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Chair

Ms. Marie-Claude Morin

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•(1115)

[Translation]

The Chair (Ms. Marie-Claude Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP)): Good morning, and welcome to the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. My apologies for the slight delay. We have had some minor connection problems. That sometimes happens when we are putting videoconferences together.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), today we are continuing our study of sexual harassment in the federal workplace.

By videoconference, we are going to hear from Craig J. Callens and Carol Bradley, from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

You have 10 minutes in which to give your presentation. We will then move to a question and answer period.

Without further delay, I will give you the floor.

[English]

Deputy Commissioner Craig J. Callens (Commanding Officer, "E" Division, Royal Canadian Mounted Police): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning to you and to the committee members. Thank you for the invitation and for allowing me to join you this morning via video conference.

I am Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens, the commanding officer of the RCMP in British Columbia, also known as "E" Division.

Here with me today is Inspector Carol Bradley, our "E" Division respectful workplace program team leader. She is available to assist in answering any questions related to the respectful workplace activities and initiatives under way by the RCMP in British Columbia.

As this is my first appearance before you, I would like to begin with a very brief overview of "E" Division.

The RCMP in British Columbia is the police force of jurisdiction in all but 11 municipalities in the province. It is also the provincial force, and of course, we have a strong presence with respect to our federal mandate.

Seventy-five per cent of British Columbians receive front-line policing services from the RCMP through our 185 detachments that cover 99% of the geographic area in British Columbia, including 190 first nations communities.

We have over 9,000 employees in B.C., which is a combination of over 6,400 regular sworn members and over 2,000 civilian employees. Our diverse workforce includes over 1,400 female regular members of the RCMP, or approximately 23% of our sworn police officers.

Organizationally, our division headquarters is now in Surrey, British Columbia. We have four geographic district headquarters buildings: in the north, southeast, island, and lower mainland districts.

We typically respond to over one million calls for service a year.

I am aware of your interest in the work we are doing here in British Columbia in relation to our respectful workplace program. I can provide you with a very brief overview and some highlights.

Approximately one year ago, shortly after my appointment as commanding officer for "E" Division, I requested a practical assessment of the division's current approaches to maintaining a respectful workplace, and expressed a strong interest in identifying and exploring new ways that those alleging gender-based harassment could come forward and report incidents without fear of reprisal or retribution.

I requested that a broad-based consultation be conducted with a cross-section of female members and employees across the province, not only to hear about their experiences but also to receive any recommendations they had specific to creating and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

Concurrently, we also received and analyzed the results and recommendations of the recently completed professionalism in policing project by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

In concert with other human resource initiatives under way, in April 2012 the "E" Division respectful workplace action plan was developed, with 11 specific objectives and 51 action items broken down into three phases with set timelines and goals.

Some of the highlights of our respectful workplace action plan include a respectful workplace literature review to identify best practices in relation to creating and maintaining a respectful workplace in a policing organization.

An employee survey was conducted, the largest and most comprehensive ever in British Columbia, with over 3,100 employees responding with feedback and suggestions on 19 workplace factors.

An early intervention system, the performance awareness reporting system, was implemented to monitor and track behavioural indicators to ensure early support and employee wellness.

Harassment awareness and investigation training was completed, and over 100 trained harassment investigators are now available in this division.

Twenty-three respectful workplace advisers have been identified and trained to respond to calls ranging from requests for simple information to assisting employees who have had a workplace issue that needed to be addressed. Another 24 respectful workplace advisers are being trained this week.

My three assistant commissioners, who are part of my senior management team, started delivery of our ethical leadership presentation three months ago during the mandatory operational skills maintenance course at our Pacific Region Training Centre.

• (1120)

I personally present at our supervisor and management development training programs in which the maintenance of a respectful workplace has been embedded.

We have hired two informal conflict management practitioners to provide training, support, and assistance to employees, supervisors, and managers in addressing and managing conflict in the workplace in a proactive, timely, and effective manner.

A respectful workplace advisory committee has been created to act as subject matter experts and to support our senior leaders and the division management team as they develop specific plans to bridge the gaps identified in the employee survey.

Dr. Stephen Maguire, a professor at Carleton University and the co-author of the CACP professionalism in policing project, is providing workshops on ethical leadership to workplace advisers and committee members in our division. There is a workshop being held today, and another one will be held in three weeks.

Just two weeks ago we held a workshop for 25 managers that dealt with promoting cultural change and enhancing gender diversity.

Perhaps most significantly, an electronic confidential reporting system has been created, which we anticipate will go live by April 1 of this year. It allows for a confidential reporting option outside of the chain of command.

The entire plan is supported by a comprehensive communication plan that works to ensure employees are aware of the initiatives under way and the items that have been actioned.

A great deal has been done and is being done to address the issues and gaps we and our employees here in British Columbia have identified. I have utmost confidence in the leadership Inspector Bradley is providing and in the commitment being demonstrated by my senior officers to support this important work.

The key is that this plan is not about a quick fix or short-term gains. It is about changing the way we do business. It is about creating an environment within which employees feel valued and leaders can flourish. It is about sustainability in that this has gone from an idea to a plan and now to a program with the intention for

this to be core business for the RCMP in British Columbia. It is an ambitious plan with short timelines, but I believe it is achievable.

We are sharing all that we have learned, working with our colleagues in other divisions and nationally, and adjusting where necessary.

I have provided you with a very brief and quick overview of the respectful workplace action plan and program here in British Columbia, and we'd be very pleased to take any of your questions.

Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We now start our first round of questions.

Mrs. Truppe, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for appearing today and for sharing all that you're doing.

One of the things you mentioned was the workshop you had for 25 managers two weeks ago, which dealt with promoting cultural change and enhancing gender diversity. How did that go? Was it a daylong session or was it a three-hour session? Was it effective?

• (1125)

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Thank you for the question.

Inspector Bradley organized and was present for the training and received feedback from those candidates who were in attendance. Perhaps Inspector Bradley can give you the best answer to your question.

Inspector Carol Bradley (Team Leader, "E" Division, Respectful Workplace Program, Royal Canadian Mounted Police): Thank you, sir.

