Canada's hosting of the 2010 Winter Games. I would like to reassure the committee that we have undertaken a number of steps to address this concern, which has been informed by other countries' experience in preparing for similar international sporting events.

Federal anti-trafficking efforts are not new; they have evolved over time through the expertise and dedication of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, of which I am co-chair with the Department of Justice. This working group is comprised of 17 federal departments and agencies that work together to develop policies, coordinate our collective efforts, and share information on anti-trafficking initiatives. As is well known, the

framework that guides our work is reflective of four pillars: preventing trafficking; protecting victims; prosecuting offenders; and building partnerships both domestically and internationally.

• (1540)

[*English*]

As my colleagues will further elaborate, to date our strategies recognize a continued need to raise awareness among key stakeholders and the public more broadly, address the needs of victims, and strengthen prevention and enforcement strategies such as dedicated law enforcement training to curb this horrific crime. To this end, preparation for the winter games builds on and strengthens existing measures nationally, with a particular focus on the Vancouver area. This approach is very similar to the German experience for the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

I would like to take a few moments to highlight a few key projects and collaborative efforts led by the working group and Public Safety Canada to address human trafficking, all of which form part of a wider government effort to prepare for the 2010 winter games.

Federal working group officials have collaborated with key partners in British Columbia, namely the RCMP's "E" Division; the B.C. provincial Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons, also known as OCTIP; and the Vancouver Police Department. A number of meetings have been held with these partners in order to share information and discuss respective operational strategies prior to the winter games.

As far back as October 2008, officials met with the Vancouver organizing committee for the games and the RCMP's integrated security unit to discuss how best to incorporate anti-trafficking measures into the broader security planning for this event.

As announced on January 15, 2009, Public Safety Canada, the RCMP, and the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association partnered to develop a national awareness campaign, available through the media, and to use the Crime Stoppers 1-800 national anonymous tip line. Crime Stoppers posters and brochures are available now in communities, and its board of directors have been trained to begin community presentations on human trafficking across its national chapters. Call centre employees for Crime Stoppers have also been trained with the protocol in hand to assist in receiving and transferring calls.

Shortly, Crime Stoppers will also begin developing a television re-enactment video and newspaper, print, and radio spots, which will form part of the national awareness campaign called Blue Blindfold, which we anticipate will be launched in January 2010. In advance of the games, Crime Stoppers will increasingly focus its awareness efforts in the Vancouver area.

[Translation]

Funded by the Department of Public Safety, we are coordinating a training workshop for crowns in BC on human trafficking to be held in January 2010. Alberta and Yukon crowns have also been invited. This initiative is complementary to the RCMP-led law enforcement awareness workshops which have taken place across Canada for approximately two years now. Together with Justice Canada, we are jointly funding a project by the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons to deliver basic training curriculum on human trafficking for first responders in BC, such as shelter staff, faith-based organizations and victims' services.

[English]

Finally, we are commissioning research on the impact, if any, of the 2010 winter games on the prevalence of human trafficking. This research will examine the types of anti-trafficking initiatives undertaken and the role that planned training and awareness raising played in addressing the concern of human trafficking during and after the games. The outcome will help inform the development of future approaches to combat human trafficking for similar sporting events hosted by Canada.

Madam Chair, I would like to reassure the committee that the government is committed to protecting vulnerable women, children, and men from traffickers who may seek to exploit them before, during, and after the winter games. As my colleagues will further elaborate, focused training has been a priority, awareness raising continues to take place, and collaborative initiatives are being developed to combat human trafficking nationally, with an emphasis on the Vancouver area prior to the games.

[Translation]

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will now ask my colleague, Superintendent Michel Aubin, to say a few words.

• (1545)

[English]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Aubin.

**Superintendent Michel Aubin (Director, Federal and International Operations, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** Good afternoon, Madam Chair, and members of the committee. Thank you for inviting us to appear before you again.

For those who are following my prepared notes, and in the spirit of respecting the time limit, I will be skipping through the first four pages. The first four pages emphasize what the RCMP is doing through its Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre, based in Ottawa.

I will highlight a couple of things that were mentioned the last time we appeared concerning awareness across Canada.

Since 2008, in excess of 2,200 law enforcement and prosecutors have attended the RCMP human trafficking awareness workshops that were delivered in more than 20 cities across Canada. Members of the national coordination centre and regional human trafficking awareness coordinators travelled extensively across Canada to raise awareness on human trafficking. To date they have provided

awareness sessions to more than 21,000 law enforcement, government, and non-government organizations and the public across Canada.

As well, in 2009 more than 3,000 human trafficking law enforcement tool kits, of which we have samples here, have been distributed to law enforcement agencies across Canada, including 342 in British Columbia alone. A mass distribution of the tool kits to non-governmental organizations is planned for 2010.

