

# Transcript

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Compere: **NEIL MITCHELL** Summary ID: **X00079369064**  
Item: **INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM ASHTON, CHIEF COMMISSIONER, [VICTORIA POLICE] REGARDING AN ACCUSATION THAT THE POLICE HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY SLOW IN PROVIDING INFORMATION, AND OTHER TOPICS.**  
**INTERVIEWEES: GRAHAM ASHTON, CHIEF COMMISSIONER, [VICTORIA POLICE]**

<b>Audience:</b>	Male 16+ 57000	Female 16+ 77000	All people 134000
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**NEIL MITCHELL:** Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton is with me. We'll get to that issue of the security industry in the moment. Chief Commissioner, good morning.

**GRAHAM ASHTON:** Good morning, Neil.

**NEIL MITCHELL:** The Attorney General has sent the convicted Gangland murderer Faruk Orman to the Court of Appeal. His lawyer Ruth Parker told me this morning that Victoria Police she believed had deliberately frustrated and then slowed providing them information which brought this appeal about. What's your answer to that?

**GRAHAM ASHTON:** We hadn't deliberately slow on anything related to that matter, Neil. We've certainly had a lot of request for information and we've been looking to try and supply as much as information as we can, as fast as we can.

NEIL MITCHELL: Has it been slow if not deliberately slow? Has it been slow?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Look, it's been slow. It's not been deliberately slow but processes happen slow because on certainly not only on that matter but through, I guess, the Royal Commission, we've been subjected to a fair bit of public criticism about the time it's taken to get documents for all but it's really been - it's due to the amount of material that we've had to source and the challenges in sourcing it and then going through it or it's taken a lot of time - we've had a lot of staff focused on it as well.

NEIL MITCHELL: I'd like to get that in a moment before we leave this appeal, will Victoria Police appear in this appeal?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. I guess we would.

NEIL MITCHELL: Will you appeal - will you appear?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, I have to take the advice on that I suppose but if the advice is there then we probably would. That just depends on the nature of that particular matter.

NEIL MITCHELL: Are you aware of whether the police would standby that conviction or the evidence that led to conviction rather?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Not a 100 per cent sure, I'd like to take the advice on that. This matter went through its appeal processes when it originally was heard and so it's gone now to the Attorney who's going to appeal what is left and the Attorney has considered the material for her and then she said sent the matter to the Appeals. So it's taking a bit of a different path [indistinct] otherwise.

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] That's highly unusual.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. That very rarely happens.

NEIL MITCHELL: Which presumably means that she sees something in it.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. I feel like she would've otherwise she would have sent the appeals. And I guess there will be a lot of - there'd be a number of matters for this case that wind up in the Appeals Court but through appeals, you know, through other ways other than through the Attorney's office.

NEIL MITCHELL: So is this just the first of money we're going to see in the Appeals Court because of the Gobbo situation?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. You'll see a number of matters in the Appeal Court I should think for some, you know, it's all part of these processes that people would want to test their convictions.

NEIL MITCHELL: Is it your view that there's been a miscarriage of justice in any of these?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I don't think - certainly, from our point of view there's been any deliberate attempt to do anything. I certainly have never seen anything of that nature but that will be for the courts to work their way through.

NEIL MITCHELL: But being deliberate isn't the issue, it's the question of whether there is a miscarriage of justice.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. And that's what - that's to be tested, you know, therefore the...

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] That means potentially we're sitting on a lot of convicted people getting out of jail.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. There's not too many that are in jail but certainly previous convictions, you know, could be overturned if the courts find that.

NEIL MITCHELL: What type of convictions?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, very serious crimes related to some, you know - a lot of them interconnected with the previous underworld, you know, gangland type of activity from, you know, more than a decade ago.

NEIL MITCHELL: We could be looking at a lot of compensation here.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. That was certainly something at the outset that was foreshadowed and if people have their convictions overturned that will be something that will likely proceed I should think.

