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April 26, 2024

Mr. John Brassard
Chair of the Committee
Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Brassard:

Further to my appearance at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics on February 27, 2024, on the study of the RCMP's Decision to Not Pursue a Criminal Investigation in Relation to the SNC-Lavalin Affair, I am writing to clarify key steps taken by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in relation to the SNC-Lavalin Affair since 2019.

Following the February 7, 2019, Globe and Mail article, the RCMP's Sensitive and International Investigations (SII) unit began to proactively monitor publicly available information on the SNC-Lavalin file, which included the hearings before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights with respect to remediation agreements, the Shawcross doctrine, and discussions between government colleagues, as well as the Ethics Commissioner's examination.

In May 2019, the SII unit sought a waiver and authorization from the Privy Council Office and the Department of Justice, which would allow the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould to provide a statement to RCMP investigators. The SII unit received the waiver on August 30, 2019.

Interviews and document disclosures occurred between the months of September 2019 and February 19, 2020. The declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 affected the speed and pace of the investigation for several months due to the inability to meet in person to finalize the interviews. The last witness was interviewed in October 2020.

The SII unit completed their assessment report on February 3, 2021, and RCMP Federal Policing management commenced their internal review. The SII unit subsequently briefed the Assistant Commissioner of Federal Policing Criminal Operations at National Headquarters on February 25, 2021, and the concluding report was placed on file on March 2, 2021.

A copy of the assessment report was provided to National Headquarters in late March 2021 to obtain direction on the way forward. However, a series of delays were unfortunately encountered due to a change of management at several levels. Enquiries on the way forward were made by the new Commanding Officer of National Division in early December and on December 20, 2021, the SII unit was informed by the National Division Commanding Officer that a decision had been reached. The SII unit made efforts to seek clarification from National Headquarters, including a copy of the written decision.

A second series of delays were encountered due to other events at play in early 2022 (e.g., war in Ukraine, convoy in Ottawa) and additional changes in management. National Division and the SII unit were informed of direction on the way forward for this file on December 6, 2022, and SII investigators notified Ms. Wilson-Raybould of the conclusion of the matter on January 25, 2023.


A letter signed by Assistant Commissioner Ches Parsons, National Division Commanding Officer, was sent on January 25, 2023, to the former Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Andrew Scheer, advising of the conclusion of the matter.

For clarification, as part of its assessment, the SII unit compiled information within its Police Records and Occurrence System (PROS). While the assessment of the file was concluded in January 2023, the file remained listed as "active" in PROS for administrative purposes until all documentation pertaining to the file was submitted and saved in the system. This explains why the RCMP's Access to Information and Privacy Branch issued a response letter to an Access to Information request on May 25, 2023, advising that the matter was under investigation. However, on June 19, 2023, the RCMP clarified that the investigation ended in January 2023 as there was insufficient evidence to substantiate a criminal offence.

In response to the administrative errors that delayed the conclusion of the file, the RCMP has now ensured that these types of files are prioritized by requiring regular reporting every 30 days to the program lead at National Headquarters. For clarity, at no time did the delays in concluding the file affect any investigative activities.

Should you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the RCMP Parliamentary Affairs office at ParlAffairs.AffairesParl@rcmp-grc.gc.ca.

Yours sincerely,


acting Commissioner
2024/04/26
Mike Duheme
Commissioner