

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

STATEMENT OF TREVOR JOHN ASHTON

1. My full name is Trevor John Ashton. I am currently an Acting Superintendent, Conduct and Professional Standards Division – Professional Standards Command.
2. I make this statement in response to a request from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 12 March 2019.

Educational background and employment history

3. I joined Victoria Police as a cadet on 28 January 1978. A summary of my employment history since that time is set out in Appendix A.
4. I have undertaken the following qualifications and training:
 - a) Graduate Certificate of Applied Management, Australian Institute of Police Management, 2007
 - b) Problem Solving & Decision Making 2007
 - c) Manage Operations 2006
 - d) Control Multi Agency Emergency Situations 2006
 - e) Project Management, Airlie School of Leadership, 2005
 - f) Mentor and Coaching Skills for Managers, Waite Group, 2005
 - g) Sub-Officers' Course, 1999
5. I have completed numerous training courses while employed by Victoria Police. In the time available, I have not been able to locate details of all of the training I have undertaken. However, some of the more recent training I have completed is set out in Appendix B.

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

6. My involvement or association with Ms Gobbo occurred during 1993 and 1995. I have very little recollection of this time and have relied on my official diary¹ and day books² in making this statement.

¹ VPL.0005.0023.0022

² VPL.0005.0023.0001, VPL.0005.0023.0007, VPL.0005.0023.0011

7. I have been unable to locate my prior official diary for the relevant period prior to 10 September 1993 and have only had access to my daybook for this period.
8. In 1993 and 1995 I was a Sergeant gazetted to the Richmond Police Station. For much of this time period, I was positioned at the 'A' District Support Group (DSG) Melbourne, on secondment. I undertook two secondments; from 21/6/1993 to 1/1/1995, 14/5/1995 to 10/10/1995. The DSG comprised of three working teams of investigators. Each team was under the direct management of a Sergeant whilst the teams were under the management of a Detective Senior Sergeant. Our core functions focussed on addressing crime related offending, including drugs, property, persons, licensing and public order.
9. My first contact with Ms Gobbo occurred on 3 September 1993 when a search warrant was executed at 250 Rathdowne Street, Carlton as part of Operation Yak. Operation Yak was a targeted operation involving alleged drug trafficking by Brian Wilson. My team was assisting Sergeant Holding's team, a fellow investigative DSG team, in executing the search warrant.
10. At 17:25 entry was gained to the premises.
11. At approximately 19:30, a search of Ms Gobbo's room was conducted. A small quantity of drugs was located in her room, concealed in a cigarette packet in a chest of drawers. Ms Gobbo was present with myself and another one or two members of my team when the search was undertaken.
12. I recall that Ms Gobbo provided me with information which ultimately led me to locating a large quantity of drugs in the laundry of the premises. I believe Ms Gobbo provided me with this information while we were in her bedroom, away from Mr Wilson.
13. Ms Gobbo and Mr Wilson were conveyed back to our station and interviewed. Ultimately, Mr Wilson was charged with drug trafficking, while Ms Gobbo was charged with use and possession of a drug of dependence.
14. I do not have any note or recollection of a third person being arrested and charged.
15. My daybook for 3 September 1993 includes a note that reads "assist re Wilson". I do not know whether this is a reference to me assisting in the processing of Wilson, or whether it relates to Ms Gobbo stating that she would assist in relation to Wilson.
16. I also have a note in my daybook which I think refers to Ms Gobbo working part time at the MCG and earning \$100 per week.
17. Between 1993 and 1995 part of my role involved undertaking plain clothes duties at the MCG, focusing on licencing and public order.

18. I recall seeing Ms Gobbo at football games at the MCG on two or three occasions during this period. From memory, Ms Gobbo worked at a catering company. I don't recall when I saw her at the MCG.
19. My daybook and diary records show that I worked shifts at the MCG on 4, 12, 18 and 25 September 1993 and 9 July 1995. I have not been able to locate any notes of any discussions I had with Ms Gobbo at the MCG. I can't recall what these discussions were about.
20. On 10 July 1995 my day book records the name Nicola and a mobile and landline phone number. I don't recall the circumstances in which this entry was made.
21. As some stage, Ms Gobbo was registered as an informer. I have been shown the registration form³ and recognise my handwriting in the sections of the form headed "Reliability" and "Contact members". The remainder of the handwriting on the form is not mine. The registration form is not dated and I have no record of when it was signed.
22. Constable Argall's name also appears on the registration form. I do not recall C/ Argall being involved in the registration process, but I recall that he was a member of my team during my second secondment to the DSG.
23. I can't remember why Ms Gobbo was registered. I think it was due to the substantial nature of the information that she was providing.
24. My diary indicates that on 12 July 1995 I spoke to a registered informer. I assume that this is a reference to Ms Gobbo. My diary and day book record me meeting with Ms Gobbo on this day, but I have no recollection of the meeting. I think that Ms Gobbo was providing information about guns being moved from Sydney to Melbourne. I can't recall whether this information related to Brian Wilson.
25. My daybook notes indicate that on 12 July 1995 I met Ms Gobbo and accompanied her to the St Kilda Road Police Station where we met with D/S John Gibson and D/S/C Brian Mellick from the Special Response Squad. Based on my daybook notes, I assume that I picked Ms Gobbo up from VicRoads and transported her to St Kilda Road.
26. On 13 July 1995 my daybook records a conversation that I had with Ms Gobbo about Brian and Gavin.
27. On 15 July 1995 my daybook records a further conversation that I had with Ms Gobbo in relation to Brian and Gavin.

