

This document has been redacted for Public Interest Immunity claims made by Victoria Police.
These claims are not yet resolved.

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

STATEMENT OF ASHLEY DICKINSON

1. My full name is Ashley Eugene Michael Dickinson. I am a retired member of Victoria Police.
2. I make this statement in response to a request to the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 26 August 2019. This statement is produced to the Royal Commission in response to a Notice to Produce.
3. In preparing this statement I have not had access to my old diaries or day books. It was my practice throughout my employment at Victoria Police to keep a record of my activities, at first in a diary and then, as I progressed through the ranks, in a day book. At the time relevant to the matters in this statement, I only kept a day book.
4. I have attempted to locate copies of my day books, but have not been able to find them. I have been informed that Victoria Police has also made searches for my day books, but has been unable to locate them.

Educational background and employment history (Q1)

5. I graduated from the Victoria Police Training Academy in January 1970. I retired from Victoria Police at the rank of Commander in September 2013. 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)

6. To the best of my knowledge, I have not been involved or associated with any investigation which had dealings with Ms Gobbo.

Provision of information or assistance by Ms Gobbo to Victoria Police (Q3)

7. I first learned that Ms Gobbo had provided assistance to Victoria Police as a result of media reports about a lawyer claiming compensation from police in relation to assistance she had provided. This may have been around early 2010, but I cannot be sure of the date.

8. To the best of my recollection, the substance of the media reports I read was that an unnamed legal practitioner had provided information or assistance to Victoria Police, either as a human source or a witness, and as a result was claiming compensation for the loss of his or her business as a lawyer. As a result of reading media reports of this nature, I believe I asked another member of Victoria Police who the person referred to in the reports was. I was informed it was Ms Gobbo.
9. I do not recall who that other member was, although I believe it would have been another senior officer, most likely a Commander or Assistant Commissioner. I do not recall whether or not any other person was present when I was informed of Ms Gobbo's name. Other than her identity, I have no recollection of being informed of the nature or extent of the information or assistance she had provided.
10. Other than as set out in my answer to questions 9 and 10 below, I do not believe I revealed or discussed her identity with any other person before it was made public around the time of the Royal Commission.
11. As a result of learning of Ms Gobbo's identity and that she had provided or was providing assistance to Victoria Police, I raised some concerns I had, which I refer to below in my answer to questions 9 and 10.

Awareness of others (Q4)

12. Other than as set out in question 3 above, I do not know specifically which members of Victoria Police or other organisations who were aware, prior to the end of 2012, that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police.

Authorisation of Ms Gobbo (Q5)

13. 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 (Q6)

14. I have no recollection of any personal contact with Ms Gobbo.

Information & assistance received (Q7 & Q8)

15. I have no knowledge of any information or assistance of this kind.

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

16. I am not aware of any concerns of this kind being raised concerning any legal practitioner other than Ms Gobbo.
17. The only concerns I was aware of in relation to Ms Gobbo were concerns I myself raised. Those concerns did not relate to the use of Ms Gobbo herself, but rather to the way in which her role as a potential witness was apparently handled separately from the ordinary process.
18. For a number of years before my retirement from Victoria Police in 2013, I was a member of a committee (**Committee**) which made recommendations in respect of the work of the Witness Security Unit (**WitSec**). This was one of my roles during the time that I was Operations Co-Ordination Commander. I, and the other members of the Committee, were not a part of WitSec during this time but were senior police members who provided recommendations (but not authorisations) in respect of witnesses and potential witnesses. The Committee played no role in negotiating applications for witness security. Its purpose was to consider and make recommendations concerning whether or not the funding associated with such applications was appropriate and should be approved.
19. To the best of my recollection I was part of the Committee for approximately two to three years, and attended some, but not all, of its meetings. I recall there being a period during which I was not a member of the Committee, but I was a member for some time either side of that period. I do not now know the dates I was involved.
20. Other members of the Committee included, from time to time, Jim Hart, Terry Purton, Denis Henry and Danye Moloney. There may have been other members. Not all members of the Committee attended every meeting. It was usual to miss a meeting where other demands of a member's role took priority. I recall there were various restructures of the Committee and membership of the Committee was fairly fluid, and that it was, at some stage, chaired by Jim Hart.
21. I have been asked whether this Committee considered rewards for human sources. During the time I was involved with the Committee it did not, and such rewards were dealt with by another part of Victoria Police. I never had any involvement with decisions as to whether a human source would be given a reward of any sort.
22. To the best of my knowledge the Committee never considered any application for involvement in the witness protection program for Ms Gobbo. I was not made aware of