NEIL MITCHELL: How many do you think we could see in the Appeals Court?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, that's something that the actual Royal Commission will have a view on and you know, there will be something that they'll let us know about as well as what we'll see through the courts but, you know, that was - she was a very active criminal lawyer, so she would represent a lot of people.

NEIL MITCHELL: The High Court said Victoria Police was guilty of reprehensible and atrocious behaviour. Is that - do you still reject that?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, at the time, what police had to deal with was a very difficult situation and someone was able to assist in dealing with that crime and police have taken the information from someone who was able to assist them and I think if they hadn't done that, where would they have been in relation to some of those matters as well. So there's a lot to be taken to account, it's not just the matter of the fact that police used a lawyer as a human source. It's just that there's a lot of complexity in that that police had to deal with.

NEIL MITCHELL: Do you remember when you first discovered that Gobbo was being used as an informer?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. I do. And that's something that I have to provide to the Royal Commission and...

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] Can you tell us when it was?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I can't because of the legal advice that sits around this but it'll be all upfront in the Royal Commission.

NEIL MITCHELL: Will you also tell the Royal Commission who was on this steering committee running her?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. To the best of my knowledge, I will. Yeah.

NEIL MITCHELL: Can you tell us that yet?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well again, no. That's the part of that evidence, yeah.

NEIL MITCHELL: Okay. You're being criticised by the Royal Commission so it's not good enough the speed of which you were providing documents. Are you - will you assure us you're not attempting to frustrate the Royal Commission.

GRAHAM ASHTON: I can absolutely put my hand on my heart and say that we are not trying to frustrate the Royal Commission. Absolutely. And I can certainly provide reassurance to your listeners at that fact. I know we've been regularly criticised for slowness. The complexity of the task is enormous and I've got about 100 staff working on this, trying to find source and check these documents that are being requested.

NEIL MITCHELL: How many?

GRAHAM ASHTON: About 100. That's to-

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] Are these sworn staff?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Most of them are sworn because they need to be experienced officers to assess these cases. They'll be coming out of Crime Command, be coming off some of our most serious investigations we're conducting. They're going in there and they're working very hard on it. It's the equivalent of two 24-hour police stations or more than that of staff, so it's not like we're not committing staff to it. But if we do a search on our system, say, we'll take Paul Dale for example, if you search Paul and Dale, you're going to get a lot of material on our systems whether it's from those particular two names or even Armidale, for that matter. You're going to get a lot of material, that has to thousands and thousands and thousands of pieces of material have to be checked.

NEIL MITCHELL: But this is where the Royal Commissioner is [indistinct] while threatening criminal charges over Paul Dale. What? 1000 documents. Have they arrived yet?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. Well, they're in the process of arriving and we're going through them all and checking them.

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] But she hasn't got them yet.

GRAHAM ASHTON: So, yeah. That's the sort of complexity of the task we're trying to deal with-

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] And has she got those documents yet?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I don't know if she's got all of those documents, to be honest with you. I don't know. But that's the process they're going through at the moment.

NEIL MITCHELL: Are you concerned you could face criminal charges?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, that won't be a matter for me. I suppose, it's a matter for the Royal Commission. But it's certainly one in which we're working to the best of our ability on and it's just the complexity of the task. It's not that anyone's got their foot on the hose trying to hold things up.

NEIL MITCHELL: Doesn't the Royal Commissioner, understand that?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, we've made that clear on a number of occasions and I know it would be frustrating running an inquiry when you haven't got the material at hand when you want it. I get that frustration, but I can certainly assure your listeners that we're not, sort of, trying to obfuscate, we're not trying to avoid providing things; it's just that it is taking a lot of time.

NEIL MITCHELL: You've explained it to her, and still she says it's not good enough and threatens legal action. She clearly rejects your explanation.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. But all I can do is really provide the best explanation - that we've got people working through the weekends and late into the night and they're pretty stressed out about the work that they're doing



themselves, trying to provide this stuff, this material, as soon as they can get it to them.

