HONORABLE DOUGLAS F. FEDERSPEIL

SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON
FOR BENTON COUNTY

JULIE M. ATWOOD,

Plaintiff,

vs.

MISSION SUPPORT ALLIANCE, LLC, STEVE YOUNG, an individual, and DAVID RUSCITTO, an individual,

Defendants.

Case No.: 15-2-01914-4

~~[PROPOSED]~~ **FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW REGARDING PLAINTIFF'S SECOND AMENDED MOTION FOR CONTEMPT AND SANCTIONS UNDER CR 37 AND CR 26(g)**

~~Noted for Hearing: July 7, 2017~~
~~(ORAL ARGUMENT REQUESTED)~~

THIS MATTER came before the Court on Plaintiff's Second Amended Motion for Sanctions. The Court considered the following:

Plaintiff's Second Amended Motion for Sanctions under CR 37 and CR 26(g);

Plaintiff's Memorandum in Support of Second Amended Motion for Sanctions under CR 37 and CR 26(g);

The Declaration of John P. Sheridan in Support of Plaintiff's Motion for Contempt dated February 17, 2017 ("Sheridan Dec.");

The Supplemental Declaration of John P. Sheridan in Support of Plaintiff's Amended Motion for Contempt dated February 22, 2017 ("Supp'l Sheridan Dec.");

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The Second Supplemental Declaration of John P. Sheridan in Support of Plaintiff's Second Amended Motion for Sanctions dated May 2, 2017 ("2nd Supp'l Sheridan Dec.");

The Declaration of Mark W. Rose in Support of Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions;

The Declaration of Julie Atwood in Support of Plaintiff's Motion for Sanctions;

The Fourth Supplemental Declaration of Christine Moreland;

Defendant's Response,

The Declaration of Denise Ashbaugh;

The Declaration of Cristin Kent Aragon;

The Declaration of Mark Beller;

The Declaration of Kathrine Bence;

The Declaration of Todd Beyers;

The Declaration of Chris Jensen;

The Declaration of Debbie Mariotti;

The Declaration of Wendy Robbins;

The Declaration of Julie Lindstrom;

Plaintiff's Reply;

The Reply Declaration of John P. Sheridan

The Fifth Supplemental Declaration of Christine Moreland; and

The Reply Declaration of Julie Atwood

The records of these proceedings.

Having been fully advised, the Court makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

The plaintiff's main complaints are focused in four areas. First, the plaintiff asserts that MSA and its attorneys improperly failed to disclose the existence of former MSA General Counsel

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Sandra Fowler as a person who complained of discrimination and retaliation at MSA, and misled the Court and the plaintiff by asserting that plaintiff's efforts to depose her "was nothing more than a fishing expedition designed to harass MSA" and "not calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence," and that MSA only disclosed some relevant documents after Judge Spanner ordered that her deposition should go forward. Second, plaintiff asserts that MSA misled the plaintiff by agreeing to produce documents and information related to claims of discrimination and retaliation, while secretly withholding those documents. Third, plaintiff asserts that MSA improperly dumped thousands of documents (many of which it had promised to produce in 2016) on her just before the February 24, 2017 discovery cutoff and in the days before trial was scheduled to begin on May 1, 2017. Fourth, plaintiff asserts that responsive documents are still being withheld from production. Plaintiff asks that the Court enter judgment for the plaintiff as a remedy.

In response, the Defendant MSA asserts in sworn declarations that each person responsible for responding to discovery acted in good faith. As to Ms. Fowler, MSA notes that her EEOC complaint was filed "well after Plaintiff filed this lawsuit." Response at 4. As to the failure to produce promised documents, MSA asserts that Ms. Atwood "raised no concerns about MSA's responses for nearly five months" before complaining in January 2017. MSA Response at 3. As to the document dump, MSA asserts that once Judge Runge granted plaintiff's motion to compel, "MSA immediately took steps to comply with the Court's order, including collecting and reviewing other complaint files." Response at 4. As to documents still not produced, MSA has submitted declarations from witnesses who challenge the loss of documents.[1]

[1] Plaintiff has objected to much of this declaration testimony under ER 602 and 802.

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The issues for the Court are whether MSA's actions are violations of CR 26 and CR 37, and if so, what is the proper sanction?

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. These findings of fact and conclusions of law are issued in connection with Plaintiff's Second Amended Motion for Sanctions under CR 37 and CR 26(g). A trial court's reasons for imposing sanctions should "be clearly stated on the record so that meaningful review can be had on appeal." *See Burnet v. Spokane Ambulance,* 131 Wn.2d 484, 494, 933 P.2d 1036 (1997).

Plaintiff Asserts That Sandra Fowler Is a Critical Witness Because Had She Been Identified Earlier, It Would Have Changed Plaintiff's Approach to Discovery

2. In its response, MSA asserts that plaintiff was not prejudiced by MSA's production of the Fowler documents identified by plaintiff in her motion for sanctions asserting that MSA provided documents related to Ms. Fowler on the date of her deposition, and "MSA supplemented production in accordance with the Civil Rules." Response at 35. MSA also asserts that the Fowler evidence "is inadmissible under ER 404(b), and that the documents were produced months before trial." *Id.*

3. In reply, plaintiff's counsel asserts that when the case began, plaintiff's discovery approach was to focus on the discrimination and retaliation of Ms. Atwood's immediate supervisor: Steve Young. This was based on Ms. Atwood's testimony and a sworn statement of former MSA Human Resources Principal Christine DeVere. Sheridan Reply Dec., Ex. 1 (DeVere 7/20/15 Dec.). That statement addressed the anonymous complaint filed against Mr. Young, and Mr. Young's response when confronted, which was to offer his resignation. DeVere Dec. at ¶¶10-13. Mr. Young identified Julie Atwood as the person who filed the complaint. DeVere Dec. ¶14. Ms. Fowler identified Chris Jensen and Todd Beyers, both direct reports to the CEO Frank Armijo, as being the managers who implemented two investigations,

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which cleared Ms. Atwood, but still led to her forced resignation. DeVere Dec. ¶¶18-59. Much of Ms. DeVere's sworn testimony became the basis for allegations in the complaint. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 2 (August 2015 Complaint). Plaintiff had no evidence at the time of filing, and had no reason to believe until February 2017, that CEO Frank Armijo held discriminatory animus toward women. Sheridan Reply Dec. Thus, the case was framed as Mr. Young held the discriminatory animus and retaliatory intent against Ms. Atwood, because he believed (wrongly) that she was the source of the complaint against him, and when Ms. Atwood was interviewed by Ms. DeVere and Wendy Robbins, she told them that Young created a hostile work environment and did treat women differently. Sheridan Reply Dec. The role of higher management was perceived by plaintiff's counsel to be one of supporting Mr. Young to the detriment of Ms. Atwood. Sheridan Reply Dec. At his deposition on February 7, 2017, Manager Chris Jensen testified that Young and Armijo had told him that a basis for Atwood being terminated was the belief that Ms. Atwood shared confidential information with DOE. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 3 (2/7/17 Jensen Dep. at 50; other pages attached for context). Thus, before the Fowler deposition, Armijo was tied to the termination, but there was no evidence that he held discriminatory animus towards women--until Ms. Fowler testified on February 10, 2017. Sheridan Reply Dec.

Ms. Fowler's Testimony

4. On February 10, 2017, Ms. Fowler testified that she was hired as MSA general counsel by MSA CEO Frank Figueroa in 2009. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 4 (2/10/17 Fowler Dep. at 7-8; other pages attached for context). Frank Armijo replaced him in June 2010. *Id.* at 8. Figueroa treated her as a colleague with respect and sought her input. *Id.* at 11-12. She testified that things changed dramatically and immediately when Armijo took over in 2010, including taking away some of her duties and treating her in a demeaning way, including an example in which he told her in an elevated voice in front of other managers that, "You need to

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shut up." *Id.* at 12-13. She never saw Armijo treat men that way. *Id.* at 13-14. She observed that Robin Madison, another woman direct report was treated poorly by Armijo, including taking away her duties and terminating her. *Id.* at 15-16. Under Armijo, Ms. Fowler was paid less than men, and advised her board of that fact. *Id.* at 18-20. Ultimately Ms. Fowler was demoted (Armijo put Mr. Stan Bensussen in her position in 2014) and constructively discharged in 2015 after being mistreated by Bensussen, who told her that she should kiss the ground they walk on that you still have a job, and after he called her a man hater. *Id.* at 20, 37-38, 41-42. Ms. Wendy Robbins investigated. *Id.* at 43-44, 46. In her current position with Bechtel Ms. Fowler testified that she is treated again with respect. *Id.* at 49-50. Ms. Fowler also disclosed an error costing MSA over $2.7 million, which was caused by Todd Beyer's organization. *Id.* at 26-27. Ms. Fowler successfully recouped over 80% of the loss, which made the board ecstatic, but Armijo's only comment was, "You took nine months to get this done." *Id.* Armijo still gave a bonus to Todd Beyers but did not give a bonus to Ms. Fowler. *Id.* at 27-28.

The Prejudice to Plaintiff

5. Plaintiff's counsel has stated that had he learned of Fowler in 2016, he would have shaped discovery to examine Armijo's involvement more closely and the sexist atmosphere that existed at the highest level of MSA. Sheridan Reply Dec. This involves an entirely different approach to discovery: a top down approach. Sheridan Reply Dec. That could not be done owing to MSA's failure to disclose her in response to discovery requests. Sheridan Reply Dec.

MSA And Denise Ashbaugh Knew That Ms. Fowler's Testimony Was Important And Hid Her From Plaintiff Until It Became Clear That Ms. Fowler Would Be Deposed And Would Bring Documents To Her Deposition.

6. The evidence shows that Ms. Ashbaugh and MSA were aware of the Fowler discrimination and retaliation complaints prior to responding to Atwood discovery. The

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Atwood complaint was filed and served on August 21, 2015, and Ms. Ashbaugh appeared in this case on August 28, 2015. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 5 (August 2015 Notice of Appearance). At her deposition, Ms. Fowler produced an October 7, 2015 response to her September 1, 2015 settlement offer to MSA. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 6 (101515 letter from Ashbaugh to Fowler). In the letter, Ms. Ashbaugh, on behalf of MSA, shows knowledge of her retaliation and discrimination claims writing, "You also suggested you were the subject of retaliation by former MSA president Frank Armijo." Page 3, 6-7. Ashbaugh also writes that the settlement demand is extortion, which is a crime, and threatens sanctions. Page 3-4. In the letter, Ms. Ashbaugh rejects Ms. Fowler's equal pay gender discrimination claim. Page 4-6. Ms. Ashbaugh also writes that "Fowler first raised this issue in 2009 and attempted to address this issue for a period of six years." Page 7.

