

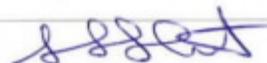
**Royal Commission
into the Management of Police Informants**

STATEMENT OF SUSAN LESLEY THWAITES

1. My full name is Susan Lesley Thwaites. I am a former member of Victoria Police.
2. I make this statement in response to a request from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 23 May 2019. This statement is produced to the Royal Commission in response to a Notice to Produce.

Educational background and employment history (Q 1)

3. I joined Victoria Police in 1978. A summary of my employment history since that time is set out below:
 - (a) in 1979, I graduated from the Victoria Police Academy;
 - (b) in 1979, I was promoted to Constable and stationed at Malvern and then the Community Policing Squad Prahran;
 - (c) in 1984, I was promoted to Senior Constable;
 - (d) in 1985, I was promoted to Leading Senior Constable and stationed in the Breath Analysis Section;
 - (e) between 1988 and 2004, I transferred to the Crime Department where I performed duties at Crime Stoppers and Forensic Procedures' Implementation Team which later became the DNA Unit. At one stage, these units came under the State Intelligence Division;
 - (f) between 2004 and 2018, I transferred to Crime, where I provided specialist support as a Tactical Intelligence Operative and Analyst; and
 - (g) on 11 December 2018, I resigned from Victoria Police.
4. I have undertaken Victoria Police qualifications and training including:
 - (a) the Victoria Police Academy;



- (b) the Field Investigation Course;
- (c) the Sergeants Exam;
- (d) the Drug and Enforcement Course;
- (e) the Analyst Course;
- (f) the Tactical Intelligence Course;
- (g) Certificate 11 in Arabic; and
- (h) Investment in Excellence.

Involvement or association with any investigation which had dealings with Ms Gobbo (Q 2)

5. I first came to know of Ms Gobbo in the early 2000s, when I was with the Tactical Response Squad as a Tactical Intelligence Officer. I came to know of her as barrister, but to the best of my recollection I did not ever meet her.
6. In November 2006, I transferred to the Purana Taskforce, where I held the position of "Tactical Intelligence Operative" or "Analyst".
7. Principally, I was required to prepare profiles on persons of interest, drawing from information contained in various Victoria Police databases or any other source available. When I received a request for information, I would create a profile for the person of interest, and then consolidate the information held across Victoria Police into that database. This process included checking their criminal record, reviewing intelligence holdings, reviewing transcripts of telephone intercepts or covert recordings, undertaking phone record checks and the like.
8. After a profile was created, using the available information, it would be updated with new information as it came in. I did not obtain information directly from human sources. Instead, the information would be disseminated to me through a handler or investigator. I do not recall any occasion on which I was told that Ms Gobbo was the source of information disseminated to me.
9. To the best of my recollection, I did not ever see any information about Ms Gobbo in a profile, or while preparing a profile, other than notations that Ms Gobbo had represented a particular person.

10. As part of this work, I was involved in the preparation of Purana Taskforce updates for various operations including *Operation POSSE*. I do not recall preparing a Purana Taskforce update that involved information about Ms Gobbo.
11. My other duties at Purana included:
 - (a) attending the execution of warrants to assist as the exhibit log keeper and other duties as required; and
 - (b) preparing photo boards.
12. In the early part of my time at Purana, I spoke with Ms Gobbo on the phone on several occasions. On each occasion, Ms Gobbo called the Purana Taskforce office, identified herself as Nicola Gobbo and asked to speak with a Purana member. If that person was available, I put the call through. If that person was not available, I took a message. My interactions with Ms Gobbo on these occasions were entirely administrative. I did not ever have a substantive conversation with her.
13. I did not find Ms Gobbo's calls to the Purana office unusual. Lawyers often called the Purana office wanting to talk to an officer about their clients.
14. It was in this period I formed the view that Ms Gobbo was HS3838. I do not recall if I received an official notification or briefing about her status. My best recollection is that I deduced HS3838's identity. HS3838 was the subject of discussion in the Purana office. I do not recall the specifics, but the nature of those discussions led me to believe that HS3838 worked in, or close to, the legal profession.
15. In the course of preparing this statement, I was shown an email chain from 22 January 2008.¹ I forwarded an email received from Detective Senior Constable Paul Rowe, which attached information concerning the point of sale for a telephone that a person of interest had used to contact Ms Gobbo. I have no independent recollection of this email. However, the email chain refers to Ms Gobbo by name, rather than in her capacity as a human source.
16. After Ms Gobbo's car was the subject of an arson attack in April 2008, I formed the firm belief that she was HS3838. I note that on 17 April 2008, I sent an email attaching materials relevant to that arson attack.² I did not discuss this belief with anyone.