Thank you for the question.

It was a three-day training workshop that included a Ph.D. who specializes in gender communications. We had a number of male and female employees attend. It went very well. There was a lot of great open dialogue and a lot of sharing and learning from each other. The feedback was very positive in terms of the impact of the workshop.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Was it mandatory or voluntary for the 25 people?

Insp Carol Bradley: It was the first opportunity we had to run the workshop. It was voluntary in the sense that we put out a call for people who were interested.

Senior managers, for the most part, were the people who attended. We did have representatives of every business line within the province and all of the different programs. There was a lot of representation in terms of the different areas in British Columbia. There were different categories of employees and a fair amount of diversity in the group.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: You had also stated that an electronic confidential reporting system has been created, and I think it's going to go live in another month or so. It allows for a confidential reporting option outside the chain of command.

How would that be communicated to everyone?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: We have an internal website for the RCMP in British Columbia. Specifically within the website is a link to our respectful workplace action plan. Each one of the 51 initiatives that are under way is communicated and clearly set out on that website and available to our members.

In addition to that, I have sent out a number of internal communiqués identifying the progress we are making on these initiatives. We have shared the respectful workplace action plan, including the confidential reporting system that is set to begin in the next month, with every member and employee in this division.

Finally, I have provided a copy of it to my employee advisory group for their feedback and for their dissemination within the division.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

In the “Summary Report on Gender Based Harassment and Respectful Workplace Consultations” for “E” Division, there are recommendations on training. There are several things that are voluntary, and some that are mandatory. There's mandatory in-classroom training that is delivered by people who are professionally trained and non-RCMP members. Real-life scenarios are to be used without identifying names. There's more training education for senior managers and supervisors so they know how to detect the signs and how to handle these types of situations when an employee reports these types of incidents.

The commissioner who was here mentioned that the RCMP is taking steps along the lines of your recommendation on training, to integrate in-person training on maintaining a respectful workplace into the regular training mechanism for senior management and to continue with refresher training through the online courses.

Has your division begun taking additional steps towards this goal?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: We have. In the spring of last year we hired two external specialists in harassment training, and we held a three-day training session for 100 new harassment awareness and harassment investigators in this province. They have been deployed across the division and are now available to assist us in addressing cases that come to our attention.

All the work we have done with the respectful workplace advisers is a three-day session, during which additional in-person training is provided with external experts to assist us in ensuring that the respectful workplace advisers can deliver on their mandate.

Finally, we have a respectful workplace advisory committee of senior officers from across the province who are receiving ongoing in-person training to ensure that they are able to develop the sort of plans locally that we require to ensure that we're successful over the long term.

• (1130)

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

The report also notes a lack of conflict resolution skills in some of the supervisors. The commissioner mentioned earlier this week that he would like training for supervisors and management to become mandatory.

I was wondering if you could speak to the importance of having supervisors in management who are comfortable dealing with issues of sexual harassment, specifically in the workplace, immediately as they arise.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, thank you.

I think really that is the spirit and intent, for the most part, of our respectful workplace program. It is to be proactive and ahead of the curve when it comes to harassment and sexual harassment.

We have hired two external professional conflict management practitioners to assist us as resources to train our officer cadre, and our senior non-commissioned officers—

The Chair: You have one minute.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: —in the ways and means of being proactive, and addressing issues as they begin to develop, as opposed to reacting to complaints after a matter has gone beyond that with which we can deal early in the process.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

Could you comment on the type of message your division has been receiving from the commissioner on the topic of maintaining a respectful workplace?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Well, the messages have been clear and they have been constant. There is an absolute priority being attached to developing, maintaining, and enhancing the workplace in the RCMP, both in British Columbia and across the country.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We now move to the official opposition.

Ms. Ashton, you have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Thank you very much.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us all the way from British Columbia.

It's interesting to hear about the work that you've been doing over the last year. Obviously a great deal of work is being done to change things for the better within the “E” Division out in B.C.

Has there been an opportunity to evaluate the kinds of initiatives that you've taken over the past year, and if so, what are the results that you've seen?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I would suggest that the evaluations to date have been rather unscientific. I have shared the respectful workplace action plan with every employee, including my employee advisory committee. I solicited feedback on the content and fulsomeness of the action plan. That feedback has been extremely positive.

I mentioned in my opening comments that we had conducted a division-wide workplace survey that had a number of questions that spoke directly to the respectful workplace action plan. We developed a baseline through the course of that survey. It is our intention, upon rolling out all the initiatives that are contained within our action plan and that are attached to our respectful workplace program, to conduct a second survey some months from now to determine more scientifically whether or not we are achieving the kinds of goals and objectives we've set out to achieve.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Have you seen an increase in reporting?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: We have seen a considerable increase in the reliance on and utilization of the respectful workplace advisers who we have introduced in the division.

To this point there have been in excess of 40 contacts made between members and employees and the respectful workplace advisers, seeking information, seeking guidance, seeking support in terms of how they might most effectively deal with issues that are occurring in the workplace.

Personally speaking, that has exceeded my expectations. The feedback from those who have relied on the respectful workplace advisers has been extremely positive. The respectful workplace advisers themselves are feeling that the program is gaining momentum and is going to fill the void that was identified within the gender-based harassment consultations that were initially done in February 2012.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Of course, we've heard interest in launching this on a national basis. For anyone who wants to launch a program at the national level something that is important is data, and obviously evaluation.

Are you currently collecting data, and if so, will you continue to collect data, in terms of complaints, in terms of cases, and in terms of how many times people are reaching out to these advisers? It seems that would be important information for a national model.

• (1135)

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, I couldn't agree more. Indeed, we are collecting that data here divisionally. As you may have heard, all of our harassment investigations and complaints have now been forwarded across the country to our national headquarters and they are being tracked nationally.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Okay.

When we're talking about the people who do come forward, as we know there is a real disincentive, or many women have felt they couldn't come forward, one of the issues is protection for whistleblowers.

I wonder what kind of protection exists now.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Within our policies there is protection for those who come forward.