7. On March 24, 2016, Ms. Atwood served MSA with Second set of interrogatories. "You" is a defined term meaning, "Mission Support Alliance, LLC, MSA, its assigns, agents and representatives, including attorneys and investigators." Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 7 (Plaintiff's Second set of interrogatories).

8. On April 15, 2016, Ms. Fowler filed an EEOC complaint which alleged that the sex discrimination and retaliation took place between 8/1/13 and 8/13/15. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 8 (Fowler EEOC complaint).

9. On May 23, 2016, Ms. Ashbaugh signed MSA's response to Atwood's second interrogatories:

> INTERROGATORY NO. 12: Please identify and describe any internal or external, complaint or allegation made against you by any current or former employee, alleging that Defendant engaged in discriminatory or retaliatory conduct during the past 10 years. This interrogatory includes, but is not limited to, all complaints filed with Washington State Human Rights Commission, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the MSA Human Resources

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Department, as well as any lawsuits filed against defendant in any court alleging discriminatory or retaliatory conduct.

ANSWER: Objection. This interrogatory is overly broad, unduly burdensome, vague, and ambiguous with regards to scope and time. Without waiving these objections, with respect to **gender discrimination, whistleblower, and/or retaliation complaints, from 2011 to the present** please see the attached documents bates numbers: MSA_Atwood_004276-428[4].06.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 33: Please produce all documents identified in your response, or relied upon to formulate your response to Interrogatory Number 12.

RESPONSE: Objection. This request for production of documents is overly broad and unduly burdensome regarding time and scope. The request is also vague and ambiguous regarding the term "complaint." Without waiving these objections, with respect to gender discrimination, whistleblower, and/or retaliation complaints, from 2011 to the present please see the attached documents bates numbers: MSA_Atwood_004276-428[4].06.

Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 9 (5/23/16 MSA responses). The production contains a "retaliation chart" but the last entry ends on 3/22/16, which excludes Fowler's EEOC complaint even though MSA said responses were made "to the present." Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 10 (MSA_Atwood_004276-428[4].06), *id.*, ¶ 12. MSA's response and related production also failed to identify any of Ms. Fowler's prior internal complaints. *Id.*

10. On June 2, 2016, Ms. Ashbaugh responded to the EEOC on behalf of MSA, which repeated much of what she wrote in response to Ms. Fowler's settlement offer, including statements showing a knowledge of the retaliation and discrimination claims going back to 2009. Sheridan Reply Dec. Ex. 11 (Ashbaugh letter to EEOC). Ms. Ashbaugh's letter to the EEOC, approximately one week after she signed the CR 26(g) certification for Interrogatory No. 12, confirmed that "Fowler notified the following individuals of her ... unfair treatment: William K. Johnson, Frank Armijo, David Ruscitto, Todd Beyers, Dorothy Hanson, and Stan Bensussen." Sheridan Reply Dec., Ex. 11, at 13; *id.*, ¶ 11, Ex. 9.

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11. In July 2016, plaintiff served Interrogatory Nos. 16 and 17, which asked for the relevant time period (February 10, 2010 through the date of trial) that MSA identify "every complaint made against MSA, for any reason," including among other things, "all outside investigators and/or EEO investigators who have investigated and/or examined any complaints." Rose Dec., ¶ 1, Ex. 1. Defendant MSA responded to these requests on August 31, 2016, representing that Defendant was producing "*all complaints that alleged gender discrimination and/or retaliation during the time that Plaintiff was employed at MSA*[.]" Sheridan Dec., ¶ 1, Ex. 1.

12. The defendant's response acknowledged defendant's agreement as to the relevance, for discovery purposes, of the gender discrimination and retaliation complaints, but sought to unilaterally carve out complaints made after Ms. Atwood's forced termination from MSA after September 2013. *See id.*, Ex. 1, at pp. 2-3; Sub# 2, 13 (Compl. and Answer, ¶ 1.2).

Interrogatory 16 asked:

INTERROGATORY NO. 16: Please identify all outside investigators and/or EEO investigators who have investigated and/or examined any complaints filed against MSA during the relevant time period herein

13. In response to Interrogatory 16 from Plaintiff's Third Set of Interrogatories, Defendant represented that it was producing, "all complaints that alleged gender discrimination and/or retaliation **during the time that Plaintiff was employed at MSA[.]**

Interrogatory Requests that Should Have produced the Fowler EEOC Complaint

14. The following requests and responses should have produced the Fowler EEOC complaint:

- May 23, 2016: In response to Interrogatory Number 12 and RFP 33, MSA states that "with respect to gender discrimination, whistleblower, and/or retaliation complaints, from 2011 to the present please see the attached documents bates numbers: MSA_Atwood_004276-428[4].06". Ms. Fowler's April 15, 2016 complaint was a

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gender discrimination and retaliation complaint and should have been identified. The Chart provided stops before April 15, 2016. MSA does not seek a protective order, and does not disclose that the Fowler complaint is not being provided. Ms. Ashbaugh signs the discovery response, and a week later on June 2, 2016, she responds to the EEOC regarding Fowler's Charge of Discrimination. Clearly, Ms. Ashbaugh knew of the EEOC Charge to which she was then responding at the time she signed the discovery response. Any reasonable inquiry taken in response to Interrogatory No. 12 ought to have also made counsel aware of Fowler's internal complaints (if she did not already know about them), as counsel knew that "Fowler notified the following individuals of her ... unfair treatment: William K. Johnson, Frank Armijo, David Ruscitto, Todd Beyers, Dorothy Hanson, and Stan Bensussen," as stated in her June 2, 2016 letter to the EEOC. Sheridan Reply Dec., Ex. 11. This is significant because the internal investigation arose from reports that Fowler made to Messrs. Johnson and Beyers. Sheridan Reply Dec., ¶ 18.

- August 31, 2016: In response to Interrogatory 16 seeking the identity of "all outside investigators and/or EEO investigators who have investigated and/or examined any complaints filed against MSA during the relevant time period herein." The relevant time period is "February 10, 2010 through the date of trial." Ms. Ashbaugh is an outside investigator who examined the Fowler EEOC complaint in connection with her response to the June 2, 2016 EEOC. Evidence concerning the Fowler filing was responsive. MSA does not seek a protective order, and does not disclose that the Fowler complaint is not being provided. Ms. Ashbaugh signs the response.

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- August 31, 2016: Interrogatory Number 17 asked MSA to identify "every complaint made against MSA, for any reason." MSA promised to produce, "all complaints that alleged gender discrimination and/or retaliation during the time that Plaintiff was employed at MSA." The Fowler EEOC filing was responsive since it alleged discrimination and retaliation during the relevant time frame. MSA does not seek a protective order, and does not disclose that the Fowler complaint is not being provided. Ms. Ashbaugh signs the response.

Plaintiff's Counsel Gives Notice That Failure To Comply Will Result In Sanctions.

15. On January 31, 2017, after serving her with a subpoena, Jack Sheridan spoke to Sandra Fowler, former General Counsel for MSA, who disclosed to plaintiff's counsel that she had filed an EEOC claim against MSA, which was still pending. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 2. The defendant had not produced this complaint or disclosed any information about it in answer to plaintiff's interrogatories. *Id.*

16. On February 1, 2017, Mr. Sheridan summarized a meet and confer, and confronted MSA's counsel with her client's failure to produce documents that plaintiff knew existed, writing in relevant part, as follows:

> I also said that I was seeking any complaints [Sandra Fowler] may have filed against MSA as outlined in the subpoena. MSA has not produced any such documents. I want you to be on notice that if you are withholding such documents, and such documents are produced at her deposition pursuant to the subpoena, I will seek sanctions. Also, you have not produced any complaints by Ms. DeVere have you? The same will be true if such complaints are revealed at her deposition on Thursday.

Sheridan Dec., ¶ 3.

17. The next day, February 2, 2017, almost two weeks after plaintiff filed a motion to compel seeking further response to Interrogatories No. 16-17, and the related requests for

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production, defendant served a supplemental answer to Interrogatory No. 16-17, which stated:

> SUPPLEMENTAL ANSWER: Objection. This interrogatory is overly broad, unduly burdensome, and vague as to the term "complaint." Without waiving this objection, MSA responds it will produce documentation regarding of all complaints raised to Employee Concerns and/or the EEO Officer that alleged gender discrimination, retaliation, or misuse of MSA resources from 2010 through the date Ms. Atwood filed this above-captioned lawsuit, approximately two years after she was employed, including complaints raised by Ms. DeVere.

Id., ¶ 5; *id.*, Ex. 5. Ms. Atwood filed her lawsuit on August 21, 2015, and the scheduling order set the original trial date for August 22, 2016. Sub #2; Sub #7.

18. The 2/2/17 supplemental answer to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 was accompanied by production of a report of investigation into EEO Officer **Christine DeVere's** complaint of retaliation against Vice President of Human Resources Todd Beyers. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 4. The report referenced witness statements and other underlying documentation from the investigation that were not included in the 2/2/17 production. *Id*

19. Defendant's 2/2/17 supplemental production failed to include any documents or disclosure of information related to the gender discrimination complaint made by **Sandra Fowler**. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 6. That day, defendant MSA filed a motion to shorten time for hearing a motion to quash the subpoena issued to Ms. Fowler, and in the underlying motion to quash, claimed:

> Ms. Fowler's own claims against MSA after *voluntarily leaving* for another position over two years after Plaintiff s employment ended is not crucial to her case. MSA has provided (and is supplementing) complaints wholly unrelated to Plaintiff of gender discrimination, retaliation and alleged misuse of funds for a period of five years (from 2010 through August 21, 2015). Discovery is not unlimited and MSA's production is more than appropriate.

Sheridan Dec., ¶ 6; *accord* Sub # 87, at p.12 (emphasis added).

