

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

STATEMENT OF GRAHAM JAMES BROWN

1. My full name is Graham James Brown.
2. I retired from Victoria Police in July 2009 after nearly 43 years' service.
3. I make this statement in response to a request from 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.
4. In making this statement I have not had access to my emails. I have had access to the four diaries I kept before I left Victoria Police, dated between 15 July 2002 and July 2009. I do not know where my other diaries are now located.

Educational background and employment history (Q1)

5. I joined Victoria Police on 16 September 1966 and graduated from the Victorian Police Academy on 3 February 1967.
6. Following graduation, I was a uniform member at Russell Street, Prahran and Frankston Crime Cars. Then I was a detective senior constable at Russell Street and the Arson Squad.
7. I was promoted to Sergeant, spending two years at Caulfield Crime Cars, and then spent three years at Mildura from 1 November 1978 to 3 December 1981. For two of those years, I was a prosecutor.
8. In December 1981 I returned to Russell Street as a Detective Sergeant.
9. In January 1983 I was promoted to Senior Sergeant at H District was then at Elsternwick Police Station until October 1988.
10. I have been informed that the remainder of my service history cannot be located by Victoria Police.
11. I recall that I spent about 12 months at Ethical Standards Division (ESD). I think this was in 1995.
12. I was Inspector then Chief Inspector at Moorabbin Police Headquarters between approximately 1987 and 1997.
13. I was the Crime Superintendent, Region 1 for approximately 10 years from 1997 to 2007.

14. Chief Commissioner of Police Christine Nixon introduced a rotation system for superintendents through the Victoria Police Force.
15. I was rotated into the Crime Department in January 2007. I remained there until December 2008 when I went on long service leave for six months.
16. On 9 July 2009, I retired.

Involvement or association with any investigation which dealt with Ms Gobbo (Q2)

17. My involvement or association with investigations which dealt with Ms Gobbo occurred after I joined the Crime Department in January 2007.
18. I have reviewed my diaries and have not located any references to Ms Gobbo. I have learned through media reports in the last year or so that Ms Gobbo's human source registration number was 3838, and have been informed in the course of preparing this statement that she was also registered by the number 2958. I have not located any references in my diaries to 3838 or 2958.

Crime Department structure

19. I was one of three operational Superintendents. The others were Paul Hollowood and Jack Blayney. A collaborative approach was encouraged between the three superintendents who would relieve for each other during periods of leave or as otherwise required.
20. In my view, when I went to the Crime Department, I was considered to be an outsider. I was a "Region Man".
21. I knew quite a few of the members at the Crime Department because Region 1 was a good source of good detectives. I was proud of this.
22. I did not have much of a personal rapport with the two other superintendents, though, notwithstanding the collaborative nature of our approach as described above.
23. I felt that the 12 months that I spent at the ESD as an investigator was noted by some of my colleagues and had an effect on some of my professional relationships. I liked officers who worked hard and got results without coming to the attention of ESD.
24. When I joined the Crime Department, the Crime Department ESD files was part of my portfolio. I reduced them quite significantly while I was there.

25. The workgroups that fell under my purview were Homicide, Sex Crimes, Arson, Major Fraud Group, Clandestine Laboratory Squad, and the Stolen Motor Vehicle Group.
26. My recollection is that Supt Hollowood had responsibility for the Drug Task Force, Armed Offenders Squad and Purana Taskforce. I am aware that he had other responsibilities as well, although I do not recall what they were.
27. I think that Supt Blayney was responsible for intelligence, among other things. I have been informed in the course of preparing this statement that he was responsible for Major Crime Tasking and Coordination management around the time I joined the Crime Department: I don't remember that role in particular, but consider it might be a role which was responsible for intelligence.
28. I have been shown an entry in Sandy White's electronic diary dated 24 July 2007.¹ I do not recall Officer White.
29. The entry relates to a meeting between Supt Tony Biggin, Detective Inspectors Jim O'Brien and 'GR' (my diary does not include a reference to GR but I expect it was Gavan Ryan), Senior Sergeant Shane O'Connell, Supt Blayney and I.
30. There is an entry in my diary that I expect relates to the same meeting.
31. Sandy White's diary states:
- "Update re 3838.
 Agreed value of HS as source is outweighed by repercussions and risk to same. Agreed to continue deployment with no tasking, intel received to be assessed on individual basis and risk determination prior to any dissemination.
 Agreed TB, ^{Sandy} and JB to brief D/C OVERLAND re issues"
32. There is no reference to 3838 in my diary, which records the following on 24 July 2007:
- "1630 Purana meeting
 Jack Blayney
 Tony Biggin
 Gavin Ryan
 Officer White
 Shayne O'Connell"