The issue we faced was a belief among some, expressed or otherwise, or a perception that should they come forward there would be reprisal or retribution. That's why we've developed these various mechanisms, including the confidential reporting system outside the chain of command, to relieve that kind of concern.

Upon the complaint being made, the key is that we comply with our policies in terms of the way the complainant and the respondent are dealt with during the course of any investigation. Simply put, that falls squarely with me and my senior officers. I have a system in place whereby those types of cases are raised with me personally every week. Every seven days thereafter I am personally briefed on those cases to ensure that those who have suffered that kind of workplace experience are not subjected to the type of retribution that some have feared might occur.

Ms. Niki Ashton: There is an interest, of course, in privacy, but part of the issue is that in the past, women have felt that justice was not served. Obviously we know of cases in the past where RCMP officers stayed on the force and even in the same community in some instances.

Is this approach you're now taking known to members? Is it known that these cases end up in your office, as a way of sending the message that people are brought together at the highest level?

The Chair: You have one minute.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: It has been broadcasted widely, internally. It has been subject to much public discussion, and I have clarified that publicly in the community. It has been discussed and presented with our labour relations program. It has been discussed at town hall meetings that have been held across our province.

As I indicated, I also present at the supervisor and management development programs, in which I make that perfectly clear. Every week one of my assistant commissioners is out at the Pacific Region Training Centre presenting on ethical leadership to all of our members who attend each week, on a rotational basis, to participate in operational skills maintenance. It's during the course of that dialogue with those members that this message is conveyed yet again.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Callens, I am going to have to interrupt you there. Thank you.

Mrs. O'Neill Gordon, you have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank you, witnesses, as well, for making yourselves available so we could hear you today.

I like the plan you have outlined. You are to be congratulated for taking the initiative to do such a report.

When you look at the report, "Gender and Respect: The RCMP Action Plan", it notes that this national picture of historical and ongoing complaints did not exist a year ago. It is a first from the RCMP. It stems directly from a December 2011 decision by the commissioner to centralize the oversight in administration of complaints in national headquarters.

I was wondering how this study has allowed you to better assess the impact of harassment on individual employees.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Thank you.

One of the key points that was raised in our localized gender-based harassment consultations and in the broader national gender-based assessment directed by the commissioner is that we have made harassment, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment a topic of conversation and dialogue during the course of virtually everything we do in terms of the necessity to address and eliminate this type of behaviour in our organization.

The tracking of these cases nationally for the purposes of ensuring accountability with commanding officers across the country, ensuring that commanding officers develop divisional and localized respectful workplace action plans and that we are communicating to our employees about the importance of the respectful workplace has changed the landscape. It is more in step with the type of modern human resources management expectations that the commissioner has of each of his commanding officers.

• (1140)

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: There is no doubt that going in that direction would make the employees more aware of this and better able to follow in these footsteps.

What do you know now that you didn't know before you undertook this summary report? What is one of the most important things you learned?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: The fact of the matter is, and I've said this many times to our employees, I am at a low risk of being harassed and I am at a low risk of being sexually harassed, as are many of my senior officers in this division. What's important is that we ask the questions and pay attention to the answers from our members and employees. It was only through engaging in that kind of consultative process and by engaging in that division survey, the workplace survey that had numerous questions specific to whether or not employees and members were enjoying the kind of workplace they deserve, that you properly begin to understand what's occurring out in the field.

What has become plain to me is that while harassment and sexual harassment are not rampant and are not systemic in our organization or in this division, there continues to be pockets and work environments where rude, dismissive, and disrespectful behaviour exists. My intention, through the initiatives that are attached to our respectful workplace plan and program, is to eliminate those pockets and to respond appropriately to the information I've received from our members and employees.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Thank you.

It's very obvious that you have obtained some very important information, and this information will be well used and put into practice.

I'm wondering how you are using this information to feed into ongoing development of existing practices, policies, and training.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Many of the initiatives that are attached to our respectful workplace action plan are the direct result of the ideas and recommendations we received through the course of the consultations. Added to that was the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police research project that made a number of recommendations, the majority of which we've already implemented in our division.

Finally, during the course of our division-wide workplace survey, we received over 5,000 ideas and recommendations from our members and employees, and those have been considered, analyzed, and grouped into themes. The various initiatives in our plan all speak to those recommendations that we have received from our members and employees.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Thank you.

As you mentioned, in B.C. there are already a number of officers who are being trained to investigate harassment or are being trained as harassment advisers. When Commissioner Paulson was here earlier this week, he spoke a bit about these roles.

I wonder if you could say how many have been trained so far, and what the timeline is for their integration into the workplace.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: The 100 harassment awareness and harassment investigators are already trained. They were trained and deployed late last year, in the summer and fall of 2012. We have already trained approximately 25 respectful workplace advisers. They are deployed and have been utilized, as I indicated earlier, on approximately 48 cases already.

• (1145)

The Chair: You have one minute.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: There is another three-day session to train another 25 respectful workplace advisers, which is going on this week. In fact, it's going on today.

Upon completion of that, we will then have 100 harassment awareness and harassment investigators deployed, and we will have 50 respectful workplace advisers deployed as early as next week.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Could I ask one extra question?

The Chair: You have 30 seconds.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: What is being done to ensure that employees are aware of harassment advisers?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I have broadcast that widely, through internal messages and within our internal website. We have identified, by picture and contact information, each one of our respectful workplace advisers, to all of the members and employees in this division.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Sgro, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Deputy Commissioner Callens and Inspector Bradley, thank you so very much for being here. Most importantly, thank you for the outstanding work you've done and the swift action you have taken.

With all of the things you are putting into place, you clearly are an example to all the other divisions in Canada. I expect that Commissioner Paulson is taking advantage of the work you've already done.

Are you taking any action right now to deal with any outstanding complaints? Policies sound good, and certainly the intention is there and all the right things are being put in place, but actions speak louder than words. Donald Ray would have been a great example to show that kind of swift action, but evidently it wasn't possible at that time.

Given these policies and the outstanding complaints that are not necessarily before the courts and you still have on the books, some action on some of those harassment complaints might help immensely to reinforce what you are both trying to do.

Do you have any comments on that?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes.

