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VPD Statement - Supreme Court Ruling on Pickton Case

Deputy Chief Doug LePard

While we are pleased that the hard work of many has led to this decision our thoughts are always first and foremost for the victims and their families. No words can adequately express the horror that permeates this case and the family members of the victims suffer with it every day. Every investigator always had foremost in their minds that the victims were daughters, sisters and mothers. They had people who loved them, and people they loved. Their lives were stolen in the most brutal way.

We hope that this decision brings some measure of solace for those families supporting this decision while at the same time we recognize any pain this may cause to the families who wanted a new trial.

We know that nothing can ever fully compensate those who have suffered and for the lives that have been lost but we hope that allowing this conviction to stand will bring some measure of closure to those who grieve.

Over the next days and months we will attempt to answer your questions and assist you in your efforts to report on this terrible case. We wish we could address all the questions you have but because there are aspects of the investigation that are still ongoing we may not be able to supply you with those answers yet.

VPD Review Information

The Vancouver Police Department is pleased that the Supreme Court of Canada has upheld the murder convictions of Robert Pickton. The VPD appreciates that there is a high level of media interest in this case, particularly with respect to what occurred between the mid-1990s and Pickton's arrest in February 2002.

As we have advised for several years, Deputy Chief Constable Doug LePard has conducted an exhaustive management review of the Missing Women investigation and this Review is the official position of the VPD. It has always been the VPD's intention to make this Review available to the public once the criminal matters are concluded and the publication bans are removed. Before this can occur, several issues must be resolved.

First, for several years, the VPD has communicated privately to the Provincial Government that it believes a Public Inquiry is necessary for an impartial examination of why it took so long for Robert Pickton to be arrested. More recently, the VPD also publicly supported a call for a Public Inquiry by Maggie de Vries, the sister of one of the Missing Women. The VPD will consider the likelihood of a public inquiry in the timing of its release of the Review.

In addition, it would be our intention to not release the report immediately since the VPD has an obligation to notify and provide those individuals and agencies named in it an opportunity to review the over 400-page Review. This is complicated by summer absences, and because most of the individuals involved have retired from policing. The VPD must also comply with the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act regarding release of the Review. Once these issues have been resolved and the Review is in the public domain, Deputy Chief LePard will be made available for interviews. All requests for interviews will be coordinated by the VPD Public Affairs Section.

Vancouver Police Department