¹ VPL.2000.0001.0869 at .0870

Jim O'Brien

To brief Simon Overland

By JB / TB / ^{Sandy} / JO'B"

33. I have no recollection of this meeting and the reference to 3838 surprises me.
34. I have seen an extract from Officer Fox's diary dated 25 July 2007², which records his notes of a conversation with Officer White. They discussed that I was "friendly" with Inspector Bob Hodgkin and queried why I was at the meeting or "told about her status". There is a note that "apparently Brown said, 'why am I here'".
35. Robert Hodgkin was one of (originally) three Detective Inspectors that I was in charge of as Crime Superintendent, Region 1. We worked together for approximately 10 years. It is not wrong to say that I was friendly with him.
36. I do not have any recollection of the meeting on 24 July 2007, or of stating "why am I here". Given that Supt Blayney was going to brief Deputy Commissioner Simon Overland "re issues", it would not have appeared necessary for me to take any further action.
37. If I had been part of a discussion about Nicola Gobbo being an informer, I expect that I would remember that discussion. I expect that I knew from media reports at the time that she was acting as a criminal barrister.
38. The only explanation I can think of for my attendance at this meeting is that Supt Hollowood was unavailable. My presence is consistent with the collaborative approach of the operational superintendents at this time.

Board of Management

39. I recall that previously Simon Overland had been the Assistant Commissioner, Crime but at the time that I joined the Crime Department, this position had been replaced with a Board of Management (**BOM**).
40. The three operational superintendents reported to the BOM.
41. The BOM was comprised of:
- a. the three operational superintendents;

² Officer Fox diary entry dated 25 July 2007 (VPL.2000.0001.2641).

- b. the three strategy superintendents, which at that time were Superintendent Wendy Steendam, Superintendent Richard Grant and Superintendent Brett Guerin; and
- c. the business manager, Toni Campbell.

42. The BOM reported to Chief Commissioner Nixon on a monthly basis through a meeting.

Operation management meetings

43. The three operational superintendents would hold regular operational management meetings with the workgroups under their responsibility. I can't recall now if this meeting had a formal name, or how regularly they occurred.

44. These meetings would occur with one workgroup at a time. One, two or three of myself, Hollowood and Blayney would attend depending on availability.

45. The attendees would include:

- a. the Inspector or Senior Sergeant in charge of the workgroup;
- b. some of their subofficers if required; and
- c. the business manager, Ms Campbell, if available;.

46. The strategy superintendents may have attended from time to time, if available.

47. The types of things covered in these meetings would include:

- a. Brief overview of workgroup's current operations;
- b. Brief update in relation to each operation;
- c. Any active ESD files in relation to that workgroup's members;
- d. Budget issues;
- e. Resourcing; and
- f. Health and welfare of members.

48. These meetings might run for approximately an hour.

Purana Taskforce

49. In my role as Superintendent, Operations in the Crime Department, I knew about Purana Taskforce. My involvement with Purana Taskforce was from a governance perspective. I had no involvement in an investigative capacity.

50. Purana Taskforce is mentioned in the minutes of meetings that I appear to have attended on 12 September 2007, 14 October 2007, 11 December 2007, 21 July 2008, 15 September 2008, and 22 September 2008.³
51. I don't have any independent recollection of these meetings. The minutes of the BOM meetings accord with my recollection of the BOM's governance focus on matters such as resourcing, budgets, and the strategic direction of the Crime Department.
52. Purana Taskforce is also mentioned in the attachments to an email I received about a Corporate Governance Committee meeting on 12 October 2007.⁴ From my diary it appears I attended this meeting although I do not have an independent recollection of it. There is no reference to Purana Taskforce in my diary.
53. There is a reference to Purana Taskforce in material related to a BOM retreat that occurred on 8 and 9 May 2008.⁵ My diary notes my attendance at the retreat and I recall attending it. I don't, however, have any real recollection of the discussions that occurred there.