I think one of the keys in moving forward and dealing with pre-existing complaints is the development of service standards and timelines that ensure the timely investigation and completion of the necessary follow-up that needs to be done in cases where allegations have been substantiated. The service standards have been developed and are being communicated. They're being followed.

The capacity within our division to conduct the investigations has been increased considerably. As I indicated, we now have 100 investigators, which is 10 times what we had previously when I assumed the position as commanding officer.

As I mentioned, I've attached the highest priority to the completion of these investigations. I am briefed on them personally every week, not only in terms of whether or not new cases have arisen, but the progress that has been made over the past seven days.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Is any progress being made with trying to resolve some of the outstanding complaints prior to your taking over command?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes. We have had some success in clearing what I reference as the backlog. I would not suggest that it has been completely dealt with. Indeed, some of them are now in the civil court process. But in terms of the sorts of delays that were experienced historically in response to complaints being made, those sorts of delays have been eliminated.

Hon. Judy Sgro: It's very good to hear that. It took a tremendous amount of courage for many of those women to get to where they got to, to where they had to go public.

I very much appreciated, Deputy Commissioner Callens, your swift response to those things, because I would like your daughter and mine to want to be part of the RCMP, because I think it says.... We all have a tremendous amount of respect, and I think what you're doing now is starting to restore that respect, but it needs to spread throughout the country.

For a young woman in rural Alberta being harassed by her commanding officer, who is also the divisional commander, under this system that you're putting in place today, how does she gain the confidence that she can go somewhere other than an independent body to lodge her complaint without putting her own career in serious jeopardy? I use her as an example.

• (1150)

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I'm not familiar with that. I take it that is a—

Hon. Judy Sgro: No, I'm using it as a hypothetical situation for a young woman, for a young officer in rural Alberta. How would she access your system and have that level of trust and confidence that clearly you want to instill there?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: The respectful workplace advisers have been selected based on their personal integrity and their commitment to ensuring that our organization is one that is free of harassment and free of the type of retribution that some fear would occur if they were to come forward. I think the first step would be an opportunity to consult with and receive assistance from the respectful workplace adviser.

In my division, I have met with all of the respectful workplace advisers. They know from me personally that in the event they do not have confidence in bringing something forward to their line officer, their officer in charge, or their district officer, they need to have the confidence that they can bring that to me directly. I will ensure that the appropriate follow-up is conducted and that those who present themselves as victims of harassment or sexual harassment can rest assured that I will ensure they are not subject to unfair treatment.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Could you elaborate a bit more on the electronic confidential reporting system aspect? Again using the example of the young officer in Alberta, if she were to use your electronic reporting system that you have referred to, it would give her a confidential avenue. Could you elaborate on how you might see that?

Maybe Inspector Bradley would elaborate a bit on that.

Insp Carol Bradley: Yes, certainly. Thank you for the question.

The electronic confidential reporting form comes directly to the respectful workplace team. It comes to me, and there are two other staff members—

The Chair: You have one minute.

Insp Carol Bradley: In the event that an employee were to express a concern via the confidential electronic reporting form, I would review that. I would be able to take that forward to the commanding officer. In your example, if it were in regard to the commanding officer, I would be able to take that forward outside that chain of command, if that were the case.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Is it going to be one of your responsibilities, Inspector Bradley, to deal with the electronic reporting system?

Insp Carol Bradley: Yes. As we launch this, it will be a new system and, I suppose, a pilot to see how much access there is and how much our employees are using it. Yes, those will come directly to the respectful workplace team, which consists of me and two other employees.

Hon. Judy Sgro: That's wonderful.

The issue—

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Ms. Sgro, unfortunately I am going to have to interrupt you. Your time is up.

[*English*]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Thank you very much, both of you.

[Translation]

The Chair: I will now move to a government member.

Ms. James, you have five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Deputy Commissioner Callens and Inspector Bradley.

I want to continue with the line of questioning regarding the confidential reporting system. As a result of all the surveys and investigations, why do you think this is particularly necessary or important?

Insp Carol Bradley: One of the things we heard from our employees, from the various sources of information, was that reporting could be a challenge to them. There was a perception by some employees, a perception or a reality, that coming forward was difficult. They did fear that in their immediate work environment or their immediate chain of command perhaps it wouldn't be dealt with appropriately, or that there might be some reprisal against them in the immediate environment.

It was very important for us, as a starting point, to provide options for employees so they would feel confident and safe in bringing issues of workplace conflict forward. The respectful workplace advisers were something we initiated very quickly. We wanted to get something out there that employees could see, access, and use as quickly as possible. The confidential electronic reporting form is another option that may meet the needs of some other employees. This is to try to provide a broad range of options for employees to take that step.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you very much.

It was my understanding that it was already launched as a pilot project in B.C. Is that correct, or has the confidential reporting system not been launched yet?

Insp Carol Bradley: We have had our respectful workplace advisers in place since November. The electronic reporting system will go live April 1.

•(1155)

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you. That was my misunderstanding. I thought it was already launched.

With regard to the workplace advisers, earlier in your testimony in questioning you indicated that there have been a number of people already trained as advisers or investigators. You mentioned 100 and then some more coming up. It's great that you've done that training down the ranks within the RCMP. You've enabled people to be better informed and to help other employees.

I'm wondering if you can speak to the effects that has had already. Have you seen those advisers or investigators being used? I wonder if you could speak to what you see happening so far, what the trend is. Is it useful or does it have to go back and be rethought?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: The increased investigative capacity we have realized with the 100 newly trained investigators has allowed us to move through these allegations much more quickly than we were ever able to before.

The respectful workplace advisers have been utilized on approximately 40 occasions already and have assisted us significantly in dealing, at the earliest possible time, with what has often been workplace conflict and in resolving the conflict before it has become a harassing situation.

I really see the respectful workplace advisers as a proactive capacity for us here.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you. I'm asking if you have seen results. You're saying what you expect it to do, but have you seen results so far? Has it proven to be successful? I know it's only been a short couple of months, but has it proven to be successful so far, in the early preliminary review?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, it has.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you.

Going back to some of the questions that—

The Chair: You have one minute.

