

**Royal Commission
into the Management of Police Informants**

STATEMENT OF ADRIAN WHITE

1. My full name is Adrian White. I am a Superintendent for Victoria Police, responsible for the SD4 (Frankston & Mornington Peninsula).
2. I make this statement in response to a request to the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 23 May 2019.

Educational background and employment history (Q1)

3. I graduated from the Victoria Police Training Academy in May 1979. A summary of my education and employment history with Victoria Police is set out in Annexure A to this statement.

Involvement or association with any investigation which had dealings with Ms Gobbo (Q2)

4. Between June 2003 and June 2006, I was an Acting Inspector and then Detective Inspector in the Major Drug Investigation Division (MDID). It was in this role that I came to learn of Ms Gobbo's proposed registration as a human source. However, after an initial discussion about her proposed registration I had no involvement in any investigation to do with Ms Gobbo.
5. I have set out my involvement in as much detail as I am able, given the passage of time. I have reviewed my diaries from February 2001 through to May 2006 and for September 2013.

Proposed registration

6. I first became aware of a proposal to use Ms Gobbo as a human source on around 8 September 2005. I recall Detective Senior Constable Paul Rowe and Detective Sergeant Steve Mansell coming into my office and telling me that they proposed to seek to use Ms Gobbo as a human source. As this was an unusual proposal, I believe I suggested that we speak immediately to Acting Superintendent Robert Hill. Mr Hill was usually an Inspector in the MDID, as was I, but he was filling in for Superintendent Tony Biggin at the time, who was on leave.



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7. I believe that we met later the same day with members of the SDU, Officer Sandy White and Officer Peter Smith. I do not recall any discussion about whether information provided by Ms Gobbo could be subject to legal professional privilege. It was not my understanding that the proposal contemplated that Ms Gobbo would provide information on her own clients. I recall thinking that because Ms Gobbo associated widely in organised crime circles, she would likely have known a lot of valuable information.

8. My diary record of that meeting states:

*1450 Meeting with [Officer Sandy White] and [Officer Peter Smith] (DSU)
re: Operation Quills and involvement of Nicola Gobbo.*

9. Although this entry does not mention DSC Rowe, DS Mansell or Acting Detective Superintendent Hill attending that meeting, I believe they were there.

10. I believe that I gave my support to the proposal, in principle, but said that this was subject to a thorough risk assessment being conducted by the Source Development Unit (SDU). I remember little further detail of those meetings on 8 September 2005.

11. I do not know who ultimately made the decision to register Ms Gobbo as a human source.

12. I do not recall having been involved in further decision-making in respect of whether to register Ms Gobbo as a human source. However, I have found diary entries in relation to the following matters:

- (a) on 9 September 2005, I spoke to Commander Terry Purton about a possible secondment for Officer Sandy White. I do not now recall whether that discussion had anything to do with the potential registration of Ms Gobbo as a human source. The discussion may simply have been about human resources, which was part of my usual responsibilities as an Inspector for the MDID. Officer Sandy White was attached to the MDID when I was there and then moved to the SDU on a date that I cannot recall;
- (b) on 21 September 2005, I attended a briefing with DAS Hill, DS Mansell, DSC Rowe and DSC Burrows "re strategy for staffing and Quills prosecution". I



do not independently recall this meeting. I have not named Ms Gobbo in this entry which is not unusual in my endeavours to protect the identity of human sources. However, it is possible that part of the discussion would have included Ms Gobbo;

- (c) on 14 November 2005, I attended a meeting with AC Purton, Commander Grant and DI Hill "*re Op Posse staffing strategy.*" I believe the discussion in this meeting was limited to the movement of staff between MDID and Purana.
13. Prior to 8 September 2005, I do not believe I had any knowledge of Ms Gobbo ever assisting police or such assistance ever being contemplated.
14. I do not now recall whether I was told of the outcome of the proposal to register Ms Gobbo as a human source, though it is likely that I was told. I believe I knew at the time that she was assigned the source number '3838'. I am now aware that Ms Gobbo was registered as a human source on 16 September 2005.
15. Following that time, I understand that Ms Gobbo was to be handled and managed by the SDU. I do not know what information or assistance Ms Gobbo actually provided. I was not involved in managing Ms Gobbo as a human source at all.
16. From time to time, the MDID and Purana coordinated resources to assist with work such as executing search warrants. However, I was not generally involved in Purana's investigations and was not aware of what they were doing.
17. I remained at the MDID until 29 May 2006, when I went on recreational leave and then leave without pay when I commenced a role outside Victoria Police. I did not return to Victoria until January 2009, when I commenced as Detective Acting Superintendent for the Ethical Standards Department.