³ VPL.0005.0007.0088

28. On 18 July 1995 my daybook records a conversation that I had with Ms Gobbo. The note refers to Gavin. My daybook also includes reference to D/Sgt Gibson attending a milk bar, which I recall was "Gary's" milk bar, which I recall Ms Gobbo had provided information about.
29. On 24 July 1995 my daybook records that I had a conversation with Ms Gobbo. My diary records that I spoke with G6/95 regarding a guns enquiry. I do not know who G6/95 is. I might have incorrectly recorded G3/95 which I now know from the registration document was Ms Gobbo's registered number.
30. On 26 July 1995 my daybook records information about the movement of stolen cigarettes through Gary's milk bar, which I recall Ms Gobbo had provided information about.
31. My daybook also records Ms Gobbo providing a name "Darren Larrs". I have no idea who this is or what it relates to.
32. On 31 July 1995 my daybook records a further conversation I had with Ms Gobbo. Ms Gobbo informed me that Brian and Gavin had had a huge rift and there was nothing happening. It appears that I contacted D/S/C Paul Pretty at Special Response Squad that day.
33. I had no further contact with Ms Gobbo.

Use of Ms Gobbo as a human source

Question 3

34. Refer to my response to question 2. I had Ms Gobbo registered in 1995 and she was providing me with information.
35. I have been asked whether I have any knowledge or belief that Ms Gobbo was providing information to police subsequent to 1995. I know now that Ms Gobbo was providing information and assistance to police between 2005 and 2009. I became aware of this from reports in the media. I recall initially hearing of Lawyer X through the media. I first suspected that Lawyer X was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] In 2018 or 2019 I became aware that Ms Gobbo was Lawyer X.

Question 4

36. I believe that D/Sgt John Gibson and D/S/C Brian Mellick from the Special Response Squad were aware of Ms Gobbo's role during 1995. I assume that C/ Tim Argall was also aware, given that his name appears on the registration form. I believe that other members of my team at the relevant time may also have been aware, including Jeff Pope, Rod Arthur and Neale Thompson.

37. I am not aware of any other person or organisation being aware of this.

Question 5

38. I registered Ms Gobbo as a human source in 1995.

Question 6

39. I refer to my response to question 2.

Question 7

40. I refer to my response to question 2.

Question 8

41. I have no knowledge in relation to this matter.

Question 9

42. I am not aware of any concerns being raised.

Question 10

43. There were no concerns raised during 1993-1995. Nor did I have any concerns. Ms Gobbo was not a legal practitioner at this time.

44. The correct processes for dealing with any potential concerns were followed by me in registering Ms Gobbo and referring her to the appropriate area, namely the Special Response Squad.

Question 11

45. I have no awareness of this matter.

Other matters

Question 12

46. I have no knowledge of this matter.

Question 13

47. I have completed numerous training courses while employed by Victoria Police. In the time available, I have not been able to locate details of all of the training I have undertaken, nor review the content of that training. However, my recollection of the training (including retraining) I have received is as follows:

- a) I cannot recall receiving any specific training in regards to obligation of disclosure to accused persons, prosecution agencies and the courts.
- b) An accused's right to silence was taught at the Academy and continually reinforced during subsequent training.
- c) An accused's right to a legal practitioner was taught at the Academy and continually reinforced during subsequent training.
- d) I can't pinpoint specific training about legal professional privilege but I have learned about this subject over the span of my career.
- e) I can't recall receiving any specific training on public interest immunity.
- f) I have received on the job training regarding professional and ethical decision making as I've moved through the management ranks.

Question 14

48. I would like to inform the Royal Commission that no-one had asked me about my registration and contact with Ms Gobbo during the years that followed. I had not recalled that I had registered Ms Gobbo and obtained information from her in 1995 until I was contacted by Operation Landow on 22 January 2019.

49. I otherwise have nothing further to add in response to question 14.

Dated: 21 March 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor John Ashton', written over a dotted horizontal line.

