



Issue #4 - 2009

19 March, 2009

Registrar cites forgery, fraud

Salesperson licence cancelled

While employed as Fleet and Lease Manager at Flag Chevrolet-Chevrolet Truck Ltd. in Surrey, Trent Lennox was accused of obtaining a 2008 Chevrolet Silverado by forging his brother-in-law's signature. The relative's credit card number, a photo of his driver's licence and a forged signature backed up ICBC registration and the lease agreement.

By the time this fraud came to light and investigations were being conducted by both the RCMP and the VSA, Lennox was no longer employed at Flag Chevrolet. The dealership, which co-operated fully in the investigation, was unable to locate its dealer file for this vehicle and later assumed that Lennox must have taken it with him.

Efforts by a VSA Compliance Officer to contact Lennox were unsuccessful, but it was noted in late February that Barnes Wheaton Pontiac Buick GMC (Surrey) notified the VSA Licensing Department that Trent Lennox was registered as a salesperson there. The compliance officer immediately visited the dealership to serve him with a notice of a hearing before the Registrar on the Flag Chevrolet matter. The dealership advised that Lennox was off the premises. He never reported back for subsequent shifts and he is no longer employed by Barnes Wheaton.

The hearing went ahead without Lennox, and Deputy Registrar Ian Christman issued the following ruling on March 11, 2009:

A hearing was held before me on this date and evidence was presented that Trent Lennox forged documents and committed a fraudulent transaction while employed with Flag Chevrolet-Chevrolet Truck Ltd. I found that it was not in the public interest that Trent Lennox continues to be a licensed salesperson and on this date, I cancelled his salesperson license, number 107109.

The dealer as victim - work with us!

As in the case reported here, chronic offenders try to move from dealership to dealership, sometimes perpetrating scams before the paperwork catches up with them.

"The VSA cannot be in the position of being an extension of dealers' personnel or human resources departments, but we can advise if a salesperson has a valid licence or is registered to be working elsewhere," said Hong Wong, Manager of Licensing.

The rules are clear that no one can engage in either sales or the business side of consumer sales without a valid licence, including conditional licences for new hires. Therefore, on the first day of proposed employment a person's status should be checked.

"Dealers can help the entire industry if they report chronic bad actors to VSA Compliance Officers," Wong said. "Let's make it difficult for these people to move from lot to lot, victimizing other dealers and their customers."