CityNews Reporter Shuts Down 'FHRITP' Hecklers Like A Boss

The Huffington Post Canada | By Emma Prestwich
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A social media firestorm touched off by a female TV reporter who fought back against sexually explicit taunts hurled by soccer fans has also cost one Toronto engineer his job.

Ontario's largest electricity provider, Hydro One, issued a statement late Tuesday saying it has terminated one of its employees in connection with the incident Sunday at a Toronto FC game, which was captured on video.

In that video, CityNews reporter Shauna Hunt questioned a group of men who admitted they planned to yell the phrase "F**k her right in the p****" into her microphone after a man beside them did so. She spoke directly to two of them.

Hydro One did not name the employee, but tips on social media had previously identified him as Shawn Simoes. A LinkedIn profile of a man by that name lists him as an assistant network management engineer with the company. Simoes did not respond to a request for comment.

Simoes drew a salary of $106,510.60 in 2014, according to the Public Sector Salary Disclosure.

Several social media posts also named the second individual, saying he worked for Cognex Corporation. A company spokeswoman said the views expressed in the video were "reprehensible" and inconsistent with Cognex's values. "We cannot comment on employee matters publicly, but we take this issue seriously and will be addressing it," Sarah Laskowski said in a statement.

Hunt said her confrontation, which triggered a flood of social media support and even praise from a provincial premier, came about after almost a year of nearly constant harassment.

"I hit my limit and I had to push back," Hunt said in a telephone interview. "I wasn't going to stand for it anymore. It was time to say something."

Instead of ignoring the remark and moving on, Hunt confronted the group of men who stood behind her, asking if they'd waited behind her just to say the phrase.

While one of the men agreed that it was rude, Simoes, another one of his friends, told Hunt, "I don't care, it's f**kin' hilarious... You're lucky there's not a f**kin' vibrator in your ear like in England."

Hunt said Tuesday on a Breakfast Television interview that that wasn't the first time she'd been yelled at that day.

Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, which owns Toronto FC, said in a statement that if the fans were identified, they would be banned from its facilities.

"We're appalled that this trend of disrespectful behaviour would make its way to our city, let alone anywhere near our stadium," said the statement.

MLSE statement: We're appalled that this trend of disrespectful behaviour would make its way to our city, let alone anywhere near our stadium. We are working to identify the individuals, and when we do they will be banned from all of our facilities. Moving forward, we will also work with our local television outlets to provide extra security support to female reporters doing field hits at any of our games. Our organization is committed to an environment where everyone can feel safe and included and discrimination or intolerance of any kind will be met with a swift and serious response. We're thankful to the vast majority of fans for standing up against such sexist behaviour and working with us to help prevent it in the future.

MLSE MLSE PR @MLSEPR
MLSE statement addressing company actions following Sunday's incident:
8:57 AM - 12 May 2015
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http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/05/12/citynews-shauna-hunt_n_7265822.html
The men could also face criminal charges.

"So far none of the reporters want charges laid," Const. Victor Kwong from Toronto Police told the Toronto Star, but he said that they "absolutely" could file a report.

On Calgary's Red Mile, where the prank has also become popular, police have considered making a public plea to track down offenders so they can lay charges, they told Global News, saying that those convicted could face a $5,000 fine or six months in jail.

Several of CityNews' reporters have had to deal with it, and told the network that perpetrators aren't always men and that male reporters are also being targeted.

"For my female colleagues and female reporters and journalists across North America, it's sexual harassment and it's disgusting and needs to stop," said Adrian Ghobrial.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne also weighed in on Twitter, cheering Hunt for speaking out.

Thanks @citynews for saying #ItsNeverOkay. Whether or not it's caught on film, sexual harassment at work is no joke.

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