

MEDIA STATEMENT

RCMP Indifference to Amber Tuccaro - a Missing, and Ultimately Murdered, Indigenous Woman

On August 18, 2010, Amber Tuccaro from Mikisew Cree First Nation, aged 20, disappeared leaving her 15 month old son behind with a stranger in a Nisku motel. Amber's mother Vivian reported Amber missing to the RCMP on August 20, 2010. Despite Vivian's pleas to the RCMP, no proper investigation into Amber's disappearance took place until December of 2010. By this time, it was too late. Amber's remains were ultimately found in a field south of Edmonton on September 1, 2012.

The Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (the "CRCC") investigated the RCMP's response to Amber's disappearance. The CRCC issued its scathing report (the "Report") to Vivian on August 27, 2018, more than 8 years after Amber's disappearance. In the wake of this month's release of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Amber's family wanted to put Amber's human face onto the problems outlined by the Inquiry.

The Report shows that the RCMP dismissed and downplayed warning signs of possible harm to Amber. They stereotyped Amber as someone who was just out partying or using drugs, despite caring for a 15 month old child. Eight days after Vivian's report of Amber's disappearance, the RCMP closed their file and removed her name from law enforcement databases. On September 4, 2010, the RCMP indicated publicly that they had no reason to believe Amber was in danger.

It was not until December 10, 2010 that the RCMP began to take Amber's disappearance seriously, after an Indigenous Corporal took over the investigation. He summed up the Leduc detachment's attitude as "oh well, it's just another person missing."

The Report concluded that "The faulty manner in which the investigation unfolded was impacted by the biased mindset of the members involved." The Report noted in closing: "the findings of unreasonable conduct contained in this report were numerous and significant."

"The RCMP talks about fixing things but I'll believe it when I see it," said Vivian Tuccaro. Vivian continued, "Apologies and more talk won't bring Amber back, they won't help our family deal with losing her and they won't help with the pain of knowing how badly the RCMP messed up. We want to see accountability."

The Report's findings and recommendations are available here:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/414764241/Report-of-RCMP-Civilian-Review-and-Complaints-Commission-Amber-Tuccaro>

Amber's family is considering releasing the full Report at a later date. Amber's family welcomes an apology from the RCMP, in accordance with the Report's recommendations. A news conference with the RCMP is tentatively scheduled in Edmonton on July 25, 2019.

Contact:

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