Trevor John Ashton

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Appendix A

Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informers

Inspector Trevor Ashton 21889

Conduct & Professional Standards Division – Professional Standards Command

Victoria Police Employment (Summary) History

Commencement: 28 January, 1978 Victoria Police Cadet

POSITION / RANKDATE/S**Constable / Senior Constable**

Dandenong Uniform	01/1980	-	10/1990
Burwood Uniform			
Nunawading Uniform			
Ringwood Uniform	31/7/1985	-	12/11/1990

Sergeant

City Watch House (Promotion)	11/1990	-	06/1991
Richmond Uniform	07/1991	-	11/1996:- <i>includes</i>
'A' District Support Group	21/6/1993	-	1/1/1995 (1)
'A' District Support Group	14/5/1995	-	10/10/1995 (2)
'A' District Headquarters (Staff Officer)	11/1995	-	01/1996 Approx.

Senior Sergeant

'B' District Reliever (Promotion)	01/1997	-	10/1997:- <i>includes</i>
Sub – Charge St. Kilda Uniform	01/1997	-	03/1997

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Sub – Charge Prahran Uniform	03/1997	-	05/1997
<u>POSITION / RANK</u>	<u>DATE/S</u>		
Service Improvement Program (Project)	05/1997	-	10/1997
Sub – Charge Carlton Uniform	10/1997	-	12/2002:- <i>includes</i>
Officer in Charge St. Kilda Rd. Uniform	06/2001	-	12/2001
Officer in Charge Carlton Uniform	12/2002	-	05/2009:- <i>includes</i>
A/Inspector Staff Officer – A/C Region 1	08/2003	-	07/2004
A/Inspector Region 1 Glen Eira – Div. 3 Region1	09/2004	-	10/2004
A/Inspector Yarra PSA	11/2004	-	02/2005
A/Inspector IT Services Re-Tendering Project	05/2005	-	09/2005
A/Inspector Carlton PSA	08/2006	-	12/2006
A/Inspector Knox PSA	03/2006	-	07/2006
A/Inspector People Development Command	04/2007	-	10/2008
A/Inspector Glen Eira PSA	11/2008	-	03/2009
Officer in Charge Nunawading Highway Patrol	05/2009	-	04/2011: - <i>includes</i>
A/Inspector Monash PSA	12/2009	-	01/2010
A/Inspector Eastern Region Traffic	04/2010	-	06/2010
A/Inspector Eastern Region Support Services	07/2010	-	09/2010
A/Inspector Monash PSA	12/2010	-	01/2011
A/Inspector Whitehorse PSA	01/2011	-	04/2011
Inspector			
Horsham PSA – Western Region	04/2011	-	03/2015:- <i>includes</i>
A/Superintendent Western Region Div. 4	05/2013	-	06/2013
A/Superintendent Western Region Div. 4	09/2013	-	11/2013
A/Superintendent Western Region Div. 4	06/2014	-	07/2014
A/Superintendent Western Region Div. 4	09/2014	-	10/2014
A/Superintendent Western Region Div. 4	11/2014	-	04/2015
Professional Standards Command	04/2015	-	Current:- <i>includes</i>
A/Superintendent C.P.S.D. – P.S.C.	12/2016	-	01/2017
A/Superintendent C.P.S.D. – P.S.C.	06/2018	-	07/2018
A/Superintendent C.P.S.D. – P.S.C.	11/2018	-	12/2018
A/Superintendent C.P.S.D. – P.S.C.	03/2018	-	Current

APPENDIX B

Learner Name : Trevor Ashton

Course Name	Course Type	Course ID	Location	Fee	Currency	Schedule	Delivery Method
Primary Collision Investigation Course	E	71022684	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		01.03.2010 - 05.03.2010	Classroom Training
OST Training Course - Academy	E	71001151	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		13.10.2010 - 14.10.2010	Classroom Training
Incident Comm and Control Structure v2	E	71003310	Box Hill Police Station	0.00		08.12.2010 - 09.12.2010	Classroom Training
SAP Smith and Wesson User and OSTT 2011	E	71006257	OSTT Unit - Ballarat	0.00		07.11.2011 - 11.11.2011	Classroom Training
Health & Safety Induction	E	71031961	Victoria Police Centre Building C	0.00		15.01.2012 - 15.01.2012	Classroom Training
Operator Development Course	E	71009159	Dawson Street Traffic Complex	0.00		25.04.2012 - 25.04.2012	Classroom Training
SAP Smith and Wesson 90 day re-cert	E	71009397	OSTT Unit - Ballarat	0.00		10.05.2012 - 10.05.2012	Classroom Training
Online Security Awareness - 2012 Release	E	71013121	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		01.07.2012 - 01.07.2012	Classroom Training
SAP Smith and Wesson 180 day re-cert	E	71012186	OSTT Unit - Ballarat	0.00		09.10.2012 - 09.10.2012	Classroom Training
Persons in Police Care or Custody - 2	E	71014491	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		01.11.2012 - 01.11.2012	Classroom Training
Persons in Police Care or Custody - 3	E	71014494	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		02.11.2012 - 02.11.2012	Classroom Training
Persons in Police Care or Custody - 1	E	71014482	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		12.11.2012 - 12.11.2012	Classroom Training
AIM Introduction	E	71018880	Western Div 4 Headquarters - Horsham	0.00		08.02.2013 - 09.02.2013	Classroom Training
OSTT Biannual Post SAP	E	71014667	Western Div 4 Headquarters - Horsham	0.00		13.02.2013 - 13.02.2013	Classroom Training
OSTT Biannual Post SAP	E	71019826	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		01.11.2013 - 01.11.2013	Classroom Training
First Aid Emergency Life Support	E	71020404	CFA Horsham Fire Station	0.00		05.03.2014 - 05.03.2014	Classroom Training