NEIL MITCHELL: Where do they come from? The hundred-odd, I assume they're detectives.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, yeah. They're coming out of- I mean, Crime Command is taking a big hit in terms of the members coming there, but they're coming from all over the state, and we've also had lawyers in there as well and some more junior staff that are assisting in the admin as well. There's quite a lot of people involved.

NEIL MITCHELL: So is this affecting the normal work of policing?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, it affects the investigations that they would otherwise have been doing, absolutely. But we get the priority of supplying the material, and so we understand that it comes at a cost.

NEIL MITCHELL: But what sort of investigation is a compromise?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, there's very serious matters that get investigated in Crime Command all the time and people have come away from those. So, the sort of work that happens in Crime Command, it's serious organised crime work. The squads are all in there - your Homicide Squads, your Armed Offenders, Arson and all those specialist squads.

NEIL MITCHELL: But surely, we're not in the situation where the investigation of murders is being affected by this, are

we? [Indistinct] murders are being affected by people being needed to go through documents for the Royal Commission.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, I don't think that murderers are getting off or murderers are getting away or anything like that, I think it's just the matter of the timeliness in which we can do [indistinct].

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] But they've been investigated more slowly.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, there'd be a number of investigations, I don't know specifically which ones, but if you take those staff out of Crime, yeah, things would be- service delivery would be affected.

NEIL MITCHELL: But any serious crime needs to be investigated quickly, doesn't it?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely.

NEIL MITCHELL: Is that not happening?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, we're trying to do them as quickly as we can with the staff that are in there, but ...

NEIL MITCHELL: Is it being compromised by this workload?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah. Look, if staff are coming out of there then investigations, they do get compromised, I guess, but that's- in terms of the timeliness of them but probably

not the outcomes of them; but certainly the speed in which they're done if you haven't got the staff to work on them. But you've got to prioritise and we know that providing information to the Commission is a priority, so we'll make that a priority.

NEIL MITCHELL:

But it's not a priority ahead of crime, is it?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Well, that's the judgment we've got to make. The Royal Commission is a very important organisation and they're doing a very important job, so we have to give it that priority.

NEIL MITCHELL:

What about secrecy? You've been accused of over-arguing the public interest immunity claim. In fact, it was reported that your own QC, Brenda Murphy, had left the team because of a disagreement over this attempted secrecy. Is that correct? Is that why he left?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

He still does work for us, Brendan. He hasn't left. I'm not sure why that impression was formed.

NEIL MITCHELL:

[Talks over] So is he concerned about that issue?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

No. That's not my understanding. He's still doing work for us. As I said, we're using a number of different lawyers that are doing that work for us, so ...

NEIL MITCHELL:

So have any of your lawyers said you're overselling the public interest immunity claim?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Not to my knowledge, no.

NEIL MITCHELL: Are you?

GRAHAM ASHTON: No, I don't think so. We've been making those claims in the Commission. We haven't tested any of those claims in the Appeals Court. We've just been ...

NEIL MITCHELL: Why do you want secrecy?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, if matters- our view is- that we've put in that view that the matters that we've been providing, we have to make sure that lives are not put at risk or people's safety are not put at risk. People that give us information on behalf of the community to try and solve crimes on behalf of the community is important and their safety is important, and that- we don't lose our obligations there. We still have obligations around those people and we're trying to get that balance right.

NEIL MITCHELL: [Indistinct] Also, you've been arguing that a couple of barristers representing some people who have already been convicted you want excluded. Why is that?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, if that's the case, it'd be around potential for conflict of interest, I would imagine, but I'm not sure of the specifics of those ones.

NEIL MITCHELL: But surely any barrister representing somebody is entitled to know what's being put. If they're representing me and I'm in jail because, I believe,

because Nicola Gobbo informed on me, surely I'm entitled to have my barrister get the information.

