

Alberta Mountie sues RCMP over harassment

 **CBCnews.ca** CBC - Mon, 14 Nov, 2011

An Edmonton-area RCMP officer is suing the Mounties over allegations he was harassed by his co-workers at the Stony Plain detachment over a period of seven years.

The RCMP External Review Committee, which investigates grievances in the force, found Gerry Hoyland was intimidated, threatened and ridiculed by other Mounties while stationed in the town just west of Edmonton from 1998 to 2005.

Hoyland said his car, office, food and equipment were tampered with by fellow officers; he was repeatedly insulted; and pornography was left in his office.

The incidents were constant and continued even after he complained to his superior officers, he said.

"I started to dry heave," he said. "I felt a lot safer out on the street with the bad guys than I ever did in Stony Plain detachment because you never knew what was going to happen."

Hoyland went on paid medical leave six years ago, but he continues to fight the RCMP over his grievance.

The 34-year veteran believes he was targeted because he wasn't part of "the old boys" network.

"Part of it was personality," he said. "I believe very strongly in accountability.

"If I'm the supervisor and I have some problems, I will talk to you," he said. "I will not cover for you. I will not shove it under the rug."

His superiors, however, claim the incidents did not amount to harassment, calling them little more than practical jokes. Witnesses interviewed denied the incidents were malicious, his superiors said.

They also said the investigation could not go ahead as Hoyland could not identify those behind the incidents.

But the committee concluded the incidents still amount to harassment.

On May 12, 2011, it recommended that the commissioner of the RCMP acknowledge Hoyland was subjected to harassment and apologize to him.

The commissioner has yet to respond.

Hoyland's \$1.6-million civil suit against the RCMP is scheduled to go to trial next year.

"I would like it to go to trial because what's going to happen is when the people get on the witness stand, it's a very lonely place," said Hoyland.

"They're not going to be protected by the organization," he said. "It's going to be a very lonely place for a lot of very high people within the RCMP from the commissioner on down."

News of Hoyland's lawsuit comes on the heels of two other high-profile complaints of harassment within the RCMP.

B.C. Cpl. Catherine Galliford said she's suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder after years of sexual harassment since the moment she graduated from the RCMP Academy in 1991.

After Galliford told her story to CBC News last week, a second B.C. officer, Krista Carle, made similar allegations.

Hoyland said changes must be made in the RCMP.

"The organization is dysfunctional," he said. "It is sick and it is sick right from the top right down to the bottom."