Course Name	Course Type	Course ID	Location	Fee	Currency	Schedule	Delivery Method
OSTT Biannual Post SAP	E	71022430	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		23.05.2014 - 23.05.2014	Classroom Training
OSTT Biannual Post SAP	E	71026676	Western Div 4 Headquarters - Horsham	0.00		04.02.2015 - 04.02.2015	Classroom Training
Inspector Development Program (4 Day)	E	71044525	Airlie Leadership Development Centre	0.00		21.04.2015 - 24.04.2015	Classroom Training
Smarter Behind the Wheel	E	71033118	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		10.07.2015 - 10.07.2015	Classroom Training
Change at Work	E	71033198	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		24.09.2015 - 24.09.2015	Classroom Training
Active Shooter (AAO) Manager	E	71032768	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		25.09.2015 - 25.09.2015	Classroom Training
Active Shooter (AAO) Manager Hydra	E	71034312	OSTT Instructor Development	0.00		01.10.2015 - 01.10.2015	Classroom Training
Inspector Development Program (1 Day)	E	71044768	Airlie Leadership Development Centre	0.00		23.08.2016 - 23.08.2016	Classroom Training
Pursuit Policy-Operational Supervisors	E	71039582	Operational Support Department Venues	0.00		13.12.2016 - 13.12.2016	Classroom Training
OSTT Standard Accuracy & Tactical Shoot	E	71040828	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		20.01.2017 - 20.01.2017	Classroom Training
First Aid Emergency Life Support	E	71041348	Victoria Police Centre	0.00		10.02.2017 - 10.02.2017	Classroom Training
Inspector Development Program (1 Day)	E	71046714	Airlie Leadership Development Centre	0.00		07.09.2017 - 07.09.2017	Classroom Training
Active Shooter (AAO) Manager Phase 2	E	71045292	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		20.10.2017 - 20.10.2017	Classroom Training
Active Shooter (AAO) Manager Hydra 2	E	71049902	Academy C Block	0.00		21.02.2018 - 21.02.2018	Classroom Training
Active Shooter (AAO) Manager Phase 3	E	71053985	OSTT Complex - Academy	0.00		30.10.2018 - 30.10.2018	Classroom Training
VPLH OTST Jan-Jun 2015- Provoked Shooting	ET	73000050		0.00		Released until : 03.02.2015	External Web-Based Training
Intercepting Vehicles & Pusuits Policy	ET	73000300		0.00		Released until : 27.10.2015	External Web-Based Training
Safe-T-Net Early	ET	73000475		0.00		Released until : 08.08.2016	External Web-Based Training

Intervention - Module 2 Safe-1-Net							
Early Intervention - Module 1	ET	73000476		0.00		Released until : 08.08.2016	External Web- Based Training
Family Violence Module-1	ET	73000404		0.00		Released until : 10.08.2016	External Web- Based Training
Pursuits Policy (2016) Revised E-Learn	ET	73000575		0.00		Released until : 16.09.2016	External Web- Based Training
Information Management & Security	ET	73000275		0.00		Released until : 28.10.2016	External Web- Based Training
Vehicle Borne Attack	ET	73000702		0.00		Released until : 12.02.2018	External Web- Based Training
Manual Handling VPS Staff & Contractors	ET	73000750		0.00		Released until : 06.11.2017	External Web- Based Training
Manual Handling VP Operational Employees	ET	73000751		0.00		Released until : 26.03.2018	External Web- Based Training
IT'S ABOUT RESPECT: Sexual Har & Discrim	ET	73001000		0.00		Released until : 16.11.2018	External Web- Based Training
Pursuits Policy (2019) Revised Refresher	ET	73001050		0.00		Released until : 15.01.2019	External Web- Based Training
Product Users of Body Worn Cameras	ET	73001028		0.00		Released until : 25.01.2019	External Web- Based Training
Search of Persons	ET	73001075		0.00		Released until : 26.02.2019	External Web- Based Training