¹ VPL.6145.0017.2711.

² VPL.6145.0018.2353.

17. On 12 May 2008, I sent an email to Mark Butterworth with the subject line "Thought you might be interested to know who GATTO is sitting with", and attaching a SSU Log for 8 May 2008.³ The SSU Log for that day included an observation that Ms Gobbo was sitting with Dominic Gatto.
18. I have been shown a number of LEAP inquiry records relating to Ms Gobbo, dated 30 April 2008,⁴ 17 October 2008⁵ and 6 May 2010.⁶ I do not independently recall these records. However, I infer from looking at it that I was directed to [REDACTED] for Ms Gobbo. When [REDACTED] the author of the [REDACTED] each time a [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED]
19. In relation to the LEAP inquiry record for 17 October 2008,⁷ this record identifies that Senior Constable Brendan Payne [REDACTED] for Ms Gobbo. Senior Constable Brendan Payne was the responding officer to the arson attack on Ms Gobbo's car. I forwarded [REDACTED] to Daniel Baulch and Jason Schubert.
20. In the course of preparing this statement, I was shown an email from 26 January 2012, in which Mark Hatt asks me for access to Purana documents relating to the threats which had been made against Ms Gobbo on 7 December 2006.⁸ I was also shown an email from that day that I sent to Mr Hatt, attaching a summary of Operation Gosford,⁹ along with an email of the following day which I sent to Senior Sergeant Shaun Bingham requesting that Mark Hatt be given access to certain intelligence holdings about Ms Gobbo.¹⁰ I have no independent recollection of these emails. However, there is nothing unusual about them. I did not have authority to grant Mark Hatt access to the information he requested. As such, I elevated his request to SS Bingham. I had no involvement in the investigation that Mark Hatt was conducting.

³ VPL.6145.0018.4282.

⁴ VPL.6145.0018.2896.

⁵ VPL.6028.0004.7791

⁶ VPL.6145.0045.0878.

⁷ VPL.6028.0004.7791.

⁸ VPL.6032.0023.1446.

⁹ VPL.6145.0019.6414, VPL.6145.0019.6415.

¹⁰ VPL.6032.0017.1163.



How I learned, or were given reason to believe, Ms Gobbo was providing information to police (Q 3)

21. I have no independent recollection of when I first learned that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police. To the best of my recollection, I became aware that Ms Gobbo was a human source when I was based at the Purana Taskforce, as I describe above.

Awareness of others (Q 4)

22. I am not aware of other members of Victoria Police or other organisations who were aware that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police.

Authorisation of the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q 5)

23. I do not know who was involved in the authorisation and continued authorisation of Ms Gobbo as a human source.

Personal contact with Ms Gobbo (Q 6)

24. I refer to my answer to question 2 above.

Information & assistance received (Q7 & Q8)

25. I have no knowledge of any information or assistance given by Ms Gobbo to Victoria Police, save as set out in my answer to question 2.

Concerns raised as to the use of a legal practitioner as a human source (Q 9)

26. When I formed the firm belief that Ms Gobbo was a human source, I thought it was a double standard that she was both a legal practitioner and a registered source. I wanted nothing to do with it. I recall speaking with a colleague about my concerns, but I do not remember who I spoke to, nor do I recall whether I did this by way of a formal discussion, or simply as part of general conversation.

Concerns raised as to the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q 10)

27. I refer to my answer to question 9 above.

Awareness about disclosure in relation to Ms Gobbo (Q 11)

28. I am not aware of any such discussions.

Other human sources with obligations of confidentiality or privilege (Q 12)

29. I am not aware of any other human sources subject to legal obligations of confidentiality or privilege.

Training (Q 13)

30. I completed a number of training courses throughout my police career. I received training on each of the topics identified in question 13 at the Academy and at various stages throughout my police career.

Other information (Q 14)

31. I have no further information to provide.

Dated: 22 November 2019



Susan Lesley Thwaites