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Oh, if it relates directly to her, yes. But if it relates to other people that may not have that connection, that might be a different story.

NEIL MITCHELL:

Do you think your problems with providing this information is delaying the Royal Commission?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Well I think that's the view of the Commission, yes certainly- that we're not giving it quick enough. We accept that. We accept the view that it's not coming quickly enough. We're doing our best to get them as quickly as we can, yeah.

NEIL MITCHELL:

What's it costing you?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Do you mean the whole situation? It's a lot, it's probably about a million and half a month, or something of that nature, in terms of all the staff cost, legal costs, and everything else.

NEIL MITCHELL:

And it's going to get- it'll run about 18 months?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Yeah, 18 months, yeah. Then you can do the sums on that, it's a lot of money.

NEIL MITCHELL:

[Interrupts] That's about \$25 million.

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Yeah, a lot of coin, a lot of coins.

NEIL MITCHELL: Where does that come from?

GRAHAM ASHTON: From the police budget. We're not funded for it, so that's going to come out of the police budget, which...

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] Surely, there are implications for that. If you- whatever the figure is, if it's 20, 25, 30 million, if you take that out, it has to affect your operations, doesn't it?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, we're a salary machine. So much of our money goes to our salaries, so it's only a small portion of our budget that then goes outside of salaries to other parts of the business that we run, so it does- yeah, it's a lot of money to have to pull out, absolutely.

NEIL MITCHELL: Will it affect your operations?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, we'll have to absolutely adjust operations because of that sort of cost, yes.

NEIL MITCHELL: How? What will you do?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well things like your voluntary duties, your over time, that sort of stuff's where we end up making cuts.

NEIL MITCHELL: It's pretty- this is- I get the feeling that this great mess bubbling away here that's going to just gradually erupting, and we see somebody going to the Appeals Court. [Indistinct] Appeal Court, we've got the bills, we've got threats from the Royal Commission to the

Police. And it's all going to erupt one day. Surely, somewhere somebody has to be accountable for this. Who is it?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, it's a process where it's been boiling away for years. It's just now boiling away in the public domain. And that's something that, certainly within the policing area, we've known about for a long time, as have the legal sector as well. So it's not a new thing, it's just now that it's out in the public arena. And the Royal Commission process is all a part of that accountability process, of people giving there for their accountability for what happened, decisions that we made, and why they were made. And that accountability, it's done in public and that's part of that accountability process.

NEIL MITCHELL: So is there a smoking gun?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I don't know what a smoking gun means in this context.

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] Well is there somebody who will be found to be accountable for this?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well if- I think people are being held accountable by this process. I think if you're looking for some [indistinct] around, someone has knowingly, in bad faith, acted to try to produce some outcome, I'm not aware of that. I'm not aware of that happening. But that's something that's going to be tested by the Commission, obviously.

NEIL MITCHELL: Do you feel any culpability yourself?

GRAHAM ASHTON: No, I don't. And if I'm asked to give evidence, I'll go and give evidence to the best of my knowledge about the whole thing.

NEIL MITCHELL: You haven't been asked yet?

GRAHAM ASHTON: No.

NEIL MITCHELL: But I assume you would be. It'll be strange not to be.

GRAHAM ASHTON: [Talks over] No.

I'd expect so, even in my current role.

NEIL MITCHELL: Okay, we'll take a- and your current role finishes in the middle of next year.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah.

NEIL MITCHELL: It's good to still be going.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, yeah, it's still another year to run, so yeah.

NEIL MITCHELL: We'll take a break. Other issues for the Chief Commissioner. 96900-693-131332, including the security industry.

[Unrelated - ad break]



NEIL MITCHELL: Chief Commissioner is with me. Some other matters. It's reported, Chief Commissioner, that VicPol has sent suspension letters to 400 security guards. Why?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, we've had an investigation going in the licensing division. There's- we're looking into a fella that we think's been falsifying identity or other type documents, identification, other documents for people to apply for security documents, illegally, really.