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20. Ms. Ashbaugh claims that at the time of the February 2, 2017 discovery answer, "the only complaint by Ms. Fowler of which [she] was aware was Ms. Fowler's 2016 EEOC charge." *See* Ashbaugh Dec., ¶ 7. However, it is difficult to reconcile the information contained in counsel's response to the EEOC on June 2, 2016 with the claim that Ms. Ashbaugh knew only about Ms. Fowler's 2016 EEOC Charge and knew nothing about Ms. Fowler's internal complaints. Ms. Ashbaugh does not disclose in her declaration at what point she allegedly became aware of Ms. Fowler's internal complaint.

21. Counsel avers, without specifying on what dates or on how many occasions, that she "directed MSA employees to search for responsive documents based on the clear parameters set forth in MSA's written discovery responses." Ashbaugh Dec., ¶ 24. If true, then the parameters laid out in the May 2016 answer, stating that MSA would disclose "gender discrimination, whistleblower, and/or retaliation complaints, from 2011 to the present," should have resulted in counsel's learning of the internal complaint made by Sandra Fowler at that time. A number of persons who were apparently made aware of plaintiff's discovery requests, including Debbie Mariotti, Wendy Robbins, Todd Beyers, and Stanley Bensussen participated in the Fowler investigation and should have been able to inform outside counsel of its existence. See Sheridan Reply Dec., ¶ 18. Given these facts, it is challenging to understand how not one of counsel's clients would have made her aware of Ms. Fowler's complaints after being given the "parameters" laid out in the May 23, 2016 answer to Interrogatory No. 12.

22. The Court finds that the lack of disclosure in May 2016 with respect to both the external and internal complaints filed by Ms. Fowler and Ms. DeVere reveals either an incompetent investigation (i.*e.*, a lack of a reasonable inquiry), or an intentional withholding of evidence -- if not by Ms. Ashbaugh, then by her corporate client. There is simply no reasonable excuse for these omissions, which necessarily call into question the claim that MSA

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consistently conducted a "reasonable, good faith search for documents." Def.'s Opp., at 28, fn. 26.

The Discovery Order

23. On February 3, 2017, the Court entered an order granting Plaintiff's Motion to Compel Defendant Mission Support Alliance to Respond to Plaintiff's Written Discovery Requests. *See* Sub #105; Sheridan Dec., Ex. 3 (requiring Defendant to answer "Interrogatory Nos. 15-17, and 19, and Request For Production Nos. 93-95, 97, 102, 105-107, 112-116 and 118, **without further delay**, and no later than February 1, 2017").

24. Since receiving the Court's February 3, 2017 order, Defendant has not provided any amended or supplemental written answer to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17. *Id.*, ¶ 19.

MSA's Efforts to Avoid Production of Fowler-Related Documents

25. Later on February 3, after the Court issued its ruling, plaintiff's counsel emailed defense counsel asking MSA, "Please send Fowler complaint immediately." Sheridan Dec., Ex. 4. MSA's counsel replied, "We will be moving for [re]consideration on Monday or Tuesday of the Court's ruling" and further stated that MSA "will be going to ex parte on Tuesday at 8:15 am on our motion to shorten time for a hearing before Friday on the Fowler deposition." *Id.* MSA did not file a motion for reconsideration on Monday or Tuesday. *Id.*, ¶ 9.

26. The Fowler deposition was set for Friday, February 10. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 12. The subpoena duces tecum was served on MSA and included a request for the production of documents as follows:

> 1. Any and all documents of any nature pertaining to any and all claims made by you against Mission Support Alliance, LLC, or any individual manager of MSA including, but not limited to, all documents filed with any agency or any court, emails, correspondence, and notes. This request is intended to also include all documents pertaining to the settlement of any claims by you against MSA or its managers.

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Sub # 85 (Dec. of Denise Ashbaugh, dated 2/2/17), ¶ 4, Ex. 4. I find that the scope of the request gave notice to MSA and its counsel that the Fowler EEOC complaint would be produced if it was in Ms. Fowler's possession, and assuming she complied with the subpoena duces tecum.

27. On Tuesday, February 7, 2017, the parties appeared before the Honorable Bruce A. Spanner on defendant's motion to hear the motion to quash plaintiff's subpoena for testimony and documents from former General Counsel for MSA, Sandra Fowler, on shortened time. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 10.

28. In support of the motion to quash, MSA Counsel Denise Ashbaugh signed a sworn statement stating in part that, "any claims by Ms. Fowler against MSA, who voluntarily left MSA over two years after Ms. Atwood's employment ended, was nothing more than a fishing expedition designed to harass MSA" and "not calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.'" Ashbaugh Dec. In Support of Motion for Shorten Time and To Quash (Sub # 85), ¶ 6.

29. At the time that Ms. Ashbaugh and MSA represented to the Court that plaintiff was on a "fishing expedition," MSA possessed documentation of Ms. Fowler's EEOC Charge in which she clearly alleged she was subject to discrimination as early as August 2013; claimed she apprised members of MSA's Board "how Frank Armijo/Dave Ruscitto/Todd Beyers ... had unlawfully treated me"; and claimed she did not leave voluntarily but was "constructively discharged on August 13, 2015." Supp'l Sheridan Dec., ¶ 1. This documentation, which MSA was withholding, "contradicted the position" taken by the company in opposing the documents release, and contradicted Ms. Ashbaugh's sworn statement to the Court. *Compare id. with* Sub # 85 (Ashbaugh Dec.), ¶ 6.

30. Judge Spanner was assigned to Ex Parte on February 7, and heard MSA's motion in chambers. In chambers, Ms. Atwood repeated her sworn declaration statement that the

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Fowler subpoena, "was nothing more than a fishing expedition," and she raised claims that the content of her document production and testimony would be subject to attorney client privilege. 2nd Supp'l Sheridan Dec.

31. After hearing the positions of the parties, Judge Spanner suggested that perhaps it would be okay for Ms. Fowler's documents to be given to MSA's counsel in advance of the Fowler deposition, to review for attorney-client privilege, and so that MSA could provide a privilege log for any pages or portions of pages that MSA objected to Ms. Fowler producing and asked her to withhold, a process to which plaintiff's counsel agreed. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 10. Judge Spanner issued no written ruling, but allowed the Fowler deposition to go forward. *Id.*

32. The next day, February 8, 2017, defendant produced 16 pages of records related to complaints of gender discrimination and retaliation made by Sandra Fowler. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 11. That production included a gender-based discrimination complaint stamped-received by "Employee Concern" August 17, 2015 (MSA-ATWOOD007222) and related documents, which fell plainly within the time frame for records defendant claimed in its February 2, 2017 supplemental discovery answer that it agreed to produce, yet did not produce – and in fact objected to producing through the motion to quash. *Id.* The Fowler records produced on February 8th also showed that Ms. Fowler signed an EEOC Charge in April 2016, claiming that she was subject to not only gender discrimination, but also retaliation, beginning in August 2013, when Ms. Atwood was still employed at MSA. *Id.*

33. I find that MSA and its counsel waited to produce the EEOC complaint and the other documents until after learning that this Court would not quash the Fowler subpoena. Knowing that the Fowler deposition would go forward on February 10, MSA's production of the Fowler EEOC complaint on February 8th was simply a recognition that the document would be provided to plaintiff on the 10th, so production on the 8th would give the illusion of

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compliance. Defendant offers no other explanation for why the records were not immediately produced upon request.

34. Ms. Fowler's deposition occurred on Friday, February 10, 2017. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 12. When the deposition began, plaintiff's counsel had received none of the documents that Ms. Fowler gave to MSA's counsel to review for attorney-client privilege prior to the deposition. *Id.* At some point later in the morning, MSA's counsel gave plaintiff's counsel the first half of the documents, and near 12:00 p.m. plaintiff was given the second half of Ms. Fowler's documents. *Id.* There were 293 pages of documents in total that were produced. *Id.* MSA provided plaintiff only one copy of the documents, which it had Bates-stamped. *Id.* As plaintiff's counsel had not previously seen the documents, he stated for the record:

> Because we have 200 documents to review, we need to do something about that anyway. So we now have some 200 documents to review, which I don't want to have to race through. So, given the fact that we now have a privilege issue that has to be resolved by the court, and will be resolved by the court, and the fact that we also have an issue of reviewing the documents, we're going to postpone your deposition and finish it at another time.

Sheridan Dec., ¶ 12.

35. MSA's counsel objected to any continuance of Ms. Fowler's deposition on the production of documents basis. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 13.

36. That same day, February 10, defendant filed a motion for reconsideration of the discovery order, asking the Court to "hold that MSA's discovery responses are properly limited to other complaints of gender discrimination, retaliation, and misuse of government resources-the only types of claims Plaintiff raises-from 2010 (the year Plaintiff began working at MSA) through August 2015 (when she filed the lawsuit, nearly two years after she stopped working at MSA)." Sub #125, at pp. 2, 5. ***The motion for reconsideration did not seek to stay the production of documents pending a ruling by the Court.*** Moreover, even if MSA had sought a stay, it would have had to have done so on a shortened time basis to avoid production. In any

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event, MSA carved out from its motion for reconsideration, "other complaints of gender discrimination, retaliation, and misuse of government resources-the only types of claims." As will be outlined below, many of the documents withheld after the Court's Order compelling production, are documents related to such claims. Thus, under any theory, MSA was required to follow Judge Runge's order compelling discovery and produce responsive documents, ***"without further delay."***

37. After attending the Fowler deposition on February 10, Ms. Fowler sent defendant's counsel a copy of a "document [she] was using this morning to recall information." Sheridan Dec., Ex. 5. This was Ms. Fowler's rebuttal to the MSA response to her EEOC complaint. *Id.*, ¶ 17, Ex. 6. Ms. Fowler wrote to MSA's counsel that she had failed to "email this to you previously," but made clear that the record "would be responsive to the SDT" [subpoena duces tecum]. *Id.*

38. After receiving Ms. Fowler's February 10th email, MSA's counsel did not notify plaintiff's counsel that MSA had received additional records responsive to the SDT from Ms. Fowler, which was also responsive to plaintiff's Interrogatory No. 16 and to Judge Runge's discovery order. *Id.*, ¶ 15. As a result, plaintiff was unaware that additional responsive records existed. *Id.*

39. On Wednesday, February 15, 2017, plaintiff's counsel sent Ms. Fowler a copy of the records that MSA had bates-stamped and produced on her behalf in response to the subpoena, and asked her to check if any documents were missing. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 16. Fowler confirmed that her 11-page response to MSA's position statement on her EEOC complaint, which she had emailed to MSA's counsel, was not included in the records that MSA produced, although she had expected MSA to forward a copy of the record to plaintiff. *Id.*; Ex. 6. Fowler provided the document to plaintiff's counsel directly on February 16, 2017. The document was not referenced on MSA's privilege log as having been withheld. *Id.*, ¶ 17. The document

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shows that Ms. Fowler's allegations of gender discrimination and retaliation involve both the same time period and same cast of characters relevant to Ms. Atwood's complaint. *See generally* Sheridan Dec., **Ex. 6** (*e.g.,* "MSA demonstrated gender bias (for all intents and purposes only male VPs has an office on the Third Floor, only male VPS were asked to play golf at charity events, and of course disparity in pay)"; "An example of bias can be found, however in the performance review from [Frank] Armijo and Ruscitto dated February 2013"; "In October 2012 Todd Beyers called a meeting with Frank Armijo and Dave Ruscitto unknown to Ms. Fowler; Todd began to accuse her of filing a gender discrimination claim against MSA due to her request for a salary review"; alleging pay disparity based, in part, on preferential treatment of Steve Young versus female comparator).

