IN THE MATTER OF:

Commission of Inquiry into the Circumstances
Surrounding the Death of Phoenix Sinclair

CROSS-EXAMINATION OF:

SHAVONNE HASTINGS

CROSS-EXAMINATION BY:

MR. H. KHAN and

MR. L. BERNAS

CROSS-EXAMINATION DATE:

WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2012

Jill Proctor
Official Examiner, Q.B.
(204)669-6186
jillproctor@mts.net

The Cross-examination on Affidavit of SHAVONNE

HASTINGS, viva voce, on oath, had and taken by Jill

Proctor, an Official Examiner in this Honourable Court, at
the offices of Aikins Law, in the City of Winnipeg,

Province of Manitoba, on Wednesday the 30th day of May 2012
at 1:06 p.m.

APPEARANCES:

On behalf of the Witness:

Mr. J. Kroft, Ms B. Chisick,

On behalf of the Southern Chiefs Organization:

Ms J. Saunders

On behalf of MGEU:

Mr. G. Smorang

On behalf of CFS General, North, South, ANCR:

Mr. L. Bernas

On behalf of Intertribal Child and Family Service:

Mr. H. Khan, Mr. J. Benson

On behalf of Kim Edwards And Steve Sinclair:

Mr. J. Gindin, Mr. D. Ireland

On behalf of the Department Of Family Services and Consumer Affairs:

Ms T. Welsh

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F	Multi	page)	
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1	WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 2012 1:06 P.M.	1	13	Q From their own assessments, they decide
2	CHAVONNE HACTINGS DEING EIDST DIE V	2		whether or not to apprehend a child? A Yes.
3	SHAVONNE HASTINGS, BEING FIRST DULY AFFIRMED, TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:	3	14	Q Am I correct to say that where possible,
5	ATTIMILE, TESTITLE AS FOLLOWS.	5	17	the goal is to maintain the family unit?
6	CROSS-EXAMINATION	6		A Absolutely. Yes.
7		7	15	Q There is a high level of stress in the
. 8	BY MR. KHAN:	8		work they do?
9	1 Q Good afternoon, Ms Hastings, you have	9		A Yes.
10	before you, I believe, a copy of your	10	16	Q Would you agree that without effective and
11	affidavit?	11		quality front line workers, children could be
12	A Ido.	12		placed at risk?
13	2 Q Can you confirm, if you look at the last	13		A Yes.
14	page, is that your signature?	14	17	Q And would you agree that the inability of
15	A It is.	15		a front line worker to do his or her job could
16	3 Q Can you confirm that this is your	16		put children at risk?
17	affidavit?	17	40	A Could you repeat the question?
18	A Yes. MR. KAHN: I would like to tender it as the	18	18	Q Would you agree that the inability of
19	first exhibit.	19		front line worker to do his or her job could put children at risk?
21	HI St CALIDIT.	21		A Yes.
22	EXHIBIT # 1 - AFFIDAVIT.	22	19	Q Mr. Kroft, I, one thing I would like to
23		23		establish at the beginning is Ms Hastings being
24	BY MR. KAHN:	24		entered as an expert witness?
25	4 Q Ms Hastings, in the course of your	25		MR. KROFT: The, I believe that Ms Hastings
	2			4
1	employment as a social worker, you have	1	•	alifies as an expert in the provision of child
2	apprehended children?	2		Ifare services in Manitoba, Mr. Khan. I don't
3	A Yes. I have.	3		lieve that there is anything in her affidavit that
4	5 Q When would you say was your last personal	4		uires that she testify in terms of expert opinion.
5	apprehension?	5		t if I did have to qualify her, I believe she would
6	A The year of 2008. Q 2008. And you were working as a	6	qua	alify as, as I said.
7	6 Q 2008. And you were working as a supervisor at that time?	7	RV	MR. KAHN: Thank you. MR. KHAN:
8	A Correct.	9	20	Q If I could draw your attention to
10	7 Q At the present time, do you supervise	10	20	paragraph 8 of your affidavit. Ms Hastings,
111	workers that do apprehensions?	11		at paragraph 8, if I can paraphrase, you are
12	A Yes. Ido.	12		essentially saying that there is a certain
13	8 Q And you discuss apprehensions with them?	13		level of risk, in the work that a front line
14	A Yes.	14		worker does?
15	9 Q Now, you would agree that front line	15		A Yes.
16.	social workers are essential to the, to the CFS	16	21	Q And again, at paragraph 15 of your
17	system?	17		affidavit? Are you essentially saying the same
18	A Yes.	18		thing, that there is a certain, I would say,
19	10 Q Front line workers obviously, they	19		perhaps standard level of risk in the work of a
20	apprehend children?	20		front line worker?
21	A Yes.	21	00	A Yes.
22	11 Q They investigate allegations of abuse?	22	22	Q Efforts are made, of course, to assess the
23	A They do. 12 Q They go to homes?	23		risk before entering a home? A Correct.
24	A They do.	24	23	Q If the assessment shows there is an
25		20	20	च भ वार्व वर्ववर्ववितालार जावभव सावार कि वा

