

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

**STATEMENT OF IAN JAMES THOMAS**

- 1 My full name is Ian James Thomas.
- 2 I make this statement in response to a request from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 19 March 2019. This statement is produced to the Royal Commission in response to a Notice to Produce.
- 3 I have been told by members of Taskforce Landow that in spite of extensive searches, my police diaries have not been located. I have answered the questions asked to the best of my recollection and at times, I have been aided by contemporaneous documents that record events that I had involvement in. While those contemporaneous documents have assisted me to recall various events, they are no substitute for my official police diaries.

**Educational background and employment history (Q1)**

- 4 I joined Victoria Police in April 1967 and graduated from the Police Academy as a constable in August 1967. A summary of my employment history since that time is set out below:
  - (a) Between 1967 and 1972, I was a Constable stationed at Russell Street, Northcote Coburg and Brunswick.
  - (b) In around 1972, I was promoted to Senior Constable and was temporarily transferred to the Ascot Vale Crime Car Squad.
  - (c) In around 1973, I became a detective at the Russell Street CIB. I was then transferred to the Broadmeadows CIB for a few years.
  - (d) Between 1975-1977, I was stationed at the drug squad.
  - (e) In 1977, I was promoted to Sergeant at Reservoir.
  - (f) In 1980, I went back to the drug squad for a period of time as a Detective Sergeant.

- (g) In 1981, I moved to the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence in Melbourne.
- (h) In 1984, I was promoted to Senior Sergeant and was stationed as the sub charge at Broadmeadows.
- (i) Between 1985-1986, I was a Senior Lecturer of the Detective Training School.
- (j) Between 1986-1987, I was staff officer to the Assistant Commissioner (Personnel).
- (k) Between 1987-1991, I was the Chief Investigator of the National Crime Authority (Melbourne) and the Deputy director of Investigations. During the period I was at the National Crime Authority, I was promoted to Detective Chief Inspector.
- (l) Between 1991-1994, I was the Detective Chief Inspector at the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence.
- (m) Between 1994-1999, I was the Detective Superintendent, Divisional Commander No 1 Division State Crime Squads (Organised Crime and Task Forces).
- (n) Between 1999 and May 2002, I was Detective Superintendent, Divisional Commander, No 3 Division (Intelligence and Support Services), State Crime Squads.
- (o) Between June 2002 and around January 2006, I was Detective Superintendent of State Intelligence in the Intelligence and Covert Support Department. For much of this period, I was upgraded to Acting Commander of the Intelligence and Covert Support Department (which comprised the State Intelligence and Covert Support divisions).
- (p) In around January 2006, I was promoted to Commander and was appointed to a joint taskforce for aviation security with the Australian Federal Police. I was based in Tullamarine and had responsibility for the southern region, with responsibility for the Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart airports.
- (q) In 2007, I retired from Victoria Police and took up a full time position as Commander with the Australian Federal Police. I remained as a Commander of the Australian Federal Police until I retired in February 2011.

- 5 I have a Graduate Certificate in Police Management that I obtained from Charles Sturt University in 2009. In addition, I have completed a number of Victoria Police training courses, including:
- (a) Executive Management Course (1998-1999)
  - (b) Senior Police Executive Officers' Course (1992)
  - (c) Victoria Police Officer's College (1986)
  - (d) Victoria Police Detective Sub-Officers' Advanced Training Course
- 6 I completed a number of Victoria Police training courses in the period that I was employed by Victoria Police.
- 7 I have received the following awards and commendations:
- (a) Australia Police Medal (2000)
  - (b) National Medal with Second Clasp
  - (c) Victoria Police Service Medal
  - (d) Victoria Police Valour Award
  - (e) Crime Department Commendation (January 2001)
  - (f) Chief Commissioner's Highly Commended Certificate (June 1993)
  - (g) Victoria Police Departmental Commendations (3)

**Involvement or association with any investigation which had dealings in any way with Ms Gobbo (Q2)**

- 8 I was not involved or associated in any investigation that had any dealings in any way with Ms Gobbo.

**Use of Ms Gobbo as a human source**

Question 3

- 9 In the course of preparing this statement, I have been shown an Informer Registration/Reactivation Application in relation to Ms Gobbo that is dated 16 September 2005 (**2005 application form**).<sup>1</sup> Based on that document, I believe that I learned that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police (or it

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<sup>1</sup> VPL.0005.0017.0001.

was expected that she was going to provide such information or assistance) in September 2005. I have no recollection of seeing this document before I prepared this statement and have no independent recollection of Ms Gobbo's registration as a human source. The version of the 2005 application form that I have reviewed is not signed. If I approved Ms Gobbo's registration, I would have signed an application. I expect that the version that I have been shown is computer generated. While I may have signed a similar document, I have no recollection of doing so.