I will focus now on the human trafficking initiatives that have been put in place for British Columbia specifically.

[Translation]

In that province, the RCMP Border Integrity Program has a detailed approach in place to prevent human trafficking and address any information that might surface leading up to the 2010 Olympics. This approach has a number of prongs and includes the monitoring of intelligence, raising awareness, building on partnerships and proactively engaging in human trafficking investigations.

[English]

This approach ensures that we are both comprehensive and inclusive.

The RCMP, aside from its own criminal intelligence program, leads a 2010 integrated security unit joint intelligence group, which monitors intelligence on criminal activities related to the Olympics and Paralympics, including human trafficking. The RCMP border integrity immigration and passport unit in British Columbia liaises with various units and partner agencies, as well as with the Vancouver police, to gather and disseminate intelligence relating to human trafficking in the Olympics in a timely fashion. In addition, the national coordination centre in Ottawa coordinates and disseminates intelligence among law enforcement across Canada, including intelligence stemming from the 2010 integrated security unit joint intelligence group.

On the topic of awareness, the British Columbia human trafficking coordinator has taken an active role in raising awareness within that province. Within the last two years leading up to the Olympics, nine workshops were conducted in the Okanagan region, the Lower Mainland, and Vancouver Island, to a total of 714 law enforcement personnel. In addition, awareness sessions have been delivered to close to 600 law enforcement, government, and non-government organizations and the public.

Attendees were trained to recognize human trafficking indicators. Law enforcement officers were provided with tools to better equip them to detect and investigate human trafficking cases. Officers were made aware of the potential for an increase in human trafficking during the lead-up to the 2010 Olympics, and they were requested to add an intelligence-gathering component to their human trafficking investigations, specifically intelligence directly related to an increase in human trafficking during the Olympics.

During the workshops RCMP cases were presented to law enforcement, prompting other units within the Lower Mainland to commence proactive trafficking operations within the sex trade.

[*Translation*]

The RCMP in BC has built excellent partnerships with local law enforcement, NGOs and shelters. Specific partnerships include, but are not limited to, the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Vancouver police, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and a variety of non-government and religious organizations, including the Salvation Army.

A 24-hour hotline provides all law enforcement immediate access to, and assistance and guidance from, the RCMP human trafficking coordinator in BC during human trafficking investigations.

• (1550)

[*English*]

In terms of enforcement, a team of investigators within the RCMP border integrity program in British Columbia has been identifying potential victims of human trafficking and are actively engaged in human trafficking investigations. This is a permanent team that will remain in place during and after the Olympics. They will continue with their ongoing efforts to combat human trafficking, proactively detect it, and monitor any human trafficking related issues within their investigations.

In June 2009 we reported that a threat assessment was under way. This assessment is nearing completion and was conducted to assess the situation in Canada, with a focus on international human trafficking. Its goal is to identify the criminal organizations involved in human trafficking, identify trends, and facilitate the exchange of intelligence among law enforcement. It will also provide law enforcement across Canada with a guide to further direct resources on this issue.

Notable proactive investigations exist throughout the Lower Mainland that have been geared to identifying and rescuing potential victims of human trafficking and that may or may not be directly related to an increase in human trafficking during the Olympics. In January 2009 information was received that a ring of human traffickers were increasing their operations throughout the Lower Mainland. However, it was not necessarily in preparation for the Olympics. The accused in this case will be charged on four separate prostitution-related charges as well as human smuggling.

Like most international human trafficking investigations, victim management proved to be an issue. Several victims returned to their home countries, while others no longer wish to appear in court. Without victims' testimony, charges of human trafficking were unlikely. Therefore, substantive charges of human smuggling, living off the avails of prostitution, keeping a common bawdy house, and procurement have been sought.

In March 2009 investigation commenced into a group of organized human traffickers operating bawdy houses throughout the Lower Mainland. While I'm not able to go into the specifics of this investigation, I can tell you that this investigation has a very specific strategic component set to identify any increase in human trafficking directly related to the Olympics.

There are as well other ongoing human trafficking related—

**The Chair:** Can you wrap it up?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Yes, ma'am.

**The Chair:** We've just gone over time, thanks. Just finish up what you have to say. Go ahead.

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Okay. I'll just go to the conclusion here.

Human trafficking is an insidious crime that the RCMP recognizes the need to address. While there are varied reports on human trafficking in past sporting events—including that of Germany in 2006, where there was no notable increase—the RCMP has taken a proactive, comprehensive approach involving our enforcement partners and border and victim management services. The RCMP will continue to monitor intelligence and follow through with all the measures to prevent, detect, and address any instances of human trafficking.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now Mr. Lamontagne.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ken Lamontagne (Director, Intelligence Risk Assessment and Analysis Division, Enforcement Branch, Canada Border Services Agency):** Good afternoon, Madam Chair, honourable members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in today's hearing.

