



Hobart Mercury
05/05/2010
Page: 3
By: Sue Neales
Section: General News
Region: Hobart Circulation: 45210
Type: Capital City Daily
Size: 240.00 sq.cms
Frequency: MTWTFSS-

Probe into conduct of top cop

SUE NEALES
Chief reporter

THE long-running political saga embroiling the top ranks of Tasmania's police force took another turn yesterday, with a legal probe launched into the conduct of the state's current top cop.

Premier David Bartlett yesterday appointed retired Victorian Supreme Court judge Peter Heerey to investigate claims of police misconduct made against current acting police chief Darren Hine.

The code of conduct complaints have been made by retired former police commissioner Richard McCreadie, acting as a citizen.

The claims relate to Mr Hine's alleged conduct in late 2008 after another former top cop, Jack Johnston, was charged with criminal offences and the State Government decided to appoint Mr McCreadie as his interim replacement.

Mr Bartlett said yesterday Solicitor-General Leigh Sealy had recommended to the Government that Mr McCreadie's complaints against Mr Hine be investigated.

The Premier met Mr Hine yester-



NOT NEW:
Darren Hine



CALL: Richard McCreadie

day to tell him of the investigation.

The new probe was announced just as interviews were about to begin to appoint Tasmania's next police commissioner.

Mr Hine is understood to be an applicant for the position, which he has filled for the past 18 months.

Mr Bartlett said Mr Hine would remain as Tasmania's police chief during Mr Heerey's inquiry, which is expected to take several weeks.

The complaints are made under the police code of conduct.

Mr Hine said last night the complaints were not new.

"They include a complaint that I failed to investigate an allegation made against the Director of Public

Prosecutions [Tim Ellis]," Mr Hine said.

"A further complaint alleges that I misled the Premier about the possibility of the DPP laying criminal charges against Mr McCreadie when the Premier informed me of his intention to appoint Mr McCreadie as Acting Police Commissioner [in October 2008]."

Mr Hine said he had at all times acted as police chief on legal advice, including when he talked with Mr Bartlett about the possibility of charges against Mr McCreadie.

"While I do not believe I have acted in any way inappropriately in relation to these matters, I accept it is appropriate they be fully investigated," he said.

Mr McCreadie, whose temporary appointment was withdrawn five days after first being announced in October 2008, has never been charged with any offence.

The Tasmanian Police Association's Sergeant Randolph Wierenga said many members were concerned about the timing and motives of the inquiry and called on the Government to ensure it was resolved as quickly as possible.