

VANCOUVER EASTSIDE MISSING WOMEN

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Police deny officers tried to rape prostitutes

Courtesy of The Province Thur 14 June 2001
Mark Wilson

Vancouver police yesterday dismissed allegations that prostitutes are at equal risk of attempted rape by a cop as by a pimp.

The allegations are contained in a report on violence against Vancouver prostitutes. The report, written for the Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education Society, was funded by the former NDP government. It's based on interviews with 183 prostitutes.

"It is a very accusatory document and members of the force are offended by it," said police spokesman Det. Scott Driemel.

"We don't know what research was done, or not done, or whether the allegations are based on information that is subjective, objective, hearsay or innuendo."

The report says that police officers were blamed by the women for six instances of attempted rape with a weapon; this is the same number of similar offences attributed to pimps.

It also says prostitutes revealed five instances of police officers insisting on unprotected sex.

Driemel said some prostitutes may have made the allegations out of anger at police who arrested them.

John Turvey, executive director of the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society, said it is hard to believe that officers would engage in unprotected sex.

"It is also a bit bewildering that nothing of this has come up before. We have regular safety meetings and the women who attend are very outspoken.

"There is also an active rumour mill, so you would have expected to hear word if there are rogue cops out there. I know that if a sex trade worker came into my office complaining of being assaulted by an officer, I would be reaching for the telephone to contact a lawyer who could represent her."

He noted the report says there are 4,700 injection drug users in the Downtown Eastside, about four times the count in a recent mayoral report on the problem.

[PACE Report on violence against sex trade workers-June 2001](#)