My name is Ken Lamontagne. I am director within the Enforcement Branch of the Canada Border Services Agency. I am pleased to be representing the agency today in order to discuss our role in the prevention and interception of human trafficking cases.

CBSA is working to ensure the security of Canadians and foreign visitors. Our goal will be to prevent and intercept human trafficking incidents prior to and during the Olympic Games. Dealing with trafficking in persons falls under our mandate of managing Canada's borders and fighting cross-border crime. We work with overseas partners to prevent the irregular movement of people which may include trafficking in persons.

A multiple borders strategy is used to combat human trafficking both internationally and domestically. Our commitment to fighting human trafficking includes: working with overseas partners to combat irregular migration, which may include human trafficking victims; detecting and intercepting fraudulently obtained travel documents to help prevent the bringing of potential human trafficking victims into Canada; assisting potential victims; providing assistance in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking offenders.

Many partnerships exist within and outside of the CBSA for dealing with human trafficking, such as with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, local police agencies and non-government organizations. We work with these key partners to ensure that victims are provided with protection.

As of April 2007, all new border services officers undergo a "People at Risk" workshop as part of their port of entry recruit training course, which will assist them in dealing with vulnerable persons including human trafficking victims and missing children. Currently 1,550 border services officers have participated in this workshop.

As of May 2009, field immigration training program participants, which includes inland enforcement officers, also undergo this workshop. Currently, 55 officers have participated in this program.

Migration integrity officers receive extensive specialized training in the following areas, which will assist them in preventing or intercepting human trafficking cases: passport and document fraud, intelligence collection and reporting, identifying inadmissible persons and threats to national security, and detecting migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

The Pacific region recently rolled out human trafficking awareness sessions in the summer of 2009. Currently, 26 human trafficking awareness sessions have been delivered to approximately 248 border services officers at Vancouver international Airport, Douglas, Pacific Highway, Aldergrove, Huntingdon, and Prince Rupert. A CBSA subject matter expert provided a presentation at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police national human trafficking workshops. From 2008 to the present, CBSA officers have participated in these RCMP workshops in 17 Canadian cities.

• (1555)

[English]

Our Olympic preparations commenced over two years ago. Our Olympic and Paralympic task force was created in October 2008 to respond to and anticipate operational issues at the Olympics.

Information gathered does not indicate an increase in human trafficking at the Olympics. Regardless, measures are in place to ensure that we are prepared.

To protect the integrity and security of our Canadian border, the CBSA, in collaboration with security partners, uses a variety of risk assessment tools and programs. The advance passenger information program and the integrated primary inspection line are examples of programs at our disposal that are used to screen persons seeking admission to Canada. Participants in the Olympics and their family members will be required to participate in the accreditation program.

We participate in the Interdepartmental Working Group on Trafficking in Persons as well as the working group on trafficking in persons and the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. The Olympic and Paralympic task force has allocated additional funding to the migration integrity officer program to enhance prevention efforts with regard to trafficking in persons. The RCMP's posters on trafficking in persons were distributed to the MIOs in November 2009 in an effort to raise awareness overseas.

The CBSA national human trafficking network, comprising regional intelligence officers, participates in monthly conference calls to share information and build expertise across Canada. RCMP tool kits were distributed to members of this network in an effort to raise awareness across Canada.

The CBSA published a policies and procedures manual on human trafficking in February 2009. The manual is available to all CBSA officers.

In September 2009 the CBSA published human trafficking information sheets for the public that also describe CBSA's role in fighting human trafficking and provide contact information.

In November 2009 CBSA met with the Canada Fights Human Trafficking organization to discuss potential collaborative opportunities. A future prospect for the CBSA will be to cooperate with this organization as an important contact in the protection and support of potential victims.

Finally, the CBSA has increased its operational capacity to perform activities and impact the ports of entry in the Pacific region. Additional resources have been allocated to Vancouver marine operations in order to increase vessel rummages and crew/passenger verifications prior to and during the Olympics. The increased presence of intelligence officers in the Pacific region will expand our intelligence capacity. Approximately 100 border security officers will be reallocated to impact the Pacific region, and additional staff will be placed at Pearson International Airport in Toronto.

In conclusion, the risk of human trafficking will be mitigated by CBSA's increased vigilance. CBSA remains committed to preventing irregular migration, which includes trafficking in persons, at its source. The CBSA will work to detect and intercept fraudulent travel documents to prevent the transportation of human trafficking victims to Canada. The CBSA will adopt a victim-centred approach when dealing with potential victims and work with its partners to ensure that victims are provided with the necessary referrals and assistance.

