

Retired cop charged with luring young girl

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Retired Peterborough cop Douglas Ralph Bronson, 51, is charged with luring a child via computer and invitation to sexual touching under 16 years of age.

TORONTO - A retired Peterborough cop was arrested in a sting operation after setting up an alleged meeting for a tryst with a young girl.

A man was arrested Tuesday in Durham Region after he thought he set up a meeting with a girl under 16, but who in reality was an undercover cop, OPP Det.-Sgt. Paul Thompson with the child sexual exploitation section said Wednesday.

Police are also trying to determine if there are other victims who may have been approached by the suspect, police said.

“We have no reason to believe (there are other victims) but the nature of the offence ... this person in this particular situation travelled to meet what he thought was going to be a young person,” Thompson said.

“In fact, he met an undercover police officer and got arrested,” he said.

The girl’s family called police in Lindsay about the child having inappropriate conversations with an adult.

An officer assumed the identity of the victim and the six-month investigation ended with a meeting set up for Tuesday, Thompson said.

“It was a real sting,” he said. “This person travelled approximately an hour to meet somebody. That certainly raises a concern for the public, it raises a high level of concern for the police.”

The arrest of a retired cop didn’t raise eyebrows among investigators, he said.

“We’ve certainly arrested clergy, physicians, police officers, firefighters,” Thompson said. “We treat them all the same going into it.”

The suspect on his LinkedIn site described himself as a veteran of 20 years of policing, having a good understanding of computers and “leadership qualities as a business owner and sergeant in charge of over 20 people.”

On the dating site Perfspot.com, he described himself as divorced and “tall, dark and handsome and did I mention modest.”

Douglas Ralph Bronson, 51, of Peterborough, is charged with luring a child via computer and invitation to sexual touching under 16 years of age.

Investigators executed a search warrant at a Peterborough home on Tuesday and seized a number of thumb drives, hard discs and other potential evidence.