

COURIER-MAIL

Edition 2 - SAT 05 APR 1997, Page 008

Ex-prostitute still fighting for rights

By CHARLTON P

Source: QNP

THE former stripper and prostitute sacked from the New South Wales Police Service is unlikely to get her job back, despite a ruling by the Industrial Commission that she was unfairly dismissed.

On Thursday, the commission ruled that Kim Hollingsworth, 30, had been denied natural justice by the police service when it sacked her after discovering that she had worked as a stripper and prostitute before entering the police academy in 1995.

Ms Hollingsworth had also worked as an undercover agent for the Wood royal commission into corruption within the NSW police.

At one point, she was placed under the commission's witness protection programme and moved to South Australia for her safety.

During the hearing, Ms Hollingsworth's lawyers argued that she was sacked because she had blown the whistle on corrupt police who wanted to open a brothel and use her as a madam/manager.

Industrial Relations Commissioner Peter Connor told lawyers for Ms Hollingsworth and the police service to ``get together and discuss the complex issues at the head of . . . the claim in an atmosphere less formal than the current arbitration proceedings''.

He adjourned the hearing until April 21.

NSW Police Commissioner Peter Ryan's office issued a statement saying that the service was studying the judgment.

Ms Hollingsworth said she still wanted to be a police officer and could continue working despite her troubled past with the police service.

``I do hope I get the job back in future,'' she said.

``That's been my ambition since I was a six-year-old and corrupt police will not be spoiling that for me.

``I have no ill-feeling towards the police service. I don't think I ever will have. It's something that happened in the past and all I can do now is try and get reinstated.

``Of course there are going to be some police officers who won't be happy. However, I'm sure when they work with me their attitude will change.''

However, sources in the service said yesterday it was extremely unlikely that Ms Hollingsworth would be offered her old training position back.

If the commission ordered that she be reinstated, police sources said it was unlikely that she would successfully complete her recruit training.

``She'd be better off taking a compensation package,' ' the source said.

Yesterday, Ms Hollingsworth was in hiding after nine days of hearings and a round of media appearances on Thursday.

She said she feared being targeted because of her work with the royal commission and her knowledge of corruption within the force.

``It's very hard to know who to trust at the moment,' ' Ms Hollingsworth said.

She appeared on Channel 9's 60 Minutes programme for a reported fee of \$19,000 and has been offered an advance of \$50,000 for a book on her life.

The **Scarlet Alliance**, an organisation representing 14 sex worker rights organisations nationwide, yesterday welcomed the commission's decision.

The alliance's executive member, Erica Red, said the decision's clear message was that prospective employers could not discriminate against a person on the basis of their previous occupation, even if that occupation was sex work.