• (1600)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Monsieur Lamontagne.

Mr. Desautels.

**Mr. Paul Desautels (Director, Operational Management Coordination, Temporary Resident Program Delivery, Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

My name is Paul Desautels. I'm the director of the temporary resident program delivery unit in the operations sector at Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

I want to thank the committee for inviting the department back to discuss our contribution to combatting human trafficking. The department's associate assistant deputy minister appeared before the committee in June.

In combatting this crime, I know there continues to be a considerable focus on the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, along with the challenges they present. Through intelligence gathering, Citizenship and Immigration Canada is continuing to work with many partners, including colleagues at the RCMP, the Canada Border Services Agency, and other law enforcement agencies, to combat human trafficking, raise awareness of this crime, and prosecute the offenders.

The government is also supporting Bill S-223, a Senate private member's bill, which the committee on human rights is recommending to the Senate after incorporating several government amendments to the bill. The bill aims to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, IRPA, to provide assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking.

Our main role is to ensure that victims receive appropriate consideration for immigration status as individual circumstances warrant. In May 2006, in response to the unique needs of victims, the government introduced guidelines that would allow temporary resident permits to be issued to them. These guidelines are supported by ministerial instructions and public policy and have the force of law, but they also offer the flexibility required for the government to make improvements in response to this complex issue.

A fee-exempt, short-term temporary resident permit is issued for 180 days to further protect and assist victims and is offered in conjunction with a fee-exempt work permit. This allows the victim a chance to escape from the influence of the trafficker, and the opportunity to begin to recover from their ordeal, with assistance, including health care benefits and trauma counselling through the interim federal health program. Victims do not have to testify against their traffickers or participate in investigations in order to receive this permit. It also gives them time to reflect on what they want to do next, whether they seek to remain in Canada or return to their home country. They may also consider participating in an investigation or prosecution if they so choose.

Longer-term temporary resident permits can also be issued for up to three years where individual circumstances warrant. Victims may also apply for permanent residence under IRPA through, for example, the permit holder class, an application for humanitarian and compassionate consideration, or the refugee determination process.

Between May 2006 and December 2008, 44 individuals have been referred to CIC for consideration of a temporary resident permit as victims of human trafficking. Twenty-eight permits have been issued to 18 individuals. This figure includes extensions to the same victim in order to maintain legal status in Canada.

CIC's commitment to protecting victims of human trafficking remains consistent regardless of the reason they arrived in Canada or the manner in which they arrived, including in relation to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are continuing our education of temporary foreign workers and other visitors on how to avoid exploitation. CIC has also ensured that posters about human trafficking have been placed in a number of our overseas missions in order to alert to clients to this issue. These posters are viewed by the clients when submitting applications.

Along with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the Province of British Columbia, we continue to engage in outreach to the hospitality and construction industries, as well as other employers, to raise awareness of their responsibilities to ensure that foreign workers are protected against exploitation.

My department, through our network of regional offices, is continuing its ongoing contact with first responders, such as health care, social services, settlement agencies, and shelters in British Columbia, in regard to temporary resident permits that are available for victims of human trafficking.

CIC recognizes that this is a serious problem. We are committed to working closely with our partners in a concerted effort to raise awareness and actively support victims of this crime.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Colleagues, I think we will only have one round, because otherwise we won't be able to complete them. You will have seven minutes and you may decide to divide them, if you choose.

I will start with Ms. Neville.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll share my time with my colleague.

Let me thank all of you for being here yet again and for updating the committee. It's certainly helpful. The strategy that you've put forward is certainly a comprehensive one.

I have two questions that I want to get on the record. My colleague will have others.

There's a lot of focus on the international trafficking of women and/or children. I'm interested in knowing what kinds of intelligence and what kinds of efforts you're putting forward as they relate to internal trafficking within Canada of women and children.

My other question is to the Vancouver Police Department. We have been hearing, both through the press and through individuals we are speaking to in the B.C. area—and I have an e-mail from someone right now—that there's a lack of responsiveness on the part of the Vancouver Police Department to some of the issues relating to the trafficking of individuals. I don't know whether it's a lack of resources or what it is. What I'm hearing is that there's an unwillingness to arrest the johns, the pimps, and owners; in return, they arrest fewer women. There's just not a lot of activity by the police department.

Could you respond on those two and then leave some time for my colleague, please?

• (1605)

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Maybe I can address the first question.