- 10 I have also been shown a form titled "Change of Nominated Participants" form.<sup>2</sup> I do not recall seeing this form until I prepared this statement.
- 11 At the time Ms Gobbo was registered, the Detective Superintendent of State Intelligence had responsibility for both the Dedicated Source Unit and the Informer Management Unit. The Dedicated Source Unit was relatively new, as were the procedures that were put in place for the registration of sources under Chief Commissioner's Instruction 6/04 (**2004 Informer Management Policy**).<sup>3</sup>
- 12 As the Detective Superintendent of State Intelligence, I was the Central Informer Registrar (**CIR**) under the 2004 Informer Management Policy. I was also the Local Informer Registrar (**LIR**) because Ms Gobbo was being registered by the Source Development Unit and I was the Superintendent in charge of that unit. I do not recall whether it was intended that the one person occupy both the CIR and LIR roles under the 2004 Informer Management Policy for registrations by the Source Development Unit.
- 13 While I have no recollection of doing so, I believe that I would have followed the procedure in the 2004 Informer Management Policy at the time that Ms Gobbo was registered. I also believe that I would have made a record of this in my police diary.
- 14 In the course of preparing this statement, I have been told that Officer Sandy White has given evidence to the effect that he briefed me at around the time Ms Gobbo was registered as a human source and that we would have discussed the potential risks of registering a barrister. I have no doubt that such discussions did take place, although I have no memory of this.

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<sup>2</sup> VPL.2000.0002.1002.

<sup>3</sup> VPL.0002.0001.2214.

- 15 I believe that I would have considered issues such as Ms Gobbo's obligations to her clients and legal professional privilege at the time she was registered. To my knowledge, at the time she was registered there was no legal bar or policy direction that would prohibit the use of lawyers as human sources in Victoria.
- 16 I have been shown an entry from the Source Development Unit Source Management Log, which records a conversation between Sandy White and me on 27 September 2005.<sup>4</sup> I do not recall the conversation that is recorded in the log but have no reason to think that it did not take place. I would have made a record of the conversation in my diary.
- 17 Under the 2004 Informer Management Policy, the member who identifies a potential human source is to complete an initial assessment. The initial assessment comprises "Part C" of the Informer Registration/Reactivation Application.
- 18 I have reviewed a copy of the risk assessment completed by Officer Peter Smith on 15 November 2005 and by Officer Black on 23 November 2005.<sup>5</sup> I do not recall seeing this document until I prepared this statement and do not know whether I was provided with a copy of an earlier version of this risk assessment at the time I first saw the 2005 application form.
- 19 If an informal risk assessment was conducted by me at an earlier stage, I would have made a note of it in my diary. I would also have made a note of relevant conversations that I had with representatives at the SDU at the time. As my police diaries have not been located, I have not been able to review them to see whether such discussions in fact took place.

#### Question 4

- 20 I believe that the people listed on the 2005 application form were aware that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police. In addition, other members of the Dedicated Source Unit and members of the Informer Management Unit may also have been aware that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police. Save than the persons listed on the 2005 application form, I am not aware of the names of specific persons within the Dedicated Source Unit or Informer Management Unit that knew that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police.

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<sup>4</sup> VPL.0100.0058.3037.

<sup>5</sup> VPL.2000.0001.9395.

Question 5

- 21 To the best of my recollection, the persons involved in the authorisation of Ms Gobbo as a human source are those persons listed on the 2005 application form, including myself.
- 22 I do not know who was involved in the continued authorisation of the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source.

Question 6

- 23 I do not recall having any personal contact with Ms Gobbo.

Questions 7 and 8

- 24 I have no information to provide in response to these questions.
- 25 It was not my role to receive information from human sources. At the time Ms Gobbo was registered, I would have been given context as to why they wanted to register her. I have no recollection of these discussions, but they would have included information that she had already provided, and the kind of information that it was expected she could provide in the future.

**Concerns in relation to the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source**Question 9

- 26 I do not recall any specific concerns being raised as to the use of a legal practitioner as a human source. No doubt there are special considerations that apply to legal practitioners that may not apply to other human sources, however, these factors do not bar legal practitioners from being human sources.

