

PROTECTED



VICTORIA POLICE

Petra

Statement & Q&As

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Statement

Victoria Police has today charged an xx year old ex-policeman with the murder of Terrence and Christine Hodson in 2004.

(Police have also charged xx year old with xx.)

The charges are the result of a two year investigation by a special taskforce, codenamed Petra. The Taskforce was formed after Victoria Police received information in February 2007.

Victoria Police has been working closely with the Office of Police Integrity investigating the activities of a small number of former and current serving police members suspected of involvement in corrupt activities linked to organised crime.

XX and xx will appear in court on.

Questions & Answers

Talking about the case

We are very mindful of the forthcoming case and do want to say or do anything that could jeopardise it or influence a jury in any way whatsoever. While we understand the media's demand for information, we must balance this carefully with the need to ensure that the forthcoming court cases are heard in a fair and unbiased court.

Why did the investigation take so long?

It was always going to take a long time. These are incredibly complex and difficult investigations and we needed to ensure all avenues were properly investigated.

Is this how long the police normally take to charge someone?

Yes, the length of time it takes to charge someone varies from case to case particularly in complex cases.

Does this now prove a culture of corruption that only a Royal Commission could effectively deal with?

Victoria Police has rigorously pursued corruption and this investigation is no different. It proves that Victoria Police has an effective process to identify and charge those who are involved in corrupt activities. The Ethical Standards Department has a high conviction rate for police involved in corruption and works hard to ensure we are as corruption resistant as possible.

We work closely with the Office of Police Integrity to ensure that the resources of our agencies effectively target police and criminals who are doing the wrong thing.

There will always be small number of police who will do the wrong thing. However, the community should be assured that Victoria Police is committed to stamping out corruption and creating an environment where police themselves will not tolerate corruption from their colleagues.

You have always said there were no links between corruption and organised crime. Don't these arrests now prove significant links?

We conceded that link when we had evidence there was a link. We always said that there was no evidence at that point in time (2004) of corrupt activity by police in organised crime and that if it was identified it would be dealt with. When these issues were identified taskforces were established in conjunction with the Office of Police Integrity to fully investigate the matters. The Taskforces have been overseen by Deputy Commissioner Simon Overland, Assistant Commissioner Luke Cornelius and the OPI.

What is happening with the Briars Taskforce?

The investigation is ongoing and it would be inappropriate to comment.

How did Petra come across the leaked SSU files. Surely this proves that there is more corrupt behaviour in the organisation closely linked to organised crime.

During the recent arrest of Rodney Collins by the Tasforce for an unrelated matter, investigators discovered in his possession a Victoria Police surveillance target profile. We subsequently found a number of copies of this document in circulation. In addition parts of a second unrelated surveillance target profile was located in The Solomons. There are also a number of copies of this document in circulation.

Importantly we have no evidence to suggest other reports have been leaked nor investigations compromised.

What is happening with that investigation?

The Petra Taskforce is continuing with its investigation. We are also progressing well in terms of the review of the management issues at the SSU and hope to have some recommendations for the future shortly.

This investigation is yet another in a long line of corruption investigations. Is the time now right for Victoria Police to admit that there are significant issues and a Royal Commission is the best way forward?

As I have said previously, Victoria Police has rigorously pursued corruption and this investigation is no different. The Ethical Standards Department has a high conviction rate for police involved in corruption, in fact fair higher than produced by any Royal Commission.

We work closely with the Office of Police Integrity to ensure that the resources of our agencies effectively target police and criminals who are doing the wrong thing.

There will always be small number of police who will do the wrong thing. However, the community should be assured that Victoria Police is committed to stamping out corruption and creating an environment where police.

This investigation has been dogged by controversy, particularly leading to the very high profile downfall of Linnell/Ashby.

It would be inappropriate to comment on those matters as they are before the courts. However, the Petra investigators have worked tirelessly to bring about these charges in the face of an extremely complex set of circumstances.

How do you feel about having former/current members charged with murder?

Victoria Police has been determined to thoroughly investigate and charge any member involved in corrupt behaviour. They have no place in this organisation

Carl Williams involvement (his input/taking him out)

We will not be talking about details of the case. These will emerge through the court process.

**Why didn't we form a taskforce when the murders first happened?
(Homicide investigated)**