Contact with Ms Gobbo as a lawyer

18. I have detailed some further contact with Ms Gobbo in her capacity as a lawyer for accused persons in my response to Question 6 below.

Report in relation to [REDACTED]

19. I recall Detective Senior Constable Samantha Jennings reporting to me that Ms Gobbo had approached her at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court and spoken to her about another police member, [REDACTED]. My diary records that on 12 November 2004, I spoke to DSC Jennings about an issue with Nicola Gobbo and her acquaintance with Sergeant [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] creating a potential conflict. Following this, I made a phone calls to Jack Vandersteen and Jeremy Rapke at the OPP to discuss this matter. I cannot now recall the content of this discussion. Beyond these diary notes and what was reported to me, I have no knowledge of the relationship between Ms Gobbo and Mr [REDACTED]. However, I understand that an investigation was conducted, and that Mr [REDACTED] was eventually dismissed. I believe that there were a number of bases for his dismissal not limited to his alleged relationship with Ms Gobbo.

Conversation with Gavan Ryan

20. In the course of preparing my statement, I have been informed that Gavan Ryan has stated that on 3 August 2007 he attended an informal retirement party for DI Jim O'Brien, at which he states that I told him that a threat had been made to kill a person called Jason Kelly (who is not the Jason Kelly of the Purana Taskforce).
21. While I recall attending an informal lunch or drinks which I think was at the Celtic Club for DI O'Brien, I have no recollection of that conversation nor of any threat being made against a Jason Kelly. At that time, I had not been working at Victoria Police for approximately 14 months and did not return to the organisation until January 2009. I do not have any reason to dispute that the conversation occurred, but cannot provide any further information about that conversation.

Search for complaints

22. I have been shown an email dated 4 September 2013, sent by Lisa Carrison,¹ who was my staff officer when I was filling in as Acting Superintendent at Professional Standards Command, Investigations Division at this time. Ms Carrison requested a search of ROCSID (the Register of Complaints and Serious Incidents Database) be conducted for any complaints made by Ms Gobbo against police.

¹ VPL.6152.0095.2415

23. My diary records that, on 4 September 2013, Detective Inspector Steve Waddell phoned me to enquire whether Ms Gobbo had made a complaint about a police member corruptly releasing information to Paul Dale. I do not independently recall this matter, but my diary records that the search did not return a result.

Awareness of use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q3)

24. I refer to my response to Question 2 above.

Awareness of others (Q4)

25. I believe that at least DSC Rowe, DS Mansell, DSS O'Brien, and Insp Hill and the SDU members, Officers Sandy White and Peter Smith, were aware of Ms Gobbo's registration or proposed registration as a human source.
26. I do not otherwise know who was aware that Ms Gobbo was a source or who received information or assistance via Ms Gobbo.
27. Sometime after I returned to Victoria Police in January 2009, while I was an Acting Detective Superintendent for the Ethical Services Division, I recall seeing a list of people who were aware that Ms Gobbo was a human source. I remember the list being fairly long, but I do not specifically remember any names on that list. I do, however, recall that I noticed that my own name was not on the list when it should have been. I believe I phoned Officer Sandy White and told him that my name ought to be on the list and suggested that if my name had been missed, it was possible that others had also been missed. I cannot recall more precisely when this occurred.

Authorisation of Ms Gobbo (Q5)

28. Beyond what I have said in my response to Question 2, I do not know who was involved in the authorisation of Ms Gobbo as a human source.

Personal contact with Ms Gobbo (Q6)

29. I have had very little personal contact with Ms Gobbo.
30. In the course of preparing this statement I have been shown some brief email exchanges I had with Ms Gobbo in late 2003 and early 2004, relating to bail

conditions for clients of hers.² It was unusual for me to communicate with lawyers for accused persons at this time, but I believe I may have done so in this instance because Paul Dale had just been arrested and suspended. I believe one of the other members of the team may also have been on leave at this time. This left my team under-resourced. Consequently, I believe I took a more hands-on role during this time so as to assist the other members of my team.