Ms. Roxanne James: I'll be very quick.

My colleague Ms. O'Neill Gordon spoke about the gender and respect action plan and the decision to start tracking and investigating and being able to have this historical data. She also mentioned that there was a decision to centralize the oversight and administration of complaints in national headquarters. I believe that falls directly under the office of the commissioner. Commissioner Paulson was here the other day.

There has to be someone in charge. At some point we have to designate someone as being in charge, someone to oversee anything, regardless of whether it's in the RCMP or elsewhere. Do you see ensuring that these complaints and investigations are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner as being a benefit?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, I do. I think it's a means by which the commissioner can hold his commanding officers accountable to ensure that we are attaching the appropriate priority to these matters. Indeed, my understanding is that the respectful workplace and the attention to the respectful workplace will be attached to his commanding officers' performance agreements in the coming year.

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you.

Very quickly, I just want to commend you for all the work you've done. Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Ashton now has the floor for five minutes.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

We are here to discuss the need for leadership on this file. There's no question the country has been gripped by what has happened in the RCMP and the harrowing stories brought forward by women officers.

Obviously, as the status of women committee, certainly on our side we believe that Status of Women Canada has a role to play in providing leadership in ending sexual harassment in the federal workplace. I'd like to continue that conversation with the minister as well, and I'd like to read a motion into the record, "That, pursuant to Standing Orders 81(4) and 81(5), the committee invite the Minister for Status of Women and agency officials to appear before it, no later than March 19, 2013, to discuss the supplementary estimates (C) 2012-13 and the main estimates 2013-14." I will be giving this text to the clerk as well.

Going back to the issue of leadership, on Tuesday we heard the negation from Mr. McPhail about there not being any systemic sexual harassment. Then we heard from Commissioner Paulson that there is cultural dysfunction. The reality is a 200-person class action lawsuit has been brought forward against the RCMP, something that we're not seeing from any other corner of the workplace in our country, and that certainly speaks to a widespread experience.

You're obviously counteracting that now with the measures you're taking, but as my colleague Ms. Sgro referred to, many past cases are still outstanding and the grievances are massive and so are the consequences women are living with on a day-to-day basis.

We heard some reference from the commissioner that the RCMP is moving to a gender-free environment—I think one can argue there is no such thing as a gender-free environment—and then, of course, in his next sentence there was reference to the ambitious recruitment goals to actually get women into the RCMP.

There are the tangible pieces you've brought forward: the reporting mechanisms, the policies, the handbook, hiring people. These are all key parts of getting to the problem. But in terms of that culture, one of the points that has been raised by many is the need to have women in decision-making positions, in senior positions.

Inspector Bradley or Deputy Commissioner Callens, could either one of you speak to the situation in "E" Division? How many women are there in senior positions?

● (1200)

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I think, as the commissioner acknowledged, there is tremendous value in the diversity that women and other employment equity groups bring to the organization. Just yesterday I enrolled seven new cadets into the organization who will be travelling to Depot on Tuesday next week. Five of those seven are women.

Approximately 23% of the RCMP sworn members in British Columbia are women. That number is primarily consistent at the ranks of constable and corporal, and the percentages get less as we move up the ranks.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Do you have a percentage to give us in the senior ranks?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, of my senior officers, who are assistant commissioners and chief superintendents, 15% of them are women.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Sorry, I didn't catch that number.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Fifteen per cent of my senior officers are women.

Now, in my view, and I think it's shared by the commissioner, that is too low a number. It does not take advantage of the diversity and the value of that diversity that an increased percentage of women would bring to the organization. I think what the commissioner has done and what we have done in this division has been to put in a clear succession planning system that provides female police officers with the kinds of developmental opportunities they deserve and require to occupy these positions over the course of time and to increase their representation in the senior ranks.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Your turn, Mrs. Amber. You have five minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Deputy Commissioner Callens and Inspector Bradley, for telling us about the initiatives you've undertaken. We appreciate it greatly.

Your report notes that there was a groundswell among some male members who felt they should have been included and that the issue of harassment extends beyond gender. I'm just wondering if you plan to, or if you have taken any steps to address the concerns of the male members of the RCMP. If so, what are they?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, thank you. The initial gender-based harassment consultations were indeed directed specifically at female members and employees in the organization. That was where I needed to get some particular insight that I didn't have, obviously, by nature of my own gender.

Since that time, however, the broad-based employee workplace survey, to which over 3,100 of our members and employees responded, included both women and men. The 11 objectives and 51 initiatives that are attached to our respectful workplace program provide the same sort of services and, I like to think, the same sense of confidence for both men and women to be supported and to bring cases of harassment and workplace conflict forward.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: So in future data collection and surveys, there will be more of a balance, I would imagine.

Is that what you're saying when you're asking the questions?

● (1205)

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Exactly.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thanks.

One of the other things mentioned in your report had to do with gender-specific communication styles. I think one of the specific training recommendations was that special attention should be paid to gender-specific communication styles.

Could you explain what this means?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Last spring I brought every one of my commissioned officers and officer equivalents in for a two-day conference during which one of the presenters presented on gender matters and discussed the importance of communication styles and methods that need to be engaged in to communicate—

A voice: There's a fire alarm.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: This is not coming out of my five minutes.

If the building is on fire, you can leave.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mrs. Ambler, I am going to give you a little more time.

[English]

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I apologize for that.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: That's okay.

I was wondering, maybe you could give us an example of something that might be a gender-specific communication style and how it would impact in the training.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: When it comes to some of the training we've engaged in, whether it is of the respectful workplace advisers or the respectful workplace committee members or some of the leadership training we're engaged in, I might to defer to Inspector Bradley who perhaps could give a little more insight into that.

Insp Carol Bradley: Thank you, sir.

I think a good example was when we hosted the three-day promoting cultural change and gender diversity workshop where we had both men and women on the course. That issue was explored in some detail in terms of how men and women, right from the stages of being very young up into adulthood, may communicate a little bit differently. It was very interesting to watch the dynamic of the groups together in terms of how that played out in terms of specific types of communications.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: I'll bet.

The Chair: You have one minute.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: In general, I suspect that women are possibly a little freer expressing their feelings, and have the ability to do so.