Question 10

- 27 I refer to my answer to question 3, above. While I do not specifically recall, I would have had discussions at the time Ms Gobbo was registered about the kinds of risks that were unique to legal practitioners as human sources. Without my diary, I am unable to recall who I had these discussions with or the detail of what was discussed.

Question 11

- 28 I have nothing further to add in response to this question.

**Other relevant matters**Question 12

29 I cannot recall any other human sources who provided information to Victoria Police who were subject to legal obligations of confidentiality or privilege.

Question 13

30 I completed a number of training courses in my period of employment with Victoria Police. I have not undertaken a detailed review of the Victoria Police courses I have completed or the content of those courses. I would have received training on each of the topics identified in question 13 at the Academy and then subsequently at various stages throughout my career.

31 My recollection of the relevant training or retraining I have received is as follows:

- (a) I would have received training on the obligation of disclosure to accused persons at the Academy. This is also something that I would have learned more about on the job as I became more experienced.
- (b) I would have received training on the rights of an accused person, including the right to silence at the Academy. Such rights are a fundamental part of police work.
- (c) I would have received training on the right of an accused person to a legal practitioner at the Academy.
- (d) I don't recall any specific training on legal professional privilege, however, this is something that I learnt about on the job.
- (e) I don't recall any specific training on public interest immunity, however, this is something that I have learnt about on the job.
- (f) Professional and ethical decision making is a fundamental part of police work and is something that I would have received training on at the Academy. While I do not specifically recall, it is also something that I would have received further training on from time to time over my career.

**Other information (Q14)**

- 32 I have been shown an Informer Registration Application completed by Detective Senior Constable Pope on 13 May 1999.<sup>6</sup> Part C of that form records that Ms Gobbo was added to the Central Register on 27 May 1999 by "Thomas 22169". This is not me. I did not sign this form and had no knowledge of Ms Gobbo being registered as a police informer in 1999.
- 33 In 2001, the Review of the Victoria Police Drug Squad made a number of recommendations in relation to the management of human sources. These recommendations included the establishment of an Informer Management Unit and the creation of associated policies and procedures. My department was involved in the implementation of these recommendations, including the development of the 2004 Informer Management Policy.
- 34 The Informer Management Policy was first implemented on 22 September 2003 under Chief Commissioner's Instruction 07/03. The State Intelligence Division also put together and delivered the training for human source management at around the same time. I had no direct role in the development of human source training.
- 35 Between May and November 2004, I was in London on secondment to the Metropolitan Police Service at New Scotland Yard. My secondment was unrelated to human source management, however, while I was on secondment, I did visit the Source Management Unit of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. To the best of my recollection, the Home Office had produced guidelines on the management of human sources by UK government departments. My recollection is that these guidelines provided direction as to the use of all human sources, including those that might be considered to be high risk, such as solicitors. The UK position was that there was no bar to the use of these kinds of sources. In the case of legal practitioners, the UK guidelines identified that there were specific risks surrounding the information that may be provided, particularly where some information may be subject to legal professional privilege.
- 36 On around 4 January 2005, I signed off on an Issue Cover Sheet that recommended that approval be given for two members to travel to Canada to develop advanced human source training.<sup>7</sup> Canada had been identified as having appropriate training which could be modified for use by Victoria Police.

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<sup>6</sup> VPL.0005.0013.0952.

<sup>7</sup> VPL.0100.0048.1470



- 37 While I have no recollection of doing so, the minutes of the Dedicated Human Source Management Team Pilot Steering Committee state that I sat on the Steering Committee in the period between January 2005 and April 2005.<sup>8</sup> I do have a general recollection of discussing the formulation of a dedicated human source handling team at around this time.
- 38 On 15 March 2005, I wrote to Chief Superintendent Souccar of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to advise him that Sandy White of the Dedicated Source Unit and Detective Acting Senior Sergeant Glenn Owen of the Informer Management Unit would accept their invitation to travel to Canada to review the Canadian training model and to attend the Specialized National Investigations Course.<sup>9</sup>
- 39 My recollection is that advanced training was implemented on their return.

Dated: 18 September 2019



Ian James Thomas

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<sup>8</sup> VPL.0100.0048.1101; VPL.0100.0048.1097; VPL.0100.0048.1143; VPL.0100.0048.1076; VPL.0100.0048.0676; VPL.0100.0048.1127; VPL.0100.0048.1094; VPL.0100.0048.1082; VPL.0100.0048.1110; VPL.0100.0048.1087; VPL.0100.0048.1136.

<sup>9</sup> VPL.0005.0051.1512.