40. On February 23, 2017, nearly two weeks after plaintiff took the deposition of Sandra Fowler, MSA produced an additional 33 pages of documents related to Ms. Fowler's complaint of gender discrimination, including emails between Fowler and President Bill Johnson that were not previously produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 4.

41. Since the February 24, 2017 deadline for completing discovery, MSA produced nearly 6,500 pages of "supplemental production." Rose Dec., ¶ 16.

42. On April 17, 2017—more than ten weeks after Judge Runge's Order, and on the same date that the parties were filing their joint Trial Management Report and respective Trial Briefs —defendants produced 126 pages of documents related to Ms. Fowler's complaints and allegations of gender discrimination and/or retaliation by another MSA executive, Stanley Bensussen (one of MSA's attorneys in this litigation), as well as top executives, Frank Armijo and Dave Ruscitto. Rose Dec., ¶ 12. The records show that in March 2015, Fowler emailed Todd Beyers, the V.P. of Human Resources, claiming that Mr. Bensussen "used derogatory and/or demeaning characterization or language toward me. He called or implied that Frank [Armijo] and Dave [Ruscitto] thought I was 'a man-hater', and made a statement, '... if he was

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I, I should kiss the ground that Frank and Dave walked on...'. I find them very misogynistic, demeaning, gender-biased, etc." *Id.* The documents also reveal that Mr. Beyers, the V.P. of Human Resources, failed to adequately address Fowler's complaint of "gender-bias" when reported to him in March 2015; as Mr. Beyers in May 2015 was himself interviewed regarding his "investigation" and follow-up on Fowler's report to him. *Id.* The newly disclosed documents show that Fowler also went to MSA's Presidents Frank Armijo and Bill Johnson complaining of discriminatory treatment in January and May 2015, respectively. *Id.*

43. The 126 pages of investigation into Fowler's complaint produced on April 17 include, among other things: copies of the questions investigators prepared for interviewing eight witnesses (including two Vice Presidents); the handwritten notes from ten witness interviews (which included two interviews each for Ms. Fowler and Mr. Bensussen); typed summaries from each witness interview; notes of the investigator's phone call with President Bill Johnson; two timelines developed by investigators; emails copied to the file as evidence in the investigation; and several pages of findings and conclusions that formed MSA's Investigative Summary Report. Rose Dec., ¶ 13. The records also reveal that in Mr. Bensussen's interview, he told the investigators that Ms. Fowler "started saying things to [him] about gender-bias in the Company, particularly about Frank [Armijo] and Dave [Ruscitto]. She had used an acronym of 'FOF' meaning 'friends of Frank'. These comments continued unabated." *Id.* There is no evidence in the records produced that Bensussen acted on Fowler's complaints of gender-bias against Armijo and Ruscitto—executives involved in the termination of plaintiff Julie Atwood. *Id.* Another witness interviewed in the May 2015 investigation into Ms. Fowler's complaints reported that President Armijo and his Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Ruscitto, are known as "the *Big Boys Club*." *Id.* This witness was not previously identified, and as a result she has not been interviewed or deposed by plaintiff. *Id.*

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44. Mark Beller—a paralegal who, in violation of CR 11, signed a number of pleadings in this litigation on behalf of Mr. Bensussen and MSA's outside counsel[2]—testifies that "recently discovered that [he] had been provided certain documents related to Sandra Fowler," and that he mistakenly failed to pass the documents on to outside counsel for production, which he refers as "an honest mistake." Beller Dec., ¶ 8. Such testimony provides no explanation for why none of the three attorneys of record for defendant, who were charged with supervising MSA's compliance with the Court's discovery order and ensuring that responsive records were produced "without further delay," failed to do so; particularly after Ms. Fowler testified at her February 10th deposition about the fact that she made a complaint to President Bill Johnson that was investigated by Wendy Robbins. *See* Sheridan Reply Dec., Ex. 4, at 43:5-23.

MSA's Efforts to Avoid Production of Todd Beyers-Related Documents

45. Plaintiff deposed Todd Beyers on February 9, 2017. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 21.

46. Since the February 24, 2017 deadline for completing discovery, MSA produced nearly 6,500 pages of "supplemental production," some of which included documents withheld from production related to HR Manager Todd Beyers, who was a participant in meeting in which Ms. Atwood was told she could resign or be fired. Rose Dec., ¶ 16; Sub # 76, Ex. 1 (Young Dep., 59:1-16); Sub # 145, Ex. 1 (Answer to Interrogatory No. 9), *id.* Ex. 3 (Beyers Dep., 8:6-16; 25:21-22)

47. Notwithstanding Judge Runge's discovery order, documents responsive to plaintiff's Interrogatory Nos. 16-17, which were addressed at length in plaintiff's motion to compel, were not produced prior to the February 9th deposition of Todd Beyers, including witness statements and other underlying documentation from the investigation into Ms.

[2] Sheridan Reply Dec., Ex. 13.

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DeVere's retaliation complaint against Mr. Beyers. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 20; *accord* Sub # 111 (plaintiff's reply brief supporting motion to compel).

48. During the deposition of Todd Beyers taken on February 9, 2017, plaintiff's counsel reiterated to defendant's counsel that there are "a bunch of attachments" (*e.g.*, witness statements) referenced in the report of investigation of Ms. DeVere's retaliation complaint that defendant produced on February 2, which still had not been produced and which plaintiff was requesting. *Id.*, ¶ 21, Ex. 7. In response, defendant's counsel simply said, "[We'll] Take it under advisement[.]" *Id.* Counsel for Ms. Atwood then replied, "And also, there's a second investigative report regarding this witness that also has been ordered by the Court produced and has not been produced. So we'd like -- it's actually impeding my ability to examine this witness." *Id.*

49. On April 20, 2017, three days after the Fowler investigative files were produced, and more than two months after plaintiff originally filed the motion for sanctions seeking, in part, the continuation of Todd Beyers' deposition, defendant's counsel sent an unsolicited email, stating:

> With the move in trial date and noting some of Plaintiff's stated concerns, MSA is to work with Plaintiff on continuing Mr. Beyers' deposition at a mutually convenient date and time. In doing so, MSA is not waiving any arguments or positions in Court or in any way admitting to any wrongdoing.

Rose Dec., ¶ 14, Ex. 9.

MSA's Post-Discovery Cutoff Document Dump of Other Documents and MSA's Continued Withholding of Other Relevant Documents

50. MSA's former EEO Officer, Christine DeVere (known now as Christine Moreland), has reviewed thousands of pages from MSA's recent production and testifies that despite the many documents MSA has produced to date, many documents, including Ms.

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DeVere's handwritten notes of witness interviews and her summary reports of investigation, remain missing. *See* 4th Supp'l Dec. of Christine Moreland.

51. Ms. DeVere testifies that the missing notes related not just to the investigative files MSA produced for third parties; DeVere also testifies that notes of her September 16, 2013 interview with plaintiff Julie Atwood—three days before MSA terminated Ms. Atwood—are also missing. *See* 4th Supp'l Moreland Dec., p. 10, line 5 ("There was definitely more with Julie. We spent a good two hours with her."). Such contention is supported not only by the fact that DeVere found notes and reports missing in many of the investigation files MSA produced, but also due to the fact that DeVere, in her review of defendant's waves of untimely production, came across a set of witness interview notes that she took in ***the same investigation in which Ms. Atwood was interviewed***, which MSA failed to produce until March 29, when it produced them in a Bates-range separate from other records in the Young/Atwood investigation. *See id.*, ¶ 9.

52. Plaintiff deposed Wendy Robbins (the Employee Concerns Program Manager and investigator) in October 2016. Rose Dec., ¶ 2. Plaintiff then deposed Chris Jensen (the Director of MSA's Employee Concerns Program) on February 7, 2017; Todd Beyers (the Vice President of Human Resources) on February 9, 2017; and Christine DeVere (the former EEO Officer) on February 27, 2017. *Id.* In advance of these depositions, defendant failed to produce a substantial number of communications and investigative records, which were relevant to the testimony of these witnesses, among others, and responsive to plaintiff's discovery requests. *Id.*

53. On **February 17**, 2017, a week before the deadline for completing discovery, defendant produced 1,138 pages of "supplemental production" without explanation, index, or any other description of the documents being produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 3, Ex. 2. A sampling of the documents reveals that the 2/17 production includes records of complaints and investigations involving allegations of gender discrimination, harassment/hostile work

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environment, and retaliation. *Id.*, ¶ 3. The 2/17 production includes records written to, by, or referencing Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, and Wendy Robbins, among other witnesses in this matter. *Id.*

54. The deadline for completing discovery under the Second Amended Case Schedule was **February 24**, 2017. Sub # 62. That day, MSA produced an additional 1,532 pages of supplemental production without explanation, index, or other description of the documents produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 5, Ex. 3. A sampling of the documents reveals that the 2/24 production again includes records of complaints and investigations involving allegations of gender discrimination, harassment/hostile work environment, and retaliation. *Id.* The 2/24 production again includes records written to, by, or referencing Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, and Wendy Robbins, among other witnesses in this matter. *Id.*

55. On **March 10**, 2017, defendant produced 120 pages of "supplemental production" without explanation, index, or other description of the documents produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 6, Ex. 4. The 3/10 production, with the exception of two pages, relates entirely to an investigation of an alleged hostile work environment in the Human Resources group, which includes Todd Beyers and Christine DeVere, as well as some of the investigative files from DeVere's subsequent complaint of retaliation filed against Mr. Beyers, the V.P. of Human Resources. *Id.*, ¶ 6. The 3/10/17 production includes, for example, Ms. DeVere's "witness statement" and some of the other documents cited as "Attachments" to the investigation report concerning her retaliation complaint, which defendant failed to provide when it produced the report on the retaliation complaint on February 2. *Id.* Even though plaintiff explicitly called out MSA's ongoing failure to produce the attachments in the Reply in Support of Motion to Compel filed on February 3, 2017, Sub # 111, at 3:13-18 (*citing* Sub # 110, ¶ 5) – and despite the fact Judge Runge ordered MSA to produce the documents "without further delay" that same

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day – defendant failed to produce these documents for 5 more weeks; until long after both Mr. Beyers and Ms. DeVere's depositions were taken. Rose Dec., ¶ 6.