М	ul	ti	pa	ge

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		5			
1		elevated level of risk, you would call the	1		your years of front line work?
2		police to assist?	2	40	A No.
3	0.4	A Yes.	3	40	Q So, just to confirm, you have never had
4	24	Q Or a security guard?	4		your name published in relation to a child in
5		A Most likely police.	5		care?
6	25	Q Now, of course, there are situations where	6		A No.
7		there is an elevated level of risk?	7	41	Q So then, of course, your name has never
8		A Yes.	8		been published in relation to death of a child?
9	.26	Q Now, that may include where parents are	9		A No.
10		known to abuse alcohol?	10	42	Q Or murder of a child?
11		A At times, yes.	11		A No.
12	27	Q Where there is drug abuse in the home?	12	43	Q So you don't have any firsthand knowledge
13		A Correct.	13		on what it is like to have your name published
14	28	Q When the house in question is involved	14		in the newspapers?
15		with, or associated with gang activity?	15		A No, just in the capacity of a front line
16		A Yes.	16		worker.
17	29	Q Where the parents or occupants of the home	17	44	Q Sorry just
18		have a history of criminal violence?	18		A In the capacity of a front line worker.
19		A Yes.	19	45	Q That you have experienced having your name
20	30	Q Where there are mental health issues in	20		published?
21		the home?	21		A My name was not published. However, I
22		A Yes.	22		have had experiences in the course of my work
23	31	Q So, then, of course, you would agree that	23		of situations where there have been child
24		there are factors that elevate the risk that	24		deaths where I was the primary worker.
25	:	are higher than the usual level of risk?	25	46	Q But in those cases your name has not been
		:			
					
		6			8
1		A Yes.	1		
1 2	32	A Yes.	1 2		published? A No.
	32	A Yes. Q Have you ever testified as a witness in an	1	47	published? A No.
2	32	A Yes. Q Have you ever testified as a witness in an inquiry?	2	47	published? A No. Q If I could bring your attention to
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any risk?

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Yes.

When you apprehend, when you apprehend a

child, do you, do you know for sure if there is

If we have the prior knowledge of the

my staff are going out coupled, and they are

going out with Winnipeg Police. And they are

told not to enter the home until they have the

services of Winnipeg Police and or RCMP if it

is in one of the communities.

23

24

25

86

decision that I had made.

wrong, you say?

Q And that relates to in a file has gone

23

24

25

intervention or decision by staff behaved in a

way that raised a safety concern. When you

say at least one, do you mean that there has

24

25

Correct.