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] So is that a big problem?

GRAHAM ASHTON: It was a lot of security guards. There's several hundred that are being looked at, so it's not a small thing. And it impacts a lot of security firms, because once you've got those credential and you've got your license, then a lot of these security firms - they work for multiple firms - so there's a lot affected.

NEIL MITCHELL: So what have they been doing other than getting dodgy accreditation? Have they been doing anything else?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, it's actually- it's getting the dodgy accreditations. But there's someone that's- there's one person that's supplying them. And the investigation has been focusing on that, as that racket around supplying the dodgy documents and then getting the employment off the back of that.

NEIL MITCHELL: And they're mostly foreign students, is that correct?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, there's a lot of students in there, foreign students in that group.

[Unrelated - caller making a traffic update]

NEIL MITCHELL: Is there a significant problem then in the security industry? Is there enough oversight?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, we do put a lot of work into oversight. We've got a lot of staff that work in the licensing area. There's a continued growth in security grants, it's fast growing every year, the amount of people that are applying for licenses. So it is something that does stretch us. But I think they're doing a fantastic job in there, the staff, of managing the amount of licensing that they have to do. They do a pretty good job. This is an example where they've found this and have tracked them down. So that's good.

NEIL MITCHELL: Last year, New South Wales did 5 million random breath tests. We did 1.3 million. Why?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, they've had a different focus on random tests. But I think our targets are from the - if I'm not mistake - our targets that are reported there are from the booze bus type operations rather than across the whole state on drivers that are pulled up, so I think it might be a slightly different management. But they still do more than us [indistinct] ...

NEIL MITCHELL: [Interrupts] Are they right or are we right?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, we've found the focus for us- there's much need to be shifting much more into the drug driving than the drunk driving. We're finding that young people are really getting the message around drink driving. We find young people are designating drivers, they're not driving when they're drinking. I think the community messaging around that is being fairly effective. But it's the drug area for us that's growing exponentially. We're just getting so many people now drug driving. That's going to have to be the area for us to increase rates.

NEIL MITCHELL: So we wouldn't expect an increase in breath test?

GRAHAM ASHTON: If we're going to increase something, I'd like to be trying to increase the drugs, drugs [indistinct].

NEIL MITCHELL: It's reported that your booze buses are still off the road, six of them. Is that right?

GRAHAM ASHTON: It's been driving me mad, these buses. We got these buses from overseas and they had problems in the sort of suspension area and safety problems with them. And now they're ready to go off to get testing, they're still off. These are the smaller busses that we wanted to use, and so while they're off the road, we're using the big buses. So not sort of losing any capacity, but it's just been an absolutely frustration trying to get these buses repaired and fixed.

NEIL MITCHELL: But you must be losing some capacity, because if the six were on the road, you'd be running both at times.

GRAHAM ASHTON: All these buses were going to retire. The other ones [indistinct] pump the tyres back up, but it's a different sort of operation. We're hoping with these new ones that we can run operations on smaller roads. Big buses, they limit you on the roads you can do them on.

NEIL MITCHELL: You're also calling the Road Policing Conference. Where? Why? Who?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, I've got the Road Policing heads coming together around the country, and just on the policing side of things, not the broader government side of things. So we've got increases in road toll in New South Wales, in South Australia, Western Australia, as well as Victoria. So this is going to come together and see what's happening in the other states and whether there's things we can pick up, and then feed that into government and see where we can go there on there on the policing side of things.

NEIL MITCHELL: When will that be? Do we know yet?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I'm hoping within the next fortnight I'll be able to get them together. I've rung around and- yeah, we'll hopefully get them together.

NEIL MITCHELL: Are looking again at the idea of the 80 kilometre limit on some country roads? B roads, dirt roads, or other roads that aren't major roads?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well what we've been pushing is roads for the conditions of the road. So if the road is a road that

should be doing 80 on, why are we doing a hundred on the condition of the road as such that it doesn't really safely allow you to do a hundred. That's always been our biggest concern and that's something that Steve Leane, our Assistant Commissioner for Road Policing, is really trying to be focused on.