31. I believe I also had some phone conversations with Ms Gobbo around this time, again, in relation to her clients.
32. On one occasion, which may have been in around 2004, I attended the Melbourne Magistrates' Court with DSC Jennings. I cannot now recall for what matter I attended. While at the Magistrates' Court, I saw Ms Gobbo having a conversation with DSC Jennings in which I perceived that Ms Gobbo was attempting to intimidate DSC Jennings. I then had a conversation with Ms Gobbo during which I recall asking her to resist the temptation of intimidating junior detectives. I accepted she needed to advocate for her clients, but I would appreciate if she did not intimidate my staff.
33. I recall, on one occasion, seeing Ms Gobbo at a bar in town, but not speaking to her. I believe she saw me. I left quite soon after I recognised her because I did not want to speak to her.
34. I have been informed that Supt Biggin records in his statement a note of discussing a "*Gobbo issue*" with me on 8 December 2003. I do not recall what that discussion may have related to. My diary records that I received a phone call from Ms Gobbo at 11.45am "*re O'Reilly bail application issue pending with surety*". I recall Ms Gobbo acting for Colleen O'Reilly in a bail application, but do not otherwise recall what this issue may have been. My diary also records that I spoke to Supt Biggin at 7.30am and 5pm that day, but make no note of speaking to him about Ms Gobbo.

Information & assistance received (Q7 & Q8)

35. I do not know what information or assistance was provided by Ms Gobbo to police.

² VPL.60002.0021.7106; VPL.60002.0021.9093; VPL.60002.0032.8991; VPL.60002.0031.0429.

Concerns raised as to the use of a legal practitioner – and Ms Gobbo – as a human source (Q9 & Q10)

36. I did not think that it was contemplated that Ms Gobbo would provide information on her clients. I do not specifically recall any discussion in which concern was raised about using any legal practitioner, including Ms Gobbo, as a human source.
37. I believe I would have been involved in discussions in September 2005 about how it was unusual to have a human source with such wide connections to organised crime figures. We discussed concerns about the possibility of using Ms Gobbo as a human source, but to the best of my recollection, those concerns related primarily to risks to Ms Gobbo's safety, particularly in the context of how well-known she was. I would have expected these matters to be considered and documented in the risk assessment performed by the SDU. All human sources should be subject to regular, documented risk assessments.

Awareness about disclosure in relation to Ms Gobbo (Q11)

38. I do not recall ever having been aware of or involved in any discussion regarding disclosure of material concerning the use of Ms Gobbo.

Other human sources with obligations of confidentiality or privilege (Q12)

39. I do not recall ever having heard of another lawyer who was a human source. I have a vague recollection of a person being a source and that that person *may* have had a law degree, but was not a practising lawyer. I cannot recall that person's name or any additional detail.

Training (Q13)

40. I believe that training in respect of legal professional privilege and the rights of an accused person to silence and to legal representation were touched upon at the Academy and, in slightly more detail at Detective Training School. I believe that these matters were often touched on in internal courses, as well as reinforced by experience on the job.
41. I believe that the obligations of disclosure and the concept of public interest immunity were also covered in the Undercover Course and in Surveillance Training.



I recall receiving training on the Undercover Course and Surveillance Course about claiming public interest immunity in respect of methodologies.

42. I believe that professional and ethical decision-making was covered during courses at the Officers' College. More generally, there is an ethics component to just about every course that is run by Victoria Police.

Other information (Q14)

43. In the course of making this statement, I have been informed that evidence has been given that I audited the informer management file for Terry Hodson in July 2003. My recollection of those events, relying partly on my diary entries, is as follows:
- (a) In June/July 2003, I was a Detective Acting Inspector at the MDID, on secondment from Crime – Tactical Response Squad;
 - (b) Superintendent Tony Biggin asked me to conduct an audit and risk assessment of Terry Hodson's informer management file in around July 2003. I do not have a diary entry of that request from Supt Biggin, but I recall the request being made to me. I have been told that Supt Biggin believes he spoke to me on 4 July 2003 to request the assessment and I have no reason to doubt that date. I believe I would also have been given written instructions for the audit and assessment;
 - (c) I do not recall Supt Biggin telling me why he wanted me to conduct the assessment and I do not believe I would have asked;
 - (d) On 23 July 2003, I went with DI O'Brien and Paul Dale to meet Terry Hodson. The reason for the meeting was partly, to assist me in conducting the risk assessment, and partly, so that I could hand over to Terry Hodson a payment of a sum of money which had been authorised by the Crime Department, Informer Payment Committee;
 - (e) I prepared a report dated 6 August 2003, setting out my audit and risk assessment;³

³ Report dated 6 August 2003 and attached Risk Assessment (to be produced).