56. On March 28, 2017, Judge Runge entered the Order Denying Defendant's Motion for Reconsideration. Sub #199.

57. On **March 29**, 2017, defendant produced another **598** pages of "supplemental production" without explanation, index, or other description of the documents produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 8, Ex. 5. A sampling of the documents reveals that the 3/29 production again includes records of complaints and investigations involving allegations of gender discrimination, harassment/hostile work environment, and retaliation. Rose Dec., ¶ 8. The 3/29 production again includes records written to, by, or referencing Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, and Wendy Robbins, among other witnesses in this matter. *Id.*

58. On April 3, 2017, pursuant to the case schedule and LCR 16, plaintiff served the initial draft of the Trial Management Report, listing plaintiff's witnesses and exhibits for trial. Rose Dec., ¶ 9.

59. On April 12, 2017, defendant produced another **2,535** pages of "supplemental production" without explanation, index, or other description of the documents produced. Rose Dec., ¶ 10, Ex. 6. A sampling of the documents reveals that the 4/12 production again includes records of complaints and investigations involving allegations of gender discrimination, harassment/hostile work environment, and retaliation. Rose Dec., ¶ 10. The 4/12 production again includes records written to, by, or referencing Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, and Wendy Robbins, among other witnesses in this matter. *Id.* The 4/12 production includes, for example, Mr. Beyers' "witness statement"— another "attachment" to the report of investigation report for Ms. DeVere's retaliation complaint that defendant failed to provide when it produced the report 10 weeks earlier. Rose Dec., ¶ 10. It also includes records of an investigation into whether President Armijo violated EEO or other applicable laws when he

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hired Chris Jensen for the Director of MSA's Employee Concerns Program without posting or advertising the position. *Id.*

60. Three days later, on Saturday, April 15, 2017, defendant served by email an additional **1,555** pages of "supplemental production," along with a cover letter stating that "[t]hese documents are being produced in response to the Court's March 28, 2017 Order on the Motion for Reconsideration." Rose Dec., ¶ 11, Ex. 7. Nevertheless, a sampling of the documents reveals that the 4/15 production again includes records of complaints and investigations involving allegations of harassment/hostile work environment and retaliation. Rose Dec., ¶ 11. The 4/15 production also includes records written to, by, or referencing Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, and Christine DeVere, among other witnesses in this matter, including Wendy Robbins. *Id.* One of the retaliation investigation files just produced includes, for example, a key comparator document, showing that Todd Beyers—the V.P. who gave plaintiff Julie Atwood notice of her termination—issued a male manager a two-week suspension after "several occasions [the male was] shown to be unethical in [his] behavior regarding a lack of discretion with sensitive business information and [to] have intentionally made [him]self a conduit of information to negatively affect not only individual MSA employees but MSA as a viable contractor...." *Id.*

61. Under the 1st Amended Civil Case Schedule Order, the deadline for defendant's Disclosure of Lay and Expert Witnesses, which for experts requires "[a] summary of the expert's opinions and the basis therefor," was September 26, 2016. Sub #42; LCR 4(h)(1)(C)(iii). Defendant served a "supplemental" disclosure of lay and expert witnesses, which identified John Fountaine, a vocational counselor retained to "provide expert testimony regarding the Plaintiffs failure to adequately mitigate her damages and the reasonable amount of time it should have taken for to find alternate employment," on February 1, 2017. Rose Dec., ¶ 19, Ex. 12. No report or other information was included with the disclosure other than Mr.

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Fountaine's resume. *Id.* On March 23, 2017, defendant served a second "supplemental" disclosure, which provided the following information:

> Mr. Fountaine will provide expert testimony regarding Plaintiffs failure to adequately mitigate her damages and the reasonable amount of time it should have taken for her to find alternate employment. Mr. Fountaine will opine that given Plaintiffs experience, she should have been able to find new employment in her field of work within three to six months following the end of her MSA employment. He will testify regarding jobs that are currently available for which Plaintiff is qualified. He will also testify that Plaintiffs job search to date is inadequate and does not represent a reasonable job search, given Plaintiffs field of work and level of experience. Mr. Fountaine will further testify regarding what a reasonable job search for Plaintiff would entail given her experience and field of work. A copy of Mr. Fountaine's resume was previously provided.

Id., Ex. 13.

62. On April 17, 2017, defendant's counsel provided its "correspondence with expert John Fountaine, as well as documents provided to him over the course of the litigation." These records were responsive to plaintiff's request for production No. 162, seeking "all documents which any expert or potential expert has consulted or reviewed as a result or in preparation of this litigation," which defendant answered two months earlier on February 13, 2017. *Id.*, ¶ 21, Ex. 14.

Evidence of Prejudice

63. This case was filed in August 2015, and has been continued twice now. Sub #2; Sub #42; Sub #62. Owing to some perceived or actual conflicts of interest among the Superior Court judiciary, this motion, which was filed in February 2017, was not heard until May 2017. The most recent trial date was set for May 1, 2017. For a variety of reasons, that date passed before this and other motions could be heard.

64. Plaintiff's counsel, Jack Sheridan, has submitted a sworn statement indicating the actions of the defendant have impaired his ability to prepare for trial.

65. Mr. Sheridan has indicated that since he began representing Ms. Atwood his firm has generated over $325,000 in fees (most of which are contingent), and that Ms. Atwood has

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incurred over $36,000 in costs. 2nd Supp'l Sheridan Dec., ¶ 2. Mr. Sheridan has either conducted or attended more than 20 depositions in this case, and his staff has reviewed nearly fifteen thousand pages of documents produced in discovery, over 6,500 of which were produced in the weeks before the May 1 trial date. *Id.*

66. Mr. Sheridan has two to three-week jury trials set in other matters in July, October, November and December 2017. 2nd Supp'l Sheridan Dec., ¶ 3. He and his staff have blocked out most of August for vacations. Mr. Sheridan has indicated that resetting this case in May or June would not give him time to do additional discovery justified by these late disclosures of over 6,500 new documents. *Id.* Many of those newly disclosed documents relate to investigations conducted by Wendy Robbins (an investigator in this case) and/or Christine DeVere (another investigator in this case). Ms. Robbins will need to be re-deposed on the new documents, and Ms. DeVere, who will be vacationing in Europe for most of May, will need to be interviewed on them as well (Ms. DeVere has submitted a declaration in support of this motion that addresses what is still missing, but Mr. Sheridan states she has not been interviewed on the substantive aspects of the documents). In addition, the 6,500 pages of document production implicate some of the same managers as are implicated in this case (including Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Dave Ruscitto, and Frank Armijo) in claims made by others and other investigations. Mr. Sheridan has indicated that unless he can bump another case already set for trial, and assuming he can depose, re-depose, or interview about ten witnesses in this case (and any additional witnesses that the discovery uncovers), and submit and obtain prompt responses to additional interrogatories and requests for production which may flow from the 6,500 documents and the resulting depositions, he cannot take this case to trial this year. 2nd Supp'l Sheridan Dec., ¶ 3. Moreover, the time necessary to conduct the work needed will take away from his ability to represent other clients who also require his time, and impact his ability to take on new clients. *Id.* Given the need for overnight travel, and the

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costs associated with depositions and videotaped depositions, Mr. Sheridan estimates that completing this work could easily cost another $20,000 to $30,000 in costs and an additional $50,000.00 to $150,000 in fees (100-300 hours in fees). *Id.*

67. Ms. Atwood has submitted a separate declaration indicating that she has been unemployed since her termination, and that she has paid out over $36,000 in costs, drawing from savings and retirement to do so. Atwood Dec. She states that the costs of continuing this litigation is a hardship, and that she believes that until this case is resolved, she will not be able to find work. In support of this contention, Ms. Atwood has noted that she has contacted other contractors at Hanford in an attempt to secure similar employment, but has been unsuccessful in obtaining other employment. *Id.* One DOE program manager at Hanford, Jon Peschong, was asked in his deposition if he had knowledge or comments about "blacklisting" that would prevent Ms. Atwood from getting alternate employment, and Peschong testified that "DOE senior managers told me that they heard [Atwood] had committed timecard fraud." Rose Dec., Ex. 10. Another witness, Ben Lindholm, testified that while working for another contractor at Hanford, Longenecker & Associates (L&A), Lindholm was tasked with helping to recruit resources to perform the work required by the General Support Services Contract, and that he gave L&A Ms. Atwood's name, and only Ms. Atwood's name, with respect to procurement for a waste modeling scope of work; but that Ms. Atwood's name was removed from consideration and that the company interviewed two other candidates, one of whom it ultimately submitted to perform the scope of work. *See* Rose Dec., Ex 11 (Lindholm Dep.) at 9:5; 14:8-15:4; 18:13-20:14; 24:10-20.

68. MSA, in contrast, is a multi-billion-dollar company. Atwood Dec., ¶ 3, Ex. 1.

69. MSA's counsel in this case is billing the DOE for its legal work in defense of Ms. Atwood's claim, and have billed over $325,000 thus far. Atwood Reply Dec.

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70. Witness Ron Nelson is now too ill to testify. Ms. Atwood has testified that Mr. Nelson is a professional colleague of hers who she worked with frequently while she was employed by MSA. For that reason, he was listed as one of Ms. Atwood's trial witnesses. He is an important witness because he is familiar with her work product and the technical aspects of her work for MSA. He observed Ms. Atwood's work ethic and is also familiar with her previous years of successful Hanford work experience. She testifies that Mr. Nelson spoke to her before and after the May 1st trial date. He was well then, but not now. Atwood Reply Dec.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Standard for Sanctions under CR 26(g) and CR 37

71. This Court has broad discretion in determining the imposition of sanctions under CR 26(g) or CR 37(b), and an appellate court will not disturb the determination absent a clear abuse of discretion. Magaña v. Hyundai Motor Am., 167 Wn.2d 570, 582, 220 P.3d 191 (2009).