24

25

provide you with an exact number without

_			ipag	<u>e </u>	
		21			23
1		actually having to detail every single one of	1		under a circumstance where it was an assigned
2	400	them out.	2		file, so the worker had previous knowledge with
3	106	Q Okay. When you say threats, would it be	3		the client. Had some concerns was, attended
4		threats of violence?	4		the home with the assistance of four police
5		A On a couple of occasions, yes. That I	5		officers, I do believe at the time. And, as
6	407	can recall.	6		far as I understood, and what was shared with
7	107		7		me is the worker was physically assaulted by
8		of reprisal?	8		the client.
9	400	A Yes.	9	115	Q Do you have any details with respect to
10	108	Q More than one of those occasions?	10		what the physical assault was?
11	400	A Yes.	11		A I do not.
12	109	Q And I am just going to refer you to	12	116	Q Going back to the approximately ten
13		paragraph 11 of your affidavit now. The first	13		instances that you referred to in connection
14		sentence is, I have never been physically	14		with paragraph 10, and the behavior involved,
15		assaulted while providing social work services,	15		was there anything other than threats?
16		and I am aware of only one situation where a	16		A No.
17		social worker under my supervision has had a	17	117	Q Sorry?
18		physical encounter with a client.	18		A No.
19		So when you say the word "social worker	19	118	Q Okay. My understanding is that your
20		under my supervision," I take it there that you	20		agency NCN shares office space in Winnipeg with
21		or you can correct me if I am wrong, does	21		the KSMA agency?
22		that mean that you are aware of other	22		A That's correct.
23		situations of social workers that weren't under	23	119	Q And my understanding is that in March of
24		your supervision that have had physical	24		2011, those offices that you share were subject
25		encounters with clients?	25		of a lock down?
			-		
		. 22			24
1		A No, I am talking about specifically as	1		A Yes.
2		their supervisor.	2	120	Q And that was as a result of threats made
3	110	Q So you are aware of other circumstances	3		by a client to one of NCN social workers?
4		where there has been physical encounters with a	4		A Correct.
5		client with social workers, they just went	5	121	Q And I have an e-mail here. I will give
6		under your supervision?	6		you a minute to read it, and you can let me
7		A I could not speak for their supervisors.	7		know when you are done. You have read it?
8	111	Q Right.	8		A Okay.
9		A I don't know the information that, a	9	122	Q That is your name that is copied on this
10		lot of what, is what you hear, whether it is	10		e-mail?
11		factual or not. I couldn't speak to that.	11		A Yes.
12	112	Q Okay. And so I take it then that you	12	123	Q Do you recall receiving it?
13			[A Yes.
113		have heard of other physical encounters	113		ハー・トロン・
14		have heard of other physical encounters occurring between social workers and clients?	13	124	
1 .		occurring between social workers and clients?	14	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A
14		occurring between social workers and clients?	14 15	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff
14 15	113	occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes.	14 15 16	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to
14 15 16 17	113	occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are	14 15 16 17	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day.
14 15 16 17 18	113	occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11?	14 15 16 17 18	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen?
14 15 16 17 18 19		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct.	14 15 16 17 18 19		Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did.
14 15 16 17 18 19 20	113	occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or	14 15 16 17 18 19 20	124	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN?
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or identities, details of that physical encounter	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	125	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN? A No.
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or identities, details of that physical encounter you heard?	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22		Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN? A No. Q Did NCN remain open both days?
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or identities, details of that physical encounter you heard? A I have to go back here. What was shared	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	125 126	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN? A No. Q Did NCN remain open both days? A Yes.
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or identities, details of that physical encounter you heard? A I have to go back here. What was shared with me, again, this is third party	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	125	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN? A No. Q Did NCN remain open both days? A Yes. Q Why is it that KSMA closed, but NCN didn't
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		occurring between social workers and clients? A Direct physical contact? On one occasion, yes. Q On one occasion other than the one you are referencing in paragraph 11? A Correct. Q Can you, without giving names or identities, details of that physical encounter you heard? A I have to go back here. What was shared	14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	125 126	Q And I guess the fourth line is that, A directive has been given that we send staff members home, and that our office is to remained closed for the remainder of the day. Did that, in fact, happen? A For KSMA it did. Q For NCN? A No. Q Did NCN remain open both days? A Yes.