This is obviously a generalization, but men may not feel quite as comfortable talking about how they feel in response to a certain situation. I would imagine that it's very difficult for an organization like the RCMP, with such a highly structured chain of command, to put these two things together. But I do commend you for obviously doing such a great job at it.

I wanted to ask a question about the mentorship programs as well that were mentioned.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mrs. Ambler, unfortunately your time is up.

[English]

Mrs. Stella Ambler: That's okay

[Translation]

The Chair: I added 30 seconds to your time. You have now reached the end of your five minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Stella Ambler: That's okay.

[Translation]

The Chair: As there is still some time left, I am sure that one of your colleagues will be able to ask that question for you.

We now move to Mrs. Sellah. You have five minutes.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

My thanks to the witnesses for taking part in this videoconference and for enlightening us on what is happening in British Columbia.

Bill C-42 has no independent process for investigations, but it gives the commissioner the power to investigate.

The E Division report recommends establishing an independent system for the process. Can you explain to us what the impact of an independent system is, please?

I will give the rest of my time to my colleague Niki.

Mr. Callens, did you understand my question?

• (1210)

[English]

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, thank you very much.

I think a number of recommendations were made during the course of the gender-based harassment consultations that have been included and responded to appropriately through our respectful workplace action plan. The ability to bring in external workplace conflict practitioners to assist in the training and the response to workplace conflict and harassment in our division will go a long way to addressing some of the concerns that were raised by our employees in this province.

C-42 and the interface with government on the sufficiency of that bill rests with the commissioner and his senior staff in national headquarters. From my perspective it will streamline and provide mechanisms through which the commissioner can ensure a much more fulsome and timely response to harassment in our organization.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much for that.

We note that Mr. McPhail mentioned on Tuesday that independence is key to credibility, so bolstering an independent avenue for complaints is certainly something that we on this side hope will be considered and implemented.

I represent northern Manitoba, an area that is serviced by the RCMP. I've had the pleasure of working with many great RCMP officers across our region. I know a lot of the recruitment they do is with young aboriginal people and increasingly with young aboriginal women. When we look at the case of B.C., however, the recent Human Rights Watch report indicates that many women have gone through some very difficult situations, such as abuse, and are reticent to come forward. It's not unlike women who have been in the force themselves.

What are you doing as "E" Division to deal with these allegations? What kind of training that involves both anti-sexism and anti-racism training are you implementing for your officers so that this kind of abuse doesn't happen, so that one day, these young aboriginal women will see the RCMP and the police as an avenue where they can work as well?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Clearly, the allegations that have been raised in the Human Rights Watch report are very serious and very disturbing. We have taken the position from the beginning that we would encourage that the facts be brought forward in whatever means possible. That could be through the local first nations political leadership, through our local first nations community consultative committees, and through the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP. Those sorts of matters need to be addressed for sure.

We have an aboriginal advisory committee in our division. I meet with that group quarterly, and it is made up of representatives from first nations communities across the province. We currently have first nations cultural awareness training in our division as we do across the country. My aboriginal advisory committee members have agreed to take the training, critique the training, and provide me with feedback on how it can be improved. We are also embarking at present on a new initiative to develop community profiles and localize training around local community issues and experiences in each one of our first nations communities so we can respond as appropriately as possible.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Sorry, just before the time ends, Commissioner, do you have a timeline for that critique or a goal in terms of the time by which you would like to receive that?

The Chair: Very quickly.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I expect it to be done by our next quarterly meeting, which will be in June.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Crockatt now has the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Thank you very much, Deputy Commissioner Callens and Inspector Bradley. It's wonderful to have you here to explain to us what's going on.

I congratulate you on what you're doing. I think you received praise from all parties today, so that certainly speaks to how you have addressed this issue.

I wanted to ask about how you're moving forward with regard to immigrants. You've talked a tiny bit about first nations and males. We have lots of different groups that are probably represented in the group that you've received complaints from. You talked about a mentorship program that you're doing. Have you actually implemented that mentorship program? Does it include groups like men and visible minorities in your mentors?

● (1215)

Insp Carol Bradley: In our mentorship program within the action plan, we have two groups. One is our respectful workplace advisory committee. That is a group of officers or officer equivalents who have come together from all of the different business lines across the province. We're starting to do some formal training with that group in person. We are trying to create a system that would allow information to be fed back and forth so that these groups of people will also be connected to our respectful workplace advisers, and support them in the different areas.

Part of the overall plan really is to create an environment so any employee can bring forward any workplace concerns or conflict through those individuals.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Maybe I could direct this a little more to see where we are with regard to it.

We know that Canada is one of the countries in the world that's accepting the most immigrants of anywhere. We would like to see our police force recognize and represent that, as well as enhance the presence of females. We talked about communications issues. I'm trying to see if that's on your radar. In addition to the bullying and harassment, we have to make sure that the force is reflective of the Canadian public and is embracing modern values. Are those on your radar?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, thank you.

I'm sorry, I think I perhaps misunderstood your initial question.

We have a dedicated effort, whether it is the recruitment, retention, or development of our members, to ensure that we have adequate and appropriate employment equity group representation. Whether it is my employee advisory committee, whether it is my diversity committee, whether it is the respectful workplace advisers or the respectful workplace committee, we ensure that we have appropriate representation and balance so that we are reflective of both our community and what our organization hopes to be.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Okay, so let's go into the advancement of women.

First of all, I just want to make sure that we know what the case is. It's not just because we are promoting women's rights, which of course we want to see advanced. What is the case for having more females in the officer ranks?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: For me personally it is the tremendous value that diversity brings in terms of insight, in terms of the type of lens we need to put in front of us as we are developing policies and as we are developing responses to community issues and community policing issues. It is not helpful—

The Chair: You have one minute.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: —if the only lens we are looking through is a male lens. We need to have—

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Since we've only got one minute, maybe I can fast-forward.

Could you tell us what you're doing about female advancement in the officer ranks?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Currently, through our officer candidate program, there is an opportunity for female officer candidates to enter at any time during the process. The process is never closed for female officer candidates or any other member of an employment equity group.