72. "The purposes of sanctions orders are to deter, to punish, to compensate and to educate." *Id.*, 167 Wn.2d at 584, *quoting* Wash. State Physicians Ins. Exch. & Ass'n v. Fisons Corp., 122 Wn.2d 299, 356, 858 P.2d 1054 (1993).

73. CR 26(g) makes the imposition of sanctions for discovery abuses **mandatory**, stating, in relevant part: "If a certification is made in violation of the rule, the court, upon motion or upon its own initiative, ***shall*** impose upon the person who made the certification, the party on whose behalf the request, response, or objection is made, or both, an appropriate sanction, which may include an order to pay the amount of the reasonable expenses incurred because of the violation, including a reasonable attorney fee." CR 26(g) (emphasis added); Wash. State Physicians Ins. Exch. & Ass'n v. Fisons Corp., 122 Wn.2d 299, 342, 858 P.2d 1054 (1993) (stating that CR 26(g) creates an "affirmative duty" to comply with the "spirit and purpose" of the discovery rules).

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74. "CR 37 sets forth the rules regarding sanctions when a party fails to make discovery," and "CR 37(d) authorizes a court to impose the sanctions in CR 37(b)(2), which range from exclusion of evidence to granting default judgment when a party fails to respond to interrogatories and requests for production." Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 593-94; and CR 37(b)(2)(C) (authorizing "rendering a judgment by default against the disobedient party"). CR 37(d) provides that "an evasive or misleading answer is to be treated as a failure to answer" and permits the trial court to impose any of the sanctions identified in CR 37(b)(2). *See, e.g.*, CR 37(b)(2) (authorizing issuance of "order treating as a contempt of court the failure to obey any orders," in addition to other relief). Similar to CR 26(g), CR 37(b) mandates the imposition of sanctions in appropriate cases, stating if a party fails to comply with an order compelling discovery responses, the Court "***shall*** require the party failing to obey the order or the attorney advising him or her or both to pay the reasonable expenses, including attorney fees, caused by the failure, unless the court finds that the failure was substantially justified or that other circumstances make an award of expenses unjust." CR 37 (b)(2); *see, e.g.*, Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 592 (affirming award of "fees and costs incurred because of ... discovery violations").

75. "[I]ntent need not be shown before sanctions are mandated." Fisons, 122 Wn.2d at 342, 345 (holding court erred when it denied discovery sanctions, in part, based on finding that "[t]he evidence did not support a finding that the drug company intentionally misfiled documents to avoid discovery"). The issue under CR 26(g) is only whether counsel's beliefs were "formed after a reasonable inquiry." *Id.*, at 343.

> "If a trial court imposes one of the more 'harsher remedies' under CR 37(b), then the record must clearly show (1) one party willfully or deliberately violated the discovery rules and orders, (2) the opposing party was substantially prejudiced in its ability to prepare for trial, and (3) the trial court explicitly considered whether a lesser sanction would have sufficed. Burnet, 131 Wn.2d at 494, 933 P.2d 1036. '*The purposes of sanctions orders are to deter, to punish, to compensate and to educate.*" Fisons, 122 Wn.2d at 356, 858 P.2d 1054."

Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 584.

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76. "The discovery rules are intended to make a trial less a game of blindman's bluff and more a fair contest with the basic issues and facts disclosed to the fullest practicable extent." Taylor v. Cessna Aircraft Co., Inc., 39 Wn. App. 828, 835, 696 P.2d 28 (1985). "While the sanctions to be imposed [for discovery violations] are a matter of trial court discretion, this discretion is not unbridled. Imposition of unduly light sanctions will only encourage litigants to employ tactics of evasion and delay, in contravention of the spirit and letter of the discovery rules." *Id.*, at 836.

Review of MSA's Discovery Answers

77. Under Brundridge v. Fluor Fed. Servs., Inc., 164 Wn.2d 432, 445, 191 P.3d 879 (2008) and ER 404(b), "evidence of employer treatment of other employees is not impermissible character evidence; rather it may be admissible to show motive or intent for harassment or discharge." *Id.* Thus, "the documents requested were relevant. [Defendant] did not have the option of determining what it would produce or answer, once discovery requests were made." Fisons, 122 Wn.2d 299, 354, n.89 (citing "Gammon v. Clark Equip. Co., 38 Wn. App. 274, 281, 686 P.2d 1102 (1984), *aff'd,* 104 Wash.2d 613, 707 P.2d 685 (1985) (defendant may not unilaterally determine what is relevant to plaintiff's claim and defendant's remedy, if any, was to seek a protective order pursuant to CR 26(c)); Taylor v. Cessna Aircraft Co., 39 Wn. App. 828, 836, 696 P.2d 28 (defendant and its counsel could not unilaterally decide what was relevant in a particular case, defendant's remedy was to seek a protective order, not to withhold discoverable material), *review denied,* 103 Wash.2d 1040 (1985)").

78. Instead of moving for a protective order in response to plaintiff's requests concerning other complaints and investigations into allegations of discrimination and retaliation, MSA first attempted to evade the scope of plaintiff's requests by unilaterally deciding in August 2016 that MSA "***has provided*** documentations regarding ***all complaints that alleged gender discrimination and/or retaliation*** during the time that plaintiff was

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employed at MSA, and including complaints raised by Ms. DeVere – even though those occurred after plaintiff left MSA." Sheridan Dec., Ex. 1. "Ms. Atwood was employed by [MSA] from February 2010 to September 19, 2013,"[3] and during that time period, Christine DeVere filed a retaliation complaint against the V.P. of Human Resources, Todd Beyers. Rose Dec., ¶ 6. Yet, defendant did not produce this retaliation complaint or the related documentation in response to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17. *See* Sub #65 (Sheridan Dec. 1/20/17), at Ex. 2 (Letter of January 13, 2017), p. 2. The August 2016 answers to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 signed by Ms. Ashbaugh thus violate CR 26(g) and *Fisons.* See Sheridan Dec., Ex. 1, at p. 12.

79. After plaintiff's counsel filed a motion to compel (Sub # 63-64) and then emailed counsel threatening sanctions for MSA's failure to produce complaints filed by Sandra Fowler and Christine DeVere (Sheridan Dec., ¶ 3), MSA amended its discovery answer, certifying that "it will produce documentation regarding all complaints raised to Employee Concerns and/or the EEO Officer that alleged gender discrimination, retaliation, or misuse of MSA resources from 2010 through the date Ms. Atwood filed this above-captioned lawsuit [August 21, 2015] … including complaints raised by Ms. DeVere." Sheridan Dec., ¶ 5, Ex. 5. Yet, when MSA served this amended answer on February 2, it still produced only a few pages about Ms. DeVere's June 2013 complaint, omitting dozens of related records, including the complaint itself and witness statements taken by the investigator, which MSA failed to produce until March 10 and April 12—long after Judge Runge's February 3rd order compelling the production of such records "without further delay"—and well after Ms. DeVere's February 27th deposition. *See* Sheridan Dec., ¶¶ 4, 20-21; Rose Dec., ¶¶ 2, 6, 10. By that time, the subject of DeVere's complaint, Mr. Beyers, had also been deposed already. Rose Dec., ¶¶ 2, 6. Had

[3] Sub# 2, 13 (Compl. and Answer, ¶ 1.2).

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defendant abided by the February 3rd discovery order and produced the documents "without further delay," plaintiff would have had the records regarding Beyers for use at his February 9th deposition. Sheridan Dec., ¶ 20; Rose Dec., ¶¶ 6, 10.

80. Defendant's conduct in withholding records related to the gender bias and retaliation complaints of Sandra Fowler, among others, was similarly egregious and in violation of CR 26(g). Just like *Fisons*, MSA's May 23, 2016 discovery answer was "misleading," as it led plaintiff to believe that all "gender discrimination, whistleblower, and/or retaliation complaints, from 2011 to the present" would be identified by MSA and produced. *See* Wash. State Physicians Ins. Exch. & Ass'n v. Fisons Corp., 122 Wn.2d 299, 352, 858 P.2d 1054 (1993). Records related to Ms. Fowler's complaints were also responsive to the discovery requests served in July 2016, Rose Dec., ¶ 1. Ms. Fowler's complaint, alleging gender discrimination and retaliation by the same cast of characters and during the same time period that Ms. Atwood alleges MSA discriminated and retaliated against her, is plainly relevant and should have been identified by MSA in its original answer to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 served in August 2016. Instead, defendant failed to acknowledge the existence of the complaint made by Ms. Fowler until after plaintiff's counsel learned of the complaint, confronted MSA about its failure to disclose the complaint, and served a subpoena on Ms. Fowler summoning her to produce the documentation of her complaint. *See* Sheridan Dec., ¶¶ 2-3, 6. The manner in which the discoverable information was unearthed by plaintiff, without any assistance by defendant, is similar to *Fisons*. *See* Fisons Corp., 122 Wn.2d at 337 ("Although interrogatories and requests for production should have led to the discovery of the 'smoking gun' documents, their existence was not revealed to the doctor until one of them was anonymously delivered to his attorneys.") Even after MSA was confronted with its withholding, the company continued to withhold the documentation of Ms. Fowler's complaint, moving to quash the subpoena to Ms. Fowler while representing to the Court that "any claims by Ms. Fowler against MSA, who

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voluntarily left MSA over two years after Ms. Atwood's employment ended, was nothing more than a fishing expedition designed to harass MSA" and "not calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.'" Ashbaugh Dec. In Support of Motion for Shorten Time and To Quash (Sub # 85), ¶ 6. At the time MSA represented that Ms. Fowler "voluntarily left MSA," it possessed documentation of her EEOC Charge in which she clearly alleged she was subject to discrimination as early as August 2013; claimed she apprised members of MSA's Board "how Frank Armijo/Dave Ruscitto/Todd Beyers ... had unlawfully treated me"; and claimed she did not leave voluntarily but was "constructively discharged on August 13, 2015." Supp'l Sheridan Dec., ¶ 1. This documentation, which MSA was withholding, "contradicted the position" taken by the company in opposing the documents release, which MSA must have known. *Compare with* Fisons, 122 Wn.2d at 338 ("documents contradicted the position taken by the drug company in the litigation").