Multipage 27 25 I can't speak to KSMA. BY MR. BERNAS: 1 Q 128 Can you speak for NCN? 138 Q Just before Mr. Khan was finishing, he was 2 2 Α I can speak for NCN. asking you, he was asking you questions with 3 3 Q Can you advise why? 129 respect to your knowledge, or if anyone had 4 4 Α We remained open, we had the security ever told you that your name cannot be 5 5 officers there, the doors remained locked. In published, at least in the context of child 6 6 that course, what we did was we were screening protection proceedings, do you recall that 7 7 our phone calls coming in and out. And when questioning? 8 8 the security, when anyone was approaching the Α Yes. 9 9 door we actually had them sign out, sign out, 139 And you can correct me if I am wrong, but 10 10 I believe I heard your answer was that you were identify who they were prior to entry, why they 11 11 were at the building. never led to believe that your name would never 12 12 not be published, and that you were, I have the Q The threats that were received, what kind 130 13 13 words down you always had an expectation that of threats were they, threats of violence? 14 14 you would be held accountable for your actions, Verbal threats. 15 15 Q Sorry? is that fair, what I am saying? 131 16 16 Α Verbal threats. Α Yes. 17 17 Q Were they verbal threats of violence? Q 132 140 Can you tell me what you mean by "be held 18 18 accountable"? There were, how would I describe, indirect 19 19 threats of violence. They were not overtly Because, my employment has, is in the 20 20 saying I would come and physically harm you. public capacity. And, my employers, whether 21 21 It was in the capacity of a mental health it be at previous or now, are in a public 22 22 client. So the threats were more in the nature capacity. So in that event, I do not expect, 23 23 that my name would be, would not be shared with of I will make you pay for a decision you have 24 24 people. I am to be held accountable for the made, those kinds of, they were not directly 25 25 28 related to the worker, more so the agency as a decisions that I make. I am to be held 1 1 whole, so we took the precautions that we accountable not only to the communities that I 2 2 needed to. serve with respect to the Nelson House, and 3 3 South Indian Lake members, but the public at 133 Q And my understanding was that the police 4 4 were involved in this incident; is that large. When I was a Winnipeg Child and Family 5 5 correct? Services worker I was a civil service employee, 6 6 Α We notified them. Yes. and I was well aware of that. 7 7 Q When you say held accountable, you equate Q And the third last line, I guess, is that, 141 134 8 8 The receptionist is changing the outgoing voice that with having your name, part of that is 9 9 mail to state that callers should contact ANCR having your name published? 10 10 Yes. only in cases of emergency. That's correct? 11 11 Receptionist -- I believe so. MR. BERNAS: I have no further questions. 12 12 MR. KAHN: Anybody else? 135 Q And, that happened with respect to NCN and 13 13 MR. KROFT: I have only one question in KSMA? 14 14 redirect. Mr. Bernas asked you about a situation Α 15 15 My understanding is that ANCR was that occurred in March of 2011. 136 16 16 providing those services for two days? THE WITNESS: Mh-hmm. 17 17 MR. KROFT: At your office, that resulted А 18 18 in certain measures being taken? And the e-mail is from Marilyn Epp, that 137 19 19 is an individual that works at KSMA? THE WITNESS: Mh-hmm. 20 20 MR. KROFT: You have to say yes or no for She does. 21 21

the record?

THE WITNESS: Sorry. Yes.

are referring to in paragraph 10 of your affidavit?

MR. KROFT: Is that the incident that you

22

23

24

exhibit, please.

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23

24

25

MR. BERNAS: Can I mark that e-mail as an

EXHIBIT #2 - E-MAIL.

Multipage

THE WITNESS: Yes. MR. KROFT: That is it, thank you. (CROSS-EXAMINATION CLOSED)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Jill Proctor, Official Court Reporter, hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings taken down by me in shorthand and transcribed to the best of my skill and ability.

JILL PROCTOR
Official Examiner Q.B.

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