Personally, I ensure that there are equal developmental opportunities for female officers and female officer candidates, and that they are provided with a variety of duties and duty functions to ensure they're positioned to be competitive, on merit, to occupy these positions moving forward.

I think where we need to be proactive is in the committed, conscientious decision to provide those opportunities, because I have heard clearly from the female members under my command that they only want to be advanced on merit.

• (1220)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: I am sorry, Mr. Callens, but I have to interrupt you.

Ms. Bateman, you have the floor for five minutes.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Thank you very much, both of you, for being here.

I echo my colleagues, Ms. Sgro and Ms. Ashton, in saying that we are all impressed with the work you have done, the challenges you have met, and the changes you have made. It's very impressive, and it's a model to be replicated.

I particularly enjoyed, sir, your comment that we have to value employees in the workplace. I think we would probably save a lot of resources in dealing with harassment issues if we took your proactive approach and the valuation of employees and their worth in the respectful workplace. I thank you for that.

We had Mr. Ian McPhail, who is the chair of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, as a witness this week. We discussed with him the numbers for sexual harassment. We asked if sexual harassment was considered systemic in the RCMP. He basically said that less than 4% of all harassment cases over the last five years in the RCMP were in fact even related to sexual harassment. I found that particularly interesting, and I would like your views on that. Are you addressing all aspects of harassment, including this 4%, which in the past at least has been related to sexual harassment?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Our respectful workplace action plan and program doesn't distinguish between sexual harassment and harassment. It is all workplace issues, including harassment and sexual harassment.

Indeed I'm familiar with those numbers. I suppose an argument can be made that they are relatively low. I think what I've always been sensitive to and what I think we need to keep our eye on is whether or not we are receiving all of the reports. That is why we have developed initiatives such as the respectful workplace advisers and the confidential reporting system outside the chain of command, so that I can move forward with a sense of confidence that if it is occurring beyond those low percentages that have been identified, then I'm able to deal with it and there are not members and employees who are, for lack of a better term, suffering in silence.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. McPhail also referenced the "Summary Report on Gender Based Harassment and Respectful Workplace Consultations". He highlighted that what seems to be similar is that the issues really are with bullying along with the issue of lack of training for leadership and a general lack of trust in the process.

You're taking steps to address that, aren't you? Could you amplify for us what you're doing regarding the prevention of abuse of authority as it relates to bullying, and the leadership piece in particular?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, indeed.

I think both in the gender-based harassment consultation and in our own employee workplace survey here in this province, sexual harassment or harassment has not been identified as a particular problem. What has been identified is too often rude, dismissive, or disrespectful behaviour. A good part of our respectful workplace action plan is directed towards ethical leadership training and respectful workplace maintenance and enhancement, which has been embedded into our supervisor development program, our management development program, and the ethical leadership dialogue that my assistant commissioners are having with every single member of my division during the course of the operational skills maintenance training they undergo.

• (1225)

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Regarding the ethical training and the respectful workplace training, it's always good to say that, but it takes resources to do it. What are your dollars for training on site for both managers and middle managers? They're so crucial in this.

The Chair: Quickly.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: It's about prioritization. We have prioritized to ensure that ethical leadership training is being embedded within the existing training funds that we have at present.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: I thank you very much, sir.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

Your turn, Ms. Sgro. You have five minutes.

[*English*]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Thank you very much.

In terms of being a little more specific, you indicated that you look at all of the complaints from harassment. Will you be categorizing them specifically with regard to sexual harassment versus general harassment complaints?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: The sexual harassment complaints are those that meet what I have referred to as threshold allegations. Any threshold allegation, whether it's against the code of conduct or whether it relates to sexual harassment, is brought to my attention when it occurs. Every seven days thereafter I am then briefed on the progress of those investigations. Ultimately, decisions are made in terms of whether or not code of conduct investigations need to be undertaken and discipline to follow.

As it relates to harassment generally, I get updated monthly in terms of the number of new harassment complaints we've had, how many we have been able to conclude, and how many have been determined to be either workplace conflict or harassment. I have those general harassment updates monthly.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Some of the complaints that we've heard from various people before committee, in correspondence, or in the media were about the lack of response. How are you going to prevent things from falling through the cracks?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I've also heard of a lack of response. Indeed, my own review of historical cases has confirmed that the response times have not met what I would consider to be a reasonable standard.

I think the development of service standards with respect to the receipt, analysis, and investigation of harassment complaints is the key to our success moving forward. Those service standards have been developed, and are rolling out across the country currently.

Hon. Judy Sgro: You indicated that you have over 9,000 employees in B.C. That's a huge workforce to have to oversee. A lot of what we're talking about today is attitude, about the atmosphere of what people can get away with, what's acceptable, what isn't. Have you attempted through your other various divisions to communicate directly to each one of those 9,000 employees about the attitude that people have? It's not about what they can get away with; it's about what are not respectful workplace procedures to happen.

Have you reached out to communicate to all 9,000 of the people who work for you, especially given the fact that a lot of this stemmed from incidents in your division or in the British Columbia area?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes, it is a large number of employees and it's a large geographic area. British Columbia is a very large province, as you well know.

I have communicated through the course of electronic media, town hall meetings, presentations on supervisor and management courses, leadership forums, and supervisor forums, with literally hundreds, if not thousands, of members.

There is also a structured dedicated schedule of delivering the same message that is followed by my senior command staff, whether they be the three assistant commissioners or the 15 chief superintendents that I have in this division. They have all provided tremendous commitment and support in changing the thinking, in changing the attitudes.

• (1230)

The Chair: You have one minute.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: We have clarified our expectations around behaviour. That is being communicated on an ongoing and continuous basis. I would say it is a part of the dialogue that every senior officer has when meeting with the members under his or her area of command.

Hon. Judy Sgro: You are doing such great work in moving forward on this whole agenda. Would you have a difficulty or an issue if one of the recommendations in our report was that you report back to the status of women committee in a year as to the success and the challenges still being faced with regard to the whole issue of harassment and sexual harassment?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I would not have any difficulty with that whatsoever.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

We now move to Ms. Young. You have five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young (Vancouver South, CPC): Thank you very much.

