

Disgraced B.C. Mountie resigns before sentencing

Former corporal Monty Robinson to be sentenced for obstruction of justice

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278

A disgraced RCMP officer who was found guilty in connection with a 2008 traffic fatality and was involved in the death of Robert Dziekanski quit the force, just as his sentencing hearing opened in Vancouver.

Cpl. Benjamin (Monty) Robinson was found guilty in March of obstruction of justice following a collision in Delta, B.C., that killed motorcyclist Orion Hutchinson.

On Friday morning just as the sentencing hearing for the disgraced corporal was getting underway in B.C. Supreme Court, Deputy Commissioner Craig Callens announced Robinson had voluntarily submitted his discharge papers.



RCMP Cpl. Benjamin (Monty) Robinson walks to court in Vancouver during his trial earlier this year. (CBC)

Callens said he would have preferred to fire Robinson, but he immediately signed his discharge instead.

"While I have been clear that I was seeking his involuntary dismissal, the opportunity to discharge him from the organization this morning was one which eliminated further delays, costs and uncertainty," said Callens.

"Mr. Robinson's career with the RCMP has ended. As a private citizen, he is no longer subject to any disciplinary actions under the RCMP Act; however, he is still subject to the ongoing criminal matters," he said.

Robinson was facing an internal Code of Conduct investigation and was suspended from the RCMP with pay since the 2008 collision. But an RCMP spokesperson couldn't clarify who was paying

Robinson's legal bills and exactly how much Robinson had been costing the force.

At the sentencing hearing Crown prosecutors asked for a sentence of three to nine months jail time or a 12- to 18-month conditional sentence for Robinson, while his own lawyers asked for a three- to six-month conditional sentence.

2 shots of vodka after accident

Robinson, who was off-duty at the time of the 2008 accident, left the scene before police arrived and went home to consume more alcohol, although he returned to the scene a short time later.



A coroner's report concluded the actions of both the driver and the motorcyclist contributed to the crash that killed Orion Hutchinson in Delta, B.C., in 2008. (CBC)

At the trial, Justice Janice Dillon dismissed [Robinson's defence](#) in which he had claimed he had walked to his Delta, B.C., home a short distance away and had two shots of vodka to calm himself because he said that's what an alcoholic would do.

In her strongly worded judgment, Dillon said Robinson used his own police training in a deliberate attempt to obstruct justice. By drinking after the accident, there was no way police could determine if he had been impaired prior to it.

Dillon also concluded Robinson had lied to Delta police officers who came to the crash scene, understating how much he had been drinking at a party just before the crash.

Hutchinson, who died at the scene, [was also found to have consumed alcohol](#) before the crash.

Dillon said she would impose a sentence on Robinson July 27.

Earlier, Hutchinson's father read out a victim impact statement to court.

Glen Hutchinson described becoming mentally unbalanced after his son's death. He said he lost his career and his relationships with his daughter and wife. He said he has tried to take his own life several times.

"Right now, aside from still being alive, I have nothing," he said, weeping.

"I will not witness Orion growing old, and there's a deep pain endured every single day in the struggle

to find a purpose in life."

Outside court, Hutchinson's friend David Van Den Brink said the sentencing recommendations presented in court weren't harsh enough.

"It should be worse," he said. "If you're trained to do something right, it's really hypocritical if you're arresting people for this. And then you do the exact same thing and worse, and then you lie about it and you have no remorse for it and you continue to lie. You won't stand up and take responsibility for your own actions."

Dziekanski connection

[Robinson is also one of four RCMP officers awaiting trial on a perjury charge](#) in connection with the death of Polish immigrant Robert Dziekanski at Vancouver airport in October 2007.

Robinson was in charge of the team of officers who dealt with the disturbed and frenetic Dziekanski by quickly stunning him repeatedly with a Taser.

Sentencing submissions in the obstruction case could go all day Friday and the judge might reserve her decision following that.

The Crown and the defence are expected to put forward arguments on the length of sentence that should be imposed.

With files from the CBC's Terry Donnelly