From a law enforcement perspective, on your question in relation to international and domestic, we do not differentiate between the two of them. From a law enforcement perspective, whether it's enforcement or intelligence-gathering, we look at both of them regardless. It's whether the victim is from Canada or from abroad. Victim management services may also address some issues in terms of investigations. But how we go about it, in the first instance, is that we don't look at one or the other.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Do you have the same intelligence capacity internally in Canada as you appear to have for international trafficking?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** We tap into both. When I'm looking at the threat assessment that has just been produced and it's almost ready to be signed off, we look at both domestic and international. The issue is that the victims may be domestic or the victims may be from abroad. So we look at it from a holistic perspective. It's the crime, it's not where the victims are from.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** It's the prevention that I'm thinking of, when I ask about the intelligence.

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Yes.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I wonder if the police department could give me a quick response in terms of their capability to respond to the issue.

**Mr. Bob Usui:** Thank you, ma'am.

In regard to responding to these investigations, my unit, the vice unit, has a total of nine members, and a lot of these investigations are very resource heavy. They usually take surveillance, sometimes some undercover work, some electronic surveillance also. We just did one recently.

As well, when we get to the point where we can execute a search warrant, say, on a bawdy house, we sometimes have problems with getting support from the victims, or the women. A lot of them are from out of country, especially the ones we see, the Asian-based ones. A lot of times we show up with members who speak different languages so we can have translators there. But again, it is very difficult, because they do return home, whether it be Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, these places. Initially they're on board, but if they leave the country, we have to get them back to testify. We do charge the keepers of these—

**Hon. Anita Neville:** You need more resources. Is that fair comment?

**Mr. Bob Usui:** I would say that's a fair comment. As well, the unit I supervise also deals a lot with Internet lurers, child exploitation, and child pornography, so whichever case comes forward, the whole unit goes with that case and we work together as a team.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** You have two minutes, roughly, Lise.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.):** Mr. Usui, I am surprised to hear you say that there has not been any increase. I am surprised to hear that, in the year before the Olympics, there has been no increase in disappearances. From reading the papers, it seems to me that more women and children have gone missing. Mr. Usui

seems to be saying that this is not the case in Vancouver. Can the same be said for the rest of Canada?

• (1610)

**Supt Michel Aubin:** We are aware of the fact that women have gone missing. As you know, we have a working group that is addressing the matter very seriously. It is possible for people to conclude that there is a link between the matter and human trafficking. But, without hard evidence, it can only be a suspicion. That is one of the things we are looking into. But we cannot say that there is a direct link between missing women and children and human trafficking.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** I suppose it cannot be easy. People may be from outside the country. They may also be from here. It seems very complicated. You also mentioned the Internet and tool kits.

Personally, I believe in prevention. When you say tool kits, can you tell me what form they take? What tips you off that human trafficking is about to take place?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** In terms of prevention...

[English]

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

[Translation]

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Excuse me, Madam?

[English]

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** You had 30 seconds; you have 20 now.

[Translation]

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Thank you.

In terms of prevention, the national coordination centre stresses prevention. Initially, prevention was done through law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, to raise their awareness of the problem. This year, the national centre is concentrating on victims and on specific groups, like young people. A lot of work is done in this area, we focus on prevention together with awareness. This is the starting point, but it is not the only focus. We also work in the areas of enforcement and intelligence.

**Mrs. Lise Zarac:** *Editorial note: inaudible*, you reach out to groups of young people. Do I understand correctly? How do you work on prevention?

[English]

I am finished.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Can you give a quick answer to that?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Yes. There are specific groups that have been identified, whether they're aboriginal groups or minority groups. We're working directly through NGOs to provide prevention training, because we feel these groups are at risk.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madame Demers.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for being here today.

At the outset, I have to say that I am quite astonished to see how great the gap is between your perception of how things are developing and your preparedness, and the perception of people on the spot. By that, I mean the prostitutes and pimps, especially in Toronto and Montreal. I am more familiar with the situation in Montreal.

I also have to say that, since you appeared before us in June, there have been no advances in what you have decided to do. It is as if what you had decided to do was fine and that you were sticking with it. There has been no move to modify your plans.

Mr. Desautels, you told us that 44 people had been referred to CIC up to December 2008. Since that date, has no one else also been referred to CIC? Where are these people?

Could you also talk to us about border security? Last week, customs officials told me that they were intercepting a lot of weapons and they were filing reports about it, but that the reports were ending up in the shredder.

Is the same thing going to happen with the information on the people who are detained at the border? I I am very concerned, because there is a big gap between what you are telling us and the perception on the ground. However, I understand that those of you at the top feel sure that you are right and that everything is unfolding as it should. Could the shortcomings be at other levels? Do you have ways of checking that?