PI [REDACTED] PI [REDACTED] between Ms Gobbo
and PI [REDACTED]

23. When I learned that Ms Gobbo had had some involvement with Victoria Police as a witness or potential witness, I was surprised and concerned that the Committee had not already been involved in the matter or been advised of her role. Given the nature of Ms Gobbo's involvement as a potential witness, I felt her case fell within the purview of the Committee. I was concerned that witness security issues were being handled separately from the Committee, as I understood that all cases were considered by the Committee.
24. I recall raising these concerns at a Committee meeting. In particular, I recall asking Jim Hart, who I believe was the chair of the Committee at the time, for my concerns to be recorded in the Committee's minutes and conveyed to Deputy Commissioner Kieran Walsh and, ultimately, to the Chief Commissioner of Police (who I believe at the time was Simon Overland). I do not know if those concerns were ultimately included in the Committee's minutes or communicated beyond the Committee, and I am not aware of any other record of this meeting.
25. I recall I never received any response to the concerns I raised.

Awareness about disclosure in relation to Ms Gobbo (Q11)

26. I am not aware of any discussion of this kind.

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

27. I am not aware of any matters relevant to this question.

Training (Q13)

28. I had training about these various matters during my time at Victoria Police, including in the:
- (a) Police Academy, during which I believe the topics in subparagraphs (b), (c), (d) and (f) were covered;
 - (b) Police Prosecutions course, during which all of the topics were covered; and
 - (c) Sergeant's course, which dealt with those topics in more detail.

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Other information (Q14)

29. I have no further information to provide.

Dated: 17 December 2019

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ashley Dickinson', written over a dotted line.

Ashley Dickinson

Annexure A

Employment history

1. I joined Victoria Police in 1968 and graduated from the Victoria Police Training Academy in January 1970.
2. From 23 January 1970, I was a Constable stationed at Russell Street Police Station.
3. From April 1971, I was stationed at the Fitzroy Police Station, and then returned to the Russell Police Station in November 1972.
4. From February 1974 I was stationed at the Beechworth Police Station. I was promoted to the rank of Senior Constable on 23 January 1975, and to the rank of Sergeant on 24 October 1979.
5. From November 1979 I was stationed at the Melton Police Station. In 1982 I was a foundation member of the Victoria Police Prosecutions Division.
6. I was promoted to the rank of Senior Sergeant on 5 December 1985 and was stationed for a time at Broadmeadows Police Station.
7. From October 1987 I worked within the Operations Department. I was promoted to the rank of Inspector on 15 December 1987 and worked as a staff officer to several Commanders, including Alan Bolton, Laurie Rymer, Barry Phelan, Brian Church and Assistant Commissioners John Frame, Frank Green and Gavin Brown.
8. I was promoted to Chief Inspector on 11 January 1993 and then stationed at the Legal Research and Review Branch of Police Prosecutions.
9. On 12 December 1994 I was promoted to the rank of Superintendent. I was in charge of the Business Services (Planning) Department until 1999 when I moved to Region 1 as Divisional Superintendent responsible for Region 1 Strategic Services.
10. On 20 June 2003, I was promoted to the rank of Commander and was appointed Operations Co-Ordination Commander until my retirement in September 2013.

Education & Training

11. I hold a Bachelor of Commerce from Deakin University and a Masters of Business degree from Victoria University.

Awards

12. I have received the following awards:

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- (a) National Medal (15 years);
- (b) National Medal (1st Clasp 25 years);
- (c) Victoria Police Service Medal (3rd Clasp 25 years);
- (d) Victoria Police Service Medal (4th Clasp 30 years);
- (e) Victoria Police Service Medal (5th Clasp 35 years);
- (f) 35 Year Service Award;
- (g) National Medal (2nd Clasp 35 years);
- (h) Australia Police Medal
- (i) Victoria Police Service Medal (6th Clasp 40 years);
- (j) National Police Service Medal.

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