

Another officer accused of lying

Chief and deputy say former subordinates lied in testimony at Rossmo trial

By NEAL HALL

For the second time in two days, a top Vancouver police officer accused a senior officer of lying at the wrongful dismissal trial of an internationally renowned geographic profiler.

On Monday, Vancouver Police Chief Terry Blythe accused former inspector Ken Doern of lying at the civil trial of Kim Rossmo, who alleges he was terminated without cause from his \$120,000-a-year job as head of the

geographic profiling unit.

Doern, testifying in June, lost his composure at the trial, saying his evidence "will have a severe impact on me . . . It will be devastating." He retired after testifying.

On Tuesday, Vancouver police Deputy Chief John Unger testified that Sergeant Grant Smith also lied when he gave evidence last June at Rossmo's trial.

Smith told the court Unger was part of the "old boys club" within the police force that decided to

get even with officers such as Rossmo who had supported former police chief Bruce Chambers.

Smith recalled that sometime after Rossmo's unprecedented promotion from constable to detective-inspector in 1995, Smith saw Unger in the police cafeteria and jokingly asked if he should refer to Rossmo as Dr. Detective Inspector Rossmo.

Smith said Unger was almost yelling when he replied: "I don't care what you call him, he'll never be an officer of this force and he'll never be a member of the officer's mess."

On Tuesday, Unger denied

ever saying those words to Smith, who retired shortly after giving his testimony.

"You say that Sergeant Smith is lying about that?" asked lawyer Murray Tevlin, who is representing Rossmo.

"Yes," Unger replied. "I say he is lying."

Tevlin asked Unger about the evidence of former police chief Chambers, who earlier testified that Unger said at a meeting in December 1997 that Rossmo's promotion was inappropriate, a mistake that could be fixed by demoting him back to constable.

Deputy chief can't find notes

"I don't recall saying that," Unger replied.

"Chambers came here and testified that you said it was inappropriate. Are you saying he's lying?" Tevlin asked.

"I think he's mistaken," Unger replied. "I took notes and he didn't."

"Where are those notes?" Tevlin shot back. "Why don't you have them?"

"I don't know," Unger quietly replied.

"Did you tell Chambers that Rossmo diminished the inspector's rank?" Tevlin asked. No, Unger replied.

"Are you saying he's lying?" Tevlin asked.

"He's mistaken," Unger said.

Tevlin said that in another meeting with Chambers in 1998, Unger again raised Rossmo as one of the top issues that needed to be addressed in the police department.

The Rossmo matter was a "burning issue" with police officers, Unger said. He agreed he was bothered by the fact that he twice asked Chambers to clarify Rossmo's duties and responsibilities but Chambers never responded.

"You were frustrated that

Chambers was not bowing to your authority and wishes by putting Rossmo back in his place. Isn't that true?" Tevlin asked.

"No, it's not true," replied Unger, 55, who has been with the force for 30 years. Unger said he was shocked to hear Rossmo earlier call him a bully and a coward.

Tevlin reminded Unger that Rossmo testified that Unger had once singled out Rossmo for being late to a department meeting.

Rossmo testified the meeting room had been changed but no one told him, so he went around the police department, trying to find it. He cited the incident as an example of how some senior officers never accepted his promotion and took out their displeasure in petty ways.

Unger denied singling out Rossmo for being late in front of other police managers. "It would be unprofessional," he said.

"Is Rossmo lying?" Tevlin asked.

"I'm saying it didn't happen. Maybe he's mistaken. Maybe it was someone else."

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Marion Allan, who is hearing the case without a jury, has heard evidence of Rossmo being terminated after Chambers



Former Vancouver police inspector Ken Doern, who was accused Monday of lying by police Chief Terry Blythe.

resigned and Blythe became chief.

Rossmo alleges the decision not to renew his contract came after the Vancouver police board decided in June 2000 to review his contract at the next board meeting.

Instead, Unger, while serving as acting chief while Blythe was on vacation, instructed staff to send Rossmo a letter on July 4 last year, informing him that his contract wasn't being renewed.

Unger said he was away on business in June, 2000, and wasn't aware of the police board's request to review the Rossmo matter at the next board meeting.

Unger recalled having a meeting with Rossmo on July 18, which Unger described as cor-



MARK VAN MANEN/VANCOUVER SUN

Deputy Chief John Unger testified Tuesday that retired Sergeant Grant Smith lied when he gave evidence at the Rossmo trial. It was the second accusation of police lying in two days.

dial and friendly. Unger testified that he told Rossmo at the meeting that he could return to working as a constable in any division in the force, which would have meant his salary would be slashed by 50 per cent.

"I told him to get back to me," recalled Unger, who will continue under cross-examination today at the Vancouver Law

Courts.

Instead, Rossmo sued for wrongful dismissal, alleging Unger used his opportunity as acting chief to demote him, which amounted to constructive dismissal.

Rossmo testified he was offered a two-year contract but found that unacceptable because it would have left him 28 months

short of being able to retire with a pension.

In 1995, Rossmo was promoted to detective-inspector after he became Canada's first police officer to graduate with a doctorate degree in criminology at Simon Fraser University, where he invented geographic profiling, a tool designed to aid investigators tracking serial crime.