[English]

**The Chair:** Monsieur Desautels was the one who was asked the question—or does it matter?

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** That question is for everyone.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Desautels:** Concerning the 44 individuals, that was the statistic as of the end of December 2008. We continue to get referrals from CBSA and our other partners. I was only reflecting where we were as of December 2008.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Okay, but this is now 2009, with the Olympics only two months away. I would have liked a more precise idea. On the eve of the Olympics, where are we? That is really why we wanted to invite you. You have just told what you already told us in June.

•(1615)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Desautels:** I respect that, but generally speaking we report on our numbers from the previous year. So we will be reporting on 2009 in January and February of next year.

But on the number of referrals, I'm not sure that necessarily means we're not ready, because referrals stay the same as of 2008. We see that happening in 2009 as well.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Mr. MacKillop and Mr. Aubin, can you answer as well?

[English]

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** On what we discussed in June, we certainly elaborated on the strategies and the components of the strategies we would be putting into place, and the ones we had put in place to date. We have since elaborated on those strategies and advanced the components. We still believe we are addressing the components, the four pillars.

We've enhanced our awareness activity that speaks to prevention. Our partnership with Crime Stoppers, public awareness, and the roles of NGOs in Vancouver and elsewhere have been significantly stepped up since June. There is not a different name; it's still a component of the strategy. But a lot of work has been done. The number of law enforcement officers, the number of—

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Mr. MacKillop, you said that the board of directors of the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association has been trained to provide information sessions in communities. How many sessions have been held and in how many communities?

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** The training sessions have just begun. I do not believe that there have been more than one or two at the moment, but they are mostly being held in Vancouver.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** So, the board has not been trained yet, but it is being trained now.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** It has been trained. The board is now going to train others. So the board has already been trained. I can share a draft with you, but I would ask you to return it to me at the end. This is a draft of their "Blue Blindfold" campaign. It will give you an idea. I can pass it round.

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Is the draft in both languages, Mr. MacKillop? If not, it cannot be circulated.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** The draft will be finalized, translated and distributed in a month. It was produced by Crime Stoppers. That is why it has not been translated yet, but we are working with them on the translation.

The main points of the strategy have been put forward. Many more people have been trained. In January, there will be training sessions for crown prosecutors. Forty or fifty crown prosecutors will receive the training. It not only deals with human trafficking internationally, but also nationally. You will see in the awareness campaigns that no distinction is made between national and international levels of human trafficking.

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Demers, you're probably sharing your time with—

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Yes, Madam Chair.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Desnoyers, you have a minute and a half.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** My question goes to Mr. Aubin and Mr. Usui.

Mr. Usui, it seems that you do not have sufficient resources or staff. Can you tell me how many of these trafficking or exploitation cases you have on record?

I will ask Mr. Aubin the same question. Like my colleague, I have the “blues” in front of me. Your last report said very much the same thing. Clearly, something is happening as the Olympics get closer. There was the case in Calgary where two women were sold to police officers. It was in the papers. Perhaps it is the tip of the iceberg.

So, with everything you have put in place, how many cases in Vancouver have you dealt with, and how many cases have you dealt with since June?

[English]

**Mr. Bob Usui:** Yes, sir, I'll address that.

I don't have the numbers for the whole year, but just the ones we've concluded this year. To date we've had five bawdy house investigations, with a number of people charged. As a matter of fact, last week we worked with IBET, which is the RCMP, in a joint investigation. It turned out they have a separate one, but it dovetailed into ours. And it was a bawdy house. As well, we arrested a fellow who was wanted Canada-wide. There were three children in this bawdy house, which was really a concern to us, and we wanted to address that quickly, so we did. It still took us a couple of weeks, with surveillance and some undercover work.

As I said, I'm not sure how many there were throughout the year, because there are so many bawdy houses and massage parlours operating in the city of Vancouver that they're too numerous to count, sir.

• (1620)

[Translation]

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Speaking for the RCMP, Mr. Desnoyers...

[English]

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Monsieur Aubin. I'm going to let you try that later, if we have some time, but we've got to move on now.

Ms. McLeod.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be sharing my time with Ms. Hoepfner.

I have a couple of what I think will be relatively quick questions.

You talked about a tool kit, and I'm wondering what's in it. That is my first question.

**Sergeant Marie-Claude Arsenault (Non-Commissioned Officer, Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** I'll answer that question and also let you know that we have samples here.

We have two tool kits, one for law enforcement and one for NGOs. They essentially include posters for the public or for victims in six different languages; pamphlets; law enforcement or police

officer handbook; fact sheets; questions and answers in relation to human trafficking; and a training video on human trafficking and different types of trafficking: domestic, international, forced labour, sexual exploitation. So it's all information to provide law enforcement with indicators of how to recognize victims of human trafficking and so on.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Is this sent out or is it on request? Are you proactively sending it?