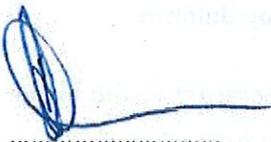


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- (f) I concluded that the result of the audit was satisfactory overall, having regard to the value of the information being provided by Mr Hodson, balanced against the risks;
- (g) I recommended, however, that two further handlers be introduced to co-handle the informer and continue obtaining information and intelligence. I believe I recommended either DSC Liza Burrows, DSC Samantha Jennings and/or DSC Reece Campbell as co-handlers (though this is not recorded in my audit). Shortly after this, I attended an external course in Sydney for several weeks and then commenced a period of leave for another 6 weeks. During this time the burglary referred to in subparagraph (h) below had occurred. Shortly after I returned from leave, I discovered that my recommendation that co-handlers being introduced had not occurred.
- (h) I made a statement dated 14 November 2003 about these matters, which I believe was used on a brief of evidence against Dale, Miechel and Hodson following the burglary of a house in Dublin Street, Oakleigh.

44. There are no further matters about which I am able to provide assistance to the Commission.

Dated: 29 November 2019



Adrian White

Annexure A

Employment history

1. I graduated from the Victoria Police Training Academy in May 1979 and commenced as a Trainee Constable at Northcote Uniform until November 1979.
2. I was a Constable from:
 - (a) August to September 1979 at Melbourne District Traffic & Patrol;
 - (b) September 1979 to January 1982 at Sunshine Police Station; and
 - (c) January 1982 to January 1983 at Coburg Uniform.
3. From January 1983 to May 1985, I was a Senior Constable at Broadmeadows Uniform.
4. From May 1985 to March 1990, I was a Detective Senior Constable at City West CIU (including a secondment to a Commonwealth State Joint Task Force between April 1987 and December 1988).
5. From March 1990 to October 1992, I was a Detective Senior Constable at the Homicide Squad.
6. From October 1992 to February 1995, I was a Sergeant at Fitzroy Uniform.
7. From February 1995 to September 1996, I was a Detective Sergeant at the Crime Department, the Tactical Investigation Squad and the Organised Crime Squad.
8. I was a Detective Senior Sergeant from:
 - (a) September 1996 to September 1999 at the Ethical Services Division, Corruption Investigation Division;
 - (b) September 1999 to September 2001 at the National Crime Authority, Surveillance Unit; and
 - (c) September 2001 to March 2004 at the Crime – Tactical Response Squad, during which time I also acted as Detective Acting Inspector for:
 - (i) Region 5 – Dandenong Crime from April 2003 to June 2003; and



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- (ii) the Major Drug Investigation Division from June 2003 to March 2004.
9. From March 2004 to June 2006, I became a Detective Inspector for the Major Drug Investigation Division.
 10. Between June 2006 and January 2009, I was on leave without pay from Victoria Police, during which time I worked at a Commonwealth law enforcement agency.
 11. From January 2009 to January 2010, I was Detective Acting Superintendent for the Ethical Standards Department, Specialist Operations and Intelligence Division.
 12. From January 2010 to December 2013, I was an Inspector for Southern Metro Region Division 1 (SD1), Stonnington, during which time I also acted as an Acting Superintendent for:
 - (a) SD1 (Stonnington & Port Phillip) from October to November 2010;
 - (b) ED5 (Shepparton) from March to May 2012;
 - (c) SD1 (Stonnington & Port Phillip) from October to November 2012;
 - (d) SD1 (Stonnington & Port Phillip) from January to June 2013;
 - (e) Professional Standards Command, Investigations Division from August to September 2013;
 - (f) SD1 (Stonnington & Port Phillip) in October 2013.
 13. In December 2013, I was promoted to Detective Superintendent for the Professional Standards Command, Support Services Division, during which time I also acted as:
 - (a) Detective Superintendent for Crime Command – Serious Crime Operations in November 2016; and
 - (b) Acting Assistant Commissioner for the Professional Standards Command from May to June 2016.
 14. From May 2016 to July 2017, I was Detective Superintendent for the Professional Standards Command, Investigations Division.



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15. Since June 2017, I have been the Superintendent for the SD4 (Frankston & Mornington Peninsula).

Education & Training

16. I hold the following qualifications:

- (a) Diploma in Workplace Assessment Systems;
- (b) Graduate Certificate in Applied Management;
- (c) Graduate, Australian Institute of Company Directors.

17. My internal training has included:

- (a) Constable recruit training at the Victoria Police Training Academy;
- (b) Detective Training School;
- (c) Brief Checking Course;
- (d) Sergeants Course;
- (e) Intelligence Investigations Course;
- (f) Senior Sergeants Course;
- (g) Undercover Course;
- (h) National Crime Authority Surveillance Training;
- (i) Police Management Development Program, the Australian Institute of Police Management;
- (j) Officers Course;
- (k) Senior Management Leadership Development Program;
- (l) Management of Serious Crime Course (AFP).