I'd like to thank you both for being here, Deputy Commissioner Callens and Inspector Carol Bradley.

My name is Wai Young. I'm the member of Parliament for Vancouver South in British Columbia. You are probably aware of the fact that this issue is very front and centre in terms of what is important to British Columbians, certainly not in Vancouver, because we have our own police force, but I think there is a sort of public confidence impact. Because if we cannot have trust in the RCMP, that kind of bleeds over into other police forces as well.

I'm very aware of the fact that I don't have much time, so I'm going to be fairly direct in terms of my questions. Prior to doing that, kudos to you for having assumed your new commission just over a year ago and moving so quickly to do so much within a very traditional operational situation. We're obviously seeing some results already.

I have a couple of questions in terms of the information we've received today. You have submitted the "Summary Report on Gender Based Harassment and a Respectful Workplace Consultations". I understand that 426 employees were interviewed in preparation of this report, but there were only women. Is that correct? You didn't interview any men.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: That's correct.

Ms. Wai Young: Would you say that one of the most surprising things, one of the interesting things of note, in conducting that kind of overall questioning and reporting of this very big issue is the overall harassment and bullying that have been identified as the critical issue, as opposed to the 4% for actual sexual harassment that has been identified? Would you say that's correct?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I don't think it's overall harassment. I think what has been identified is what is too often dismissive and disrespectful behaviour.

Ms. Wai Young: Exactly, and that leads me to my next question. Given your long tenure in the RCMP, and also yours, Inspector Carol Bradley, did you find that at all surprising? Obviously, this is where you've worked for many years.

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Well, it wasn't my experience, but as I indicated earlier, I think I'm at a low risk. I always have been at a low risk of harassment, and certainly sexual harassment. The initial gender-based consultation of the 426 employees was directed towards women for that very reason. I needed to, in those initial months, get a clearer understanding and insight into what the temperature and experience were for our female members in the division. The second much more scientific and fulsome survey was of both men and women and all categories of employee.

Ms. Wai Young: That was what I was also going to ask, because we had Mr. McPhail here the other day, and it was very clear that this is something that impacts the males in the workforce as well. Is that correct?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes.

Ms. Wai Young: What I want to focus on then, because committee members have asked about the report previously, is your process and the actions you put in place, which I find to be very commendable. I want to know what you are doing in addition to that to restore public trust. Is there some kind of information campaign so that the public will know that these actions are being taken and these processes are being put in place so public trust can be restored? Are there thoughts around what is going to go on around that?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Yes. We have an external communication plan in which we have publicly outlined what it is we're doing with respect to our workplace. I have shared the respectful workplace action plan with each one of our contracting partners, both provincial and municipal. We provide front-line policing services to 16 municipalities. They've been provided a copy of our respectful workplace action plan. I've presented it to our Minister of Justice here in the province and have seen her feedback as well.

• (1235)

Ms. Wai Young: Okay. Presenting it to the minister, while being very positive, of course, is great, but how about really restoring public trust, on the ground, in the community?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I have had much in the way of public dialogue personally with the media on the issue, including putting into perspective the nature of the issue and the nature of the problem.

Ms. Wai Young: Again, I'd like to commend you both for your work in this area.

Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Young, I am sorry, but your time is up.

We now move to Ms. Ashton.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you.

[English]

When we hear reference to bullying as being the primary complaint that comes forward, do you know how much of that bullying is of a sexist nature, or how much of what is being reported is done by men vis-à-vis women?

The Chair: Mr. Callens, can you hear me?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: I'm sorry, we were only receiving the French translation of Ms. Ashton's question here in British Columbia.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Ashton, I am going to give you a little more time because of these technical difficulties.

Mr. Callens, we are going to try again.

[English]

Let me know if you have another problem.

Ms. Niki Ashton: We'll try this again.

Does the bullying that's being reported involve sexist language or attitude, and how much of it is done by men towards women?

D/Commr Craig J. Callens: Historically, and it was clear to me through the initial consultation of the 400 members and employees, there were sexist comments being made. Indeed, some of the cases that have come to my attention since I've been the commanding officer have included sexist comments. Those are ones that I have dealt with very quickly and decisively. We are maintaining the data to determine where the abuse of authority issues are arising so that we can address it appropriately. I would say that the bulk of it, or the majority of it, is arising from males.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you for that information. It's important that we recognize there's a spectrum of discrimination, obviously. On one side of the spectrum, the extreme side is sexual harassment, but bullying isn't without its gendered experience as well. I'm glad to hear that you recognize it as such in many cases and that you've dealt with the sexist comments that have been shared.

I'll go back to the issue of training. Do you do more of your training in person? What is the percentage of in-person training versus online training?

Insp Carol Bradley: I will answer that question, if that's all right with you.

All of our training is done in person in terms of the respectful workplace action plan in "E" Division. There are online training options that are national, such as harassment awareness training online, and the development of new training around respectful workplaces is under way, as I understand it.

Our training here is in person. We have trained our respectful workplace advisers to act as trainers. A big part of their job is to do respectful workplace awareness training sessions and training sessions on the respectful workplace action plan. To date, in the three months they've been on the ground, they've done presentations to well over 500 employees. Our training also is to provide specialized workshops when we can. We have ethical leadership training that Dr. Stephen Maguire has developed for us. This is being done today and we'll do it later in the month of March.

We have also done training. We are starting to work with our informal conflict management practitioners, who are also developing workshops for in-person training on informal conflict management, which has been identified through our employee surveys as being one of the key issues and the key training gaps for all of our employees, so that we can address those conflict situations at the earliest stages.

• (1240)

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much for that, Inspector.

Does "E" Division feel that in-person training is better than online training? How do you see it?

Insp Carol Bradley: It's a combination. It needs to be multi-faceted. People learn differently, and we do have challenges with regard to geography and numbers, so we would see value in both.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much for all of your responses today.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: That ends our session, given that another meeting is scheduled in a few minutes.

Mr. Callens, Ms. Bradley, thank you for agreeing to appear before our committee. Have a wonderful day.

The meeting is adjourned.

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