**Sgt Marie-Claude Arsenault:** As previously mentioned, it has been sent to approximately 3,000 law enforcement officers across the country. It's distributed during our workshops, upon request. So it has been distributed in large numbers.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** There was also some talk about a hotline. Is that in operation now, or will that be over the Olympic period? What is the hotline again?

**Sgt Marie-Claude Arsenault:** The hotline actually has been in operation for quite a while. It's not necessarily just for the Olympics. Also, I forgot to mention that the number is included in the tool kits. It's on a pocket card for law enforcement officers. It includes some indicators as to how to recognize victims of human trafficking, and it has the phone number for the 24-hour hotline that goes directly to our human trafficking coordinators in British Columbia.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Okay, so that's 24/7, then. That's great.

**Sgt Marie-Claude Arsenault:** Yes.

**Mr. Barry MacKillop:** I would just add, as well, that the Crime Stoppers 1-800 number is also being used and is being promoted as a tip line for suspected cases of human trafficking, which complements the RCMP hotline.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** You also talked about a threat assessment document that's almost complete. I would presume that it's going to be an internal departmental document. Could you give me an understanding of what that is?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** It is internal, but it's done by the Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre. Once it's completed, we will be sharing it with law enforcement agencies that need to be aware of the contents, meaning those we've identified as having criminal organizations operating in their area of jurisdiction. The idea is to share it with those agencies so they can make sure they're aware of the intelligence. Then they can direct their resources according to their needs and what not.

Yes, we will be sharing it, but it's within law enforcement.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** I have one quick question, and then I hope to leave a minute or two for my colleague.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Just to follow up in terms of the question you didn't get to respond to, you looked at the temporary work permits, and it didn't seem that there had been a lot for a number of years. Is that the tip of the iceberg? From a federal perspective, are there any numbers? Where would you care to go in terms of a response to Mr. Desnoyers' question that you didn't have time for?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** Is your question in relation to temporary resident permits?

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** No. I looked at it and thought there were not very many, so I wondered if we really have the tip of the iceberg here. Indeed, in Canada, how big do you expect this issue is?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** The scope of the problem is hard to determine. Our threat assessment is meant not to determine the scope of the problem but to identify the organizations involved. If I may answer it this way, I think what's helpful to understand is that a number of years ago we had only five human trafficking convictions in Canada; today we have 24 cases and more before the courts. We have a number of cases, as well, that are offences related to human trafficking.

There's an awareness going on. Law enforcement and prosecutors are realizing what the problem is, and they're adjusting accordingly. I think it's normal that you have that evolution. It takes time to have that awareness and for the courts to be sensitized and to deal with these cases accordingly.

• (1625)

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Thanks.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Could I have just a minute?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Great. Thank you.

My question is for the Vancouver Police Department. Recently our government introduced mandatory reporting, by Internet service providers, of child pornography. I'm wondering if you can comment on how that will help you protect young girls, who are the primary victims of child pornography, not only because of the reporting requirements but also because of the requirement to maintain and protect evidence.

**Mr. Bob Usui:** That's a great question.

I was so happy when that legislation came forward, because our unit's really active in these investigations. You know what? It will secure the evidence for us, because sometimes it is difficult with the IP addresses and the ISPs to get that information in a timely manner. This legislation definitely not only supports us but supports law enforcement all across this country.

I'm not sure if the committee is aware that craigslist is rampant with advertising for sex, especially with young girls. We had a case just last week of an advertisement from a fellow who was looking for sex with a young girl under 14. That was brought to our attention, and we actually embarked on an undercover operation. We actually arrested this subject last week. He showed up at a meeting point, fully looking to find probably a 13- or 14-year-old girl, but all he found was a bunch of cops. He was charged with a number of offences. You know what? That day we prevented a sexual assault from happening.

These are the things I see, and part of that legislation is really going to help us.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Madam Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for being here. We appreciate your time and expertise.

One of the reasons we did ask you back was this newspaper article or, rather, media report. I'm going to quote from it. This is from a former prostitute and a current front-line worker who said that she was working with a couple of women who work in massage parlours and others who work on the street, and they reported that currently their pimps are organizing a whole lot of them to head in the direction of the Olympics in the next few weeks. I'm wondering if you have the resources to follow up on something like this.

Have you been in touch with police services in the large cities like Toronto or Montreal where young women may be coming from?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** That's a good question, and it speaks to the purpose of the Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre, if I may address it that way. The problem is located in large cities across Canada. The national coordination centre is intended exactly for that. It's to be able to make those connections.