81. MSA and its counsel in the February 2 discovery answer certified under CR 26(g) that defendant was producing all gender and retaliation complaints "from 2010 through the date Ms. Atwood filed this above-captioned lawsuit [August 21, 2015]," which was misleading, since MSA refused to produce the Fowler documentation "immediately" when requested by plaintiff -- even after Judge Runge ordered MSA to produce such records "without further delay" on February 3. Instead, defendant disregarded the order and failed to produce its records of Ms. Fowler's complaint responsive to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17, hedging its bets until it knew that records of Ms. Fowler's complaint were going to be produced by Ms. Fowler herself, after MSA failed to persuade Judge Spanner to grant MSA an order quashing the subpoena issued to Ms. Fowler. Only after MSA knew that Ms. Fowler would be producing her own records of the complaint did MSA begin to comply with the discovery order and produce 16 pages of records about Ms. Fowler's complaints of gender discrimination and retaliation. *See* Sheridan Dec., ¶ 11. Defendant should not have waited for Judge Spanner's ruling before it

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produced records of Ms. Fowler's complaint. "[A] spirit of cooperation and forthrightness during the discovery process is necessary for the proper functioning of modern trials." Fisons, 122 Wn.2d at 342; *compare id.*, 122 Wn.2d at 346, 352 ("The drug company was persistent in its resistance to discovery requests. Fair and reasoned resistance to discovery is not sanctionable. Rather it is the misleading nature of the drug company's responses that is contrary to the purposes of discovery and which is most damaging to the fairness of the litigation process. ...The drug company's responses and answers to discovery requests are misleading. The answers state that all information regarding Somophyllin Oral Liquid which had been requested would be provided. They further imply that all documents which are relevant to the plaintiff's claims were being produced. ... They state that there is no relevant information within the cromolyn sodium product files.")

82. When the parties appeared before Judge Spanner on February 7, 2017, regarding the motion to quash the subpoena, plaintiff had to present her case in the dark, lacking the documents needed to contest MSA's misleading characterization of a "fishing expedition." Plaintiff could only provide the Court a hearsay offer of proof from plaintiff's counsel as to what Ms. Fowler represented she had complained about. In spite of MSA having supplemented its answer to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 to certify that "MSA has provided (and is supplementing) complaints wholly unrelated to plaintiff of gender discrimination... for a period of five years (from 2010 through August 21, 2015)," MSA had still not produced the Fowler complaint alleging constructive discharge on August 13, 2015. Only after Judge Spanner declined to quash the subpoena did MSA produce a few pages about Ms. Fowler's complaints in advance of her February 10 deposition.

83. Yet, the bulk of MSA's file on Ms. Fowler—its *entire record of investigation*, including documents showing the allegations Ms. Fowler presented to Todd Beyers in March 2015, notes and statements from witnesses interviewed in May 2015, and the Investigative

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Summary Report, were all silently withheld. Defendant failed to include those records among any of its belated document dumps until April 17th—the date the parties were filing their trial briefs and the Trial Management Report listing exhibits for trial. Rose Dec., ¶¶ 12-13.

84. In spite of the fact that Judge Runge's discovery order was unequivocal that documents be produced "without further delay," MSA has continued to "employ tactics of evasion and delay, in contravention of the spirit and letter of the discovery rules." Taylor, 39 Wn. App. at 836. The declaration of Christine Moreland (formerly DeVere) catalogs the many responsive records that MSA has *still* not produced, including notes from witness interviews and summary investigative reports in which DeVere was involved, confirming that MSA's "game-playing" and evasive conduct in discovery continues through the present. See 4th Supp'l Moreland Dec. Under CR 37(d), MSA's "evasive or misleading answers" are "to be treated as a failure to answer," permitting the Court to impose any sanctions identified in CR 37(b)(2).

Willfulness

85. To reiterate, "intent need not be shown before sanctions are mandated." Fisons, 122 Wn.2d at 342, 345. However, if the "court imposes one of the more 'harsher remedies' under CR 37(b), then the record must clearly show … one party willfully or deliberately violated the discovery rules and orders." Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 584. The term "willful" has a narrow meaning in the context of the discovery rules. "A party's disregard of a court order *without reasonable excuse or justification* is deemed willful." Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 584.

86. Under the facts here, defendant's conduct can only be viewed as willful disregard of the discovery rules and a discovery order. Judge Runge ordered defendant to provide documents responsive to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 "without further delay," yet defendant refused to provide Ms. Fowler's complaint "immediately" upon request, allegedly because MSA intended to move for reconsideration of Judge Runge's order. *See* Sheridan Dec., Ex. 4. Yet, on February 8th, after Judge Spanner ruled that the subpoena to Ms. Fowler would not be

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quashed, so Ms. Fowler would be producing her records to plaintiff—and before any motion for reconsideration was filed—defendant produced 16 pages of records related to Ms. Fowler's complaint in its possession that were responsive to Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 and to Judge Runge's order. *See id.*, ¶ 11. When defendant later filed a motion for reconsideration, it only asked Judge Runge to limit the discovery of complaints of gender discrimination through August 2015; so the motion for reconsideration had no effect on whether defendant was required to produce Ms. Fowler's complaint (or other gender complaints), which MSA received through August 2015. *See* Sub #125, at pp. 2, 5 (Mot. for Reconsideration filed 2/10/17); and Sheridan Dec., ¶ 11. Thus, having no excuse for failing to produce Ms. Fowler's complaint immediately upon request (other than to deprive plaintiff of information she might use to oppose the motion to quash the subpoena issued to Fowler), MSA's disregard of the discovery order can only be viewed as willful.

87. Even more egregious, MSA has no excuse for its failure to produce its record of investigation into Ms. Fowler's complaints prior to April 17th. Counsel for MSA in this matter has always known of the Fowler investigation. One of MSA's attorneys here (Stan Bensussen) was the subject of that investigation, who was twice interviewed in May 2015 about Ms. Fowler's complaint of gender discrimination and retaliation; and another of the attorneys (Denise Ashbaugh) appeared on behalf of MSA to defend against Ms. Fowler's claims of discrimination, beginning in October 2015, with her engagement continuing through June 2016, when Ms. Ashbaugh wrote the EEOC on behalf of MSA in response to Ms. Fowler's formal Charge of Discrimination.[4] Plaintiff threatened sanctions for not producing the Fowler complaint files on February 1; then in the wake of Judge Runge's discovery order, plaintiff's counsel asked for immediate production of the records of Ms. Fowler's complaint on February

[4] *See* Sub # 234 (Ashbaugh Dec., ¶ 4); Sub #233 (Mot.) at 11:1-5; Rose Dec., ¶¶ 12-14.

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3; yet defendant silently withheld the entire record of investigation until April 17—long after the period for discovery was complete. There is no excuse for such disregard of the discovery rules and the Court's order.

88. The fact that Mr. Beller claims he mistakenly failed to pass on the Fowler file for production is also not a reasonable excuse. "The label 'paralegal' is not in itself a shield from liability. … As long as the paralegal does in fact have a supervising attorney who is responsible for the case, any deficiency in the quality of the supervision or in the quality of the paralegal's work goes to the attorney's negligence, not the paralegal's." *See* Tegman v. Accident & Med. Investigations, Inc., 107 Wn. App. 868, 876, 30 P.3d 8 (2001).

89. The declaration of Ms. DeVere (now Ms. Moreland) shows that the tactics of evasion and delay that MSA has employed in responding to plaintiff's requests for the complaints initiated by Ms. DeVere and Ms. Fowler fit a much larger pattern of the company failing to provide full and complete copies of its records of investigations. The inference to be drawn from that pattern is that MSA's conduct in discovery is willful.

Prejudice

90. Plaintiff served her discovery requests in July 2016. By producing nearly 6,500 pages of "supplemental production" since the February 24, 2017 deadline for completing discovery, MSA effectively deprived plaintiff of any opportunity to follow-up on the information contained in these documents. *See* Rose Dec., ¶ 16. "The discovery violations here prevented the plaintiff[] from doing what the law really allows [her] to do, and that's to follow up on leads from developed facts." *See* Smith v. Behr Process Corp., 113 Wn. App. 306, 325, 54 P.3d 665 (2002). MSA's evasion of the July 2016 discovery requests and its untimely production of documents responsive thereto, "casts doubt on the discovery that has gone on before." *Id.* Due to defendant's tactics of evasion and delay, documents written to, by, or with reference to Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, Wendy Robbins, and Sandra

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Fowler, among other witnesses, were not disclosed prior to the witnesses' depositions. Rose Dec., ¶¶ 2-3, 5, 8, 10-12. A witness who reported to investigators that President Armijo and his Chief Operating Officer (Mr. Ruscitto) are known as "the Big Boys Club," was not interviewed, nor deposed. Now, plaintiff must effectively start discovery anew, reopening nearly all of the previous depositions (including those of Beyers, Jensen, DeVere, Robbins, and Fowler, among others) and take additional depositions of individuals not previously understood to be necessary. *See* Magana v. Hyundai Motor Am., 167 Wn.2d 570, 588, 220 P.3d 191 (2009) ("Reasonable opportunity to conduct discovery is a fundamental part of due process of law. If disclosed [earlier] the information regarding other seat back failures in Hyundai vehicles would have been investigated and further evidence would have been developed by the plaintiff."). Under these facts, there can be no question that defendant has stymied plaintiff's ability to investigate the facts and thereby prejudiced her ability to prepare for trial.

~~**Default Judgment**~~

91. In this case, where MSA willfully disregarded the discovery order to produce responsive documents "without further delay," only a default judgment will fulfill the role of discovery sanctions "to deter, to punish, to compensate and to educate."

THIS COURT DOES NOT CONCLUDE THAT

1. In Rivers v. Washington State Conference of Mason Contractors, 145 Wn.2d 674, 699, 41 P.3d 1175 (2002), the Supreme Court reviewed dismissal of plaintiff's discrimination complaint "because she did not comply with a court order directing her to follow a discovery order and case event schedule deadlines." The Court reversed the lower courts and remanded for further proceedings in which the trial court would make specific findings by applying the *Burnet* factors. In doing so, the Supreme Court acknowledged that the plaintiff had "manifested a somewhat casual disregard for the rules of discovery and her obligation to comply with the orders of the court under those rules," writing further that:

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> **The circumstances in this case might well justify the sanction of dismissal** imposed against Petitioner. Petitioner was granted several deadline extensions for discovery but failed to comply with those extended deadlines. **Petitioner failed to comply with trial court discovery orders. Under CR 37, the trial court might impose the sanction of dismissal of Petitioner's complaint**, but the court must explain on the record that it has considered less harsh alternative sanctions.