NEIL MITCHELL: So it's still under consideration, is it?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, I'm not sure about the broader government view, but certainly Steve's view is that it is something we need to keep talking about.

NEIL MITCHELL: Is there some problem with leaks that you've been- you sort of running a blitz on too? People under investigation, one person charged on providing information without authorisation; including a couple of high ranking one like Stuart Bateson the commander?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, well Stuart was an IBAC investigation. I think that sort of relates to information about an IBAC matter, so it wasn't our issue in terms of the leaking from our side of things. But he's dealing with those allegations at the moment, he's going to get to court and front that at the moment, so he's off-

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] I've read this week another person of significant rank has been suspended.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, we haven't really had any blitzes as such, but there have been a few of them lately, you're right.

They had been a few of them in the last 12 months where we've charged people. Yeah, there have been.

NEIL MITCHELL: Why?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, I'm not sure there's anything endemic going on. There's just been a bit of an increase of late. At times it happens from time to time. Certainly- I certainly haven't been proud of many conversations where we said, look, this is something we need to sort of crackdown on. They just come along and if the evidence is there, they charge.

NEIL MITCHELL: Police officer- former police officer, former member of the Highway Patrol, extraordinary footage last night of an incident- road rage incident on the freeway, and he was accused of attacking another driver. And there was dramatic footage of it, his solicitor - his barrister - said it was something to do with PTSD from his time as a police officer. Are you aware of the case?

GRAHAM ASHTON: I'm aware if the case, the footage is incredible. That- the danger of having that brawl in the traffic lane on a busy road...

NEIL MITCHELL: [Talks over] So is VicPol involved with this case, still? Given that he says it's PTSD.

GRAHAM ASHTON: We'll we were- he was a member of the force when this happened and I think he has since left. Professional Standards Command dealt with the matter at the time in terms of charging and suspending and all that. But,

you know, look, PTSD is a huge problem in the force. And we know that, but I'm not sure in this case of what the connection is. But I guess that will have to be explored at court.

NEIL MITCHELL:

Family violence, a lot of attention at the moment. Does it ever frustrate your office? I spend a lot of time on as we know, they deal with it, and often when it comes out of the court, there's not a lot of response, or a reaction.

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Yeah, it's our most frequent event that police officers go. There is still, I think, it's about every seven minutes now, they're going to a family violence incident and it takes up most of the day for our street police officers who are on the van.

NEIL MITCHELL:

But the court's supporting you, though.

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Yeah, it's, we hope after Royal Commission, and with those recommendations so this is an issue that everyone takes seriously and we certainly hope that that's reflected. We want people who get sentenced for this things to absolutely get the- as much as we can get.

NEIL MITCHELL:

Reaction to the John Setka decision?

GRAHAM ASHTON:

Yeah, that was before the courts, so...

NEIL MITCHELL:

Well, it's not now.

GRAHAM ASHTON: That's right. We'd dealt with- but there's still- we're still just inside, things like the penal period and all that sort of stuff. So I'll have to be good.

NEIL MITCHELL: Back to the Royal Commission, I reckon there could be a thousand cases there involving Nicola Gobbo. You sure that the police can't do more to speed it up?

GRAHAM ASHTON: Well, I could reassure you and the listeners, Neil, we're doing everything we can and we'll continue to do everything we can. We understand the importance of the Royal Commission and absolutely hand on my heart, do everything we can.

NEIL MITCHELL: You've been in action, you've damaged your finger.

GRAHAM ASHTON: Yeah, cut with a knife cutting some chicken, doing some barbecue on the weekend.

NEIL MITCHELL: They don't give you a gun, do they?

GRAHAM ASHTON: No. Hopefully it will heal alright.

NEIL MITCHELL: Thank you for the time. Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton.

\* \* End \* \*

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