One of its mandates is sharing intelligence. In many of these cities when they do engage in a human trafficking investigation, they will communicate with Marie-Claude's office and let them know, because their job is to make those connections. When we do have intelligence that would suggest that people are organizing in city A and headed to Vancouver, that information will be passed on to the RCMP, the Vancouver police, and what not.

As we explained before, we have, in my view, as comprehensive an approach as possible to try to address any information indicating that there are going to be people headed there for that purpose.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you.

You said that the RCMP border integrity program in B.C. has been identifying potential victims of human trafficking and that they are actively engaged in human trafficking investigations. I'm wondering what you look for when you're identifying victims. How do you identify the victims?

**Supt Michel Aubin:** There are a number of ways they go about it. A lot of it has to do with sources and dealing with the public. The public could be in many forms in terms of various industries that may come in contact with these individuals. Law enforcement by practice has contacts in all areas of the community and they try to gather information. The RCMP, like the Vancouver police, are trying to be proactive in trying to identify areas where human trafficking is happening and addressing it rather aggressively, if I may suggest. We're aware of this potential. We're trying to address it and make sure we try to prevent it and preclude it.

• (1630)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Monsieur Lamontagne, you talked about the training and the people at risk workshops as part of the port of entry recruit training course to assist in identifying vulnerable people. I think it was previously asked, but I want to pick up on that. How extensive are these workshops? Could you give me a sense?

**Mr. Ken Lamontagne:** The workshops identify the rules and protocols to follow with respect to dealing with victims as well as identifying cases with respect to trafficking. They look at behavioural indicators and what to look out for, what to look for in certain cases, and what to be on the lookout for with respect to the victims and the traffickers. They are extensive workshops in that regard.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** They would go on for several days.

**Mr. Ken Lamontagne:** I couldn't tell you the length, but I can tell you in a general context the type of information that's in those workshops.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** You feel quite confident that when officers are finished with these workshops they are fully prepared and have the ability to do the job you're looking for.

**Mr. Ken Lamontagne:** Yes, I do at this point.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Finally, I'm wondering how the RCMP distinguishes between prostitution and domestic human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Very clearly, in terms of human trafficking there's a profound sense of victimization, where with prostitution it may well be someone who has decided to pursue the sex trade.

**Supt Michel Aubin:** I want to make sure I understood your question. It's how do we differentiate between prostitution and human trafficking?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Yes.

**Supt Michel Aubin:** The definition we rely upon is the definition in the Criminal Code. So we accept that there are women out there who will commit themselves to prostitution. When we're talking about human trafficking, there have to be elements of coercion, and there are elements of control, which take many forms. That is the difference. They're victims.

As my colleague from the Vancouver police alluded, in a number of cases when these individuals are from abroad and we are trying to get their collaboration to provide the police and the courts with that evidence, they're not willing to cooperate; they just prefer to return to their home country. But that is where we make the distinction of whether there is a form of control, a form of coercion, meaning they are no longer doing it wittingly but are doing it unwittingly.

Sometimes those forms of control and coercion are not necessarily evident at first blush. You have to really look at it. The victims may not even recognize themselves as victims in the first instance. So the purpose of law enforcement through investigations, whether under-

cover operations or more complex investigations, is to try to bring out that evidence.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** So I take it that would require experience and real sensitivity, when speaking to an individual, to pick up the signs and to get the signals in regard to victimization.

**Supt Michel Aubin:** The purpose of the awareness sessions and the workshops is to bring that to the attention of law enforcement, so they can recognize that there are signs they have to go after and so they will not take things at first blush but will look for those pieces of evidence. But you also have to try to get that from the victims, where possible.

**The Vice-Chair (Ms. Candice Hoepfner):** You have another 10 to 15 seconds. Is there anything you want to add?

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I was interested in the statement about engaging the hospitality and construction industry in terms of their understanding of human trafficking. When I first read that, I thought there would be this effort to engage them to watch out for it, to prevent it. But now I'm wondering—because these are people who are coming from outside as sponsors or vendors—whether these are the people who may be looking for sexual favours. Are these the people who might be victimizing young women who are at the Olympics for the purposes of trafficking?

•(1635)

**The Vice-Chair (Ms. Candice Hoepfner):** Ms. Mathysen, you're pretty well out of time, so perhaps Mr. Desautels could answer that very quickly.

**Mr. Paul Desautels:** Yes, it is possible it could be the same individuals, but the point of our reaching out to those organizations is to have a conversation with them and make them aware of the signs. We can talk to the associations that these various organizations work through so that, wherever possible, we can raise awareness of the program.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Good.

**The Vice-Chair (Ms. Candice Hoepfner):** Thank you very much.

I'd like to thank each of the witnesses for being here today.

We will suspend right now and clear the room, and then we'll go in camera.

Thank you.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]





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