145 Wn.2d at 699.

92. While MSA's delayed production and continual withholding of documents violates Judge Runge's February 3rd discovery order, such showing, although adequate, is not necessary for entry of a default judgment, as the Court in Magaña made clear:

> Magaña was entitled to the discovery he requested. Hyundai never requested a protective order, and the discovery requests were reasonably calculated to lead to the production of admissible evidence. The discovery requested should have been given to Magaña in a timely manner. Magaña need not have continually requested more discovery and updates on existing requests. Additionally, Magaña should not have needed to file a motion for an order to compel Hyundai to produce the documents Hyundai was required to produce by the discovery requests themselves, nor does this opinion rest on the existence of a discovery order.

Magaña, 167 Wn.2d at 588.

Adequacy of Lesser Sanctions

93. "[T]he purposes of sanctions orders are to deter, to punish, to compensate and to educate. Where compensation to litigants is appropriate, then sanctions should include a compensation award." Mayer v. Sto Indus., Inc., 156 Wn.2d 677, 690, 132 P.3d 115 (2006).

94. If the Court declines to enter a default judgment and to hold a trial on damages only, then MSA would still be able to reap the rewards of its misconduct. Absent a default judgment, plaintiff is placed in the unenviable position of rushing (at great expense) to restart discovery and complete a substantial number of depositions while at the same time preparing her case for trial. Ordinarily, discovery would be completed 2.5 months before trial, with plaintiff not submitting her final witness and exhibits lists, motions in limine, and trial brief until two months after the discovery period closes. *See* LCR 4(f)(2).

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95. If the Court sanctioned MSA in a manner short of a default judgment, for example, ordering a continuation of the trial date to allow plaintiff to conduct additional discovery, that sanction would have little to no impact on MSA, a large federal contractor with near limitless resources, which is being paid by DOE for its legal defense, as compared with the adverse impact that such delay and additional costs from discovery would have on Ms. Atwood. Since the time of her termination in September 2013, Ms. Atwood has been unable to find other employment, having been "blacklisted" under false rumors in the Hanford community that she was let go from MSA due to time accounting fraud. Sub #2 (Compl., ¶ 2.67). Thus, lacking the financial resources of her opponent, to start discovery anew as though MSA had complied with the spirit and purpose of the discovery rules and fully answered plaintiff's requests in August 2016 would be far more punishing to Ms. Atwood than to MSA, given the expense of more delay and more depositions.

96. In an effort to alleviate the financial imbalance, ~~if a default judgment were not granted and~~ the trial date ~~were~~ IS continued for plaintiff to reopen discovery, ~~then~~ AND the Court ~~could require MSA to pay plaintiff's reasonable attorney's fees and all costs incurred through the present; and/or~~ order MSA to pay the reasonable attorney's fees and all costs related to the additional discovery caused by defendant's misconduct. *See* Mayer v. Sto Indus., Inc., 156 Wn.2d 677, 692, 132 P.3d 115 (2006) ("The trial court did not abuse its discretion in determining that the Mayers should be fully compensated for the money wasted [in attorney fees and expenses] on the first trial and for the loss of use of that sum for the period of time described in the judgment.") IN ADDITION, IT IS ENTITLED TO AN AWARD OF FEES AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH BRINGING THIS MOTION.

97. ~~Even still, to the extent responsive records remain missing from MSA's production, as Ms. DeVere outlines in her declaration, the problem remains that plaintiff lacks the documentation necessary to complete discovery once it is reopened for Ms. Atwood. While the Court might, as one sanction, direct~~ THE COURT ORDERS MSA's counsel to certify that the company is

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withholding no further documentation responsive to plaintiff's discovery requests and to the Court's discovery order, ~~plaintiff cannot reasonably rely upon such a certification, given that similar certifications made under CR 26(g) have already proven worthless. If~~ the Court were to award a substantial monetary fine as a penalty, that could potentially assist in deterring further misconduct and reinforce the value of such certification. *See, e.g.*, Magana, 167 Wn.2d at 591 (listing a "monetary fine" as one of the "lesser sanctions" available); Camicia v. Howard S. Wright Const. Co., No. 74048-2-I (issued Feb. 21, 2017) (unpublished) (affirming order that "City and Defense Counsel pay a fine of $10,000 to the Legal Foundation of Washington … for the provision of legal services to those with financial need" to "deter future discover violations, and to punish for the violations");[5] and CR 37(b)(2) (identifying monetary sanctions as an award made "in lieu of" or "in addition" to the orders described in CR 37(b)(2)(A)-(E)). In this case, plaintiff has suggested an appropriate fine for the discovery violations of MSA and its counsel would require that each pay a penalty of $100,000 to the Legal Foundation of Washington or to the Benton and Franklin Counties Superior Court Administration.

98. ~~However, like the trial court in Magaña, I find that it remains "difficult to know what amount [monetary fine] would be suitable since '[MSA] is a $3.4 billion-dollar corporation.'" Magana, 167 Wn.2d at 592; Atwood Dec., ¶ 3, Ex. 1. I also find that~~ any ~~monetary sanction would still fail to address the prejudice to plaintiff or to the judicial system~~. I further find that granting a continuance to allow plaintiff to conduct additional discovery ~~is not~~ IS AT Δ'S COST & EXPENSE AND REPRESENTS, ALONG WITH THE OTHER PARTS an adequate sanction. ~~Sanctions for discovery violations should not reward the party who has committed the violations and granting a continuance would only exacerbate the situation. If defendant were allowed to have the trial date and discovery continued, the cost-benefit analysis from the company's perspective would always favor misconduct, because they have unlimited~~ OF THIS ORDER THE LEAST SEVERE SANCTION UNDER THE FACTS OF THIS CASE.

i.e. the depositions of those individuals on Ex "A" attached.

[5] The recent unpublished Camicia decision has no precedential value, is not binding on any court, and is cited only for such persuasive value as the court deems appropriate. GR 14.1.

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~~resources and unlimited time. Plaintiff on the other hand has finite resources and can be driven into the ground by being forced to devote her time, attention and resources to an endless battle regarding defendant's ongoing deficiencies in discovery. Only a default judgment can balance the scales and hold defendant MSA accountable in this situation.~~

Relief Granted

99. Based on the foregoing findings of misconduct, the Court finds the following relief appropriate and grants such relief. The Court hereby:

(1) finds Defendant MSA ~~and its counsel~~ DFI violated CR 26(g) and the Court's order compelling production of documents;

(2) finds MSA ~~willfully~~ NEGLIGENTLY ~~failed~~ and did not reasonably seek for to produce documents properly requested in July 2016 that were relevant to the depositions of Todd Beyers, Chris Jensen, Christine DeVere, Wendy Robbins, and Sandra Fowler, among other witnesses in this matter; including but not limited to, producing only a few documents related to Sandra Fowler after it became clear that MSA's motion to quash the Fowler subpoena was denied, so the few documents MSA disclosed February 8 would be produced by Ms. Fowler at her deposition, while continuing to withhold more than 100 pages of internal records of MSA's investigation that Fowler did not possess, until long after the depositions of Ms. Fowler and other relevant witnesses were completed and the period for completing discovery was past;

(3) finds that plaintiff is substantially prejudiced in her ability to prepare for trial based on defendant's pattern of withholding evidence; and

(4) and finds, ~~as in *Magaña*~~, that no lesser sanction than ~~a default judgment~~ TRANSFERRING THE COST OF NEW DISCOVERY TO THE Δ will suffice. ~~and sets the date trial on damages as May _____ 2017~~.

The Court has considered the ~~lesser~~ GREATER sanctions ~~addressed above~~ REQUESTED BY THE PLAINTIFF, but given the facts and circumstances of this case finds them ~~insufficient~~ TOO SEVERE AND UNNECESSARY for purposes of ensuring that MSA does not profit from the wrong for the reasons previously stated, AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT AND FUTURE DISCOVERY REQUESTS.

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The Court further deems just the following relief:

PLAINTIFF'S COUNSEL MAY SEND AN INDOICE TO DEF. MSA CARE OF THEIR COUNSEL MONTHLY, FOR ALL FEES AND COSTS (INCLUDING TRAVEL & LODGING) WHICH SHALL BE PAID IN FULL W/IN 10 BUSINESS DAYS. ANY DISPUTE AS TO THE NECESSITY AND/OR REASONABLENESS SHALL BE DECIDED BY THE COURT.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Done this 20th day of July 2017.

JUDGE

PRESENTED BY:

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ATTACHMENT "A"

Magaña, that no lesser sanction than a default judgment will suffice and set a May 2017 date for trial on damages.

If the Court declines to enter a default judgment, then in the alternative, in addition to the foregoing findings (1) through (3), Plaintiff seeks an order:

President & CEO BOTH IF DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

(4) directing MSA's ~~counsel~~ to certify the company is withholding no further documentation responsive to Plaintiff's Interrogatory Nos. 16-17 and to the Court's discovery order;

(5) granting a 60-day continuance of the trial date to Monday, July 3, 2017, and requiring the company to accept trial subpoenas on behalf of all current employees;

(6) allowing Plaintiff until June 19, 2017 to amend its list of witnesses and exhibits in the Trial Management Report;

(7) authorizing Plaintiff to continue the depositions of:

OK

(i) Sandra Fowler;
(ii) Todd Beyers;
(iii) Steve Young;
(iv) Chris Jensen
(v) Christine DeVere;
(vi) Wendy Robbins;
(vii) Kadi Bence; and
(viii) Cindy Protsman;

THE FEES & COSTS TO BE PAID BY MSA.

and to take the depositions of:

(i) Stanley Bensussen;
~~(ii) Greg Jones;~~ DEL.

with MSA obligated to make the company's employees available for deposition, absent documentation of a medical issue or out-of-town vacation;

(9) extending for 60-days (to June 30) Aug 11, 2017 the Commission to Take Deposition Outside the State of Washington, Sub #201, for purposes of deposing former President Frank Armijo;

(10) requiring MSA to pay Plaintiff's reasonable attorney's fees and all costs incurred through the present;

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