Operation Agamas

54. References to Operation Agamas occur in my diaries throughout 2007 and 2008. I do not recall this operation. The references generally occur in the context of workgroup meetings which I have attended with the other operational superintendents.
55. I cannot recall now which of Supt Blayney or Hollowood had responsibility for this operation.
56. I have seen a reference in Officer White's diary dated 10 January 2008 regarding a meeting about leaks from Operation Agamas. His diary records my attendance at this meeting with others. There is an entry in my diary at 4pm on the same day about what I believe is the same meeting.
57. I don't have any independent recollection of this meeting or this issue.

³ Crime Department Board of Management meeting 12 September 2007 (VPL.6119.0114.0631), Crime Department tasking and Coordination meeting 12 October 2007 (VPL.6042.0006.0052), Crime Department Corporate Governance Group 11 December 2007 (VPL.6119.0119.9332), Crime Department Board of Management meetings on 21 July 2008 (VPL.6119.0095.6840), 15 September 2008 (VPL.6119.0074.5634), and 22 September 2008 (VPL.6119.0075.4592).

⁴ Corporate Governance Committee meeting on 12 October 2007 (VPL.6119.0113.3753) and attachment (VPL.6119.0113.3754).

⁵ BOM retreat on 6 – 8 May 2008 (VPL.6119.0095.2018).

58. There is a note in my diary the following day (11 January 2008) at 7.15am of a discussion with Superintendent Blayney "re Agamas". My diary indicates that Chief Commissioner Nixon's Chief of Staff Peter Bull had been briefed. ESD was going to be advised. My diary does not say who by. I do not have any notes in my diary suggesting I took any action in relation to this issue and this accords with my recollection that it would have been more appropriate for Supt Blayney to do this.

Petra Taskforce

59. I recall that at one point while I was Superintendent, Operations at the Crime Department, one or more members were taken from my squads to form a new taskforce. I can't now recall who approached me about this, but I expect it is likely to have been Supt Hollowood. There was a lot of secrecy around the taskforce. I was not provided with information concerning this taskforce.

60. In retrospect, I suspect this was probably Petra Taskforce, which I understand to be the name of the operation that investigated Paul Dale.

61. I don't have any recollection of the Petra Taskforce details but I have seen references to it in Corporate Governance Group meeting minutes dated 11 December 2007 and BOM meeting minutes dated 18 August 2008.⁶

62. I am recorded in the minutes as being present at a meeting at 2.30pm on 2 September 2008⁷ that included discussion about human source management as a significant risk faced by the Petra Taskforce.

63. My diary records that at 12.30pm and 3pm that day, I had telephone calls about a serious matter requiring my attention, namely an allegation of fraud by a police member. My diary does not record my attendance at the meeting at 2.30pm and I think it is likely that I was not in fact in attendance.

⁶ BOM meeting minutes dated 14 November 2007 (VPL.6119.0118.6320), 11 December 2007 (VPL.6119.0119.9332) and 18 August 2008 (VPL.6119.0073.9149).

⁷ (VPL.6119.0072.8440), noting that the minutes from the 2 September 2008 meeting appear to be contained in a document prepared for the purposes of a meeting on 4 February 2009. I was on long service leave on 4 February 2009.

Briars Taskforce

64. There are references to Briars Taskforce and Operation Gosford in an attachment to agenda for a Crime Department, Tasking and Coordination Committee meeting on 14 October 2007.⁸ The names Briars and Gosford don't mean anything to me.

How I learned, or was given reason to believe, Ms Gobbo was providing information (Q3)

65. Before I joined the Crime Department I did not know Nicola Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police. I did not know she was providing information or assistance while I was at the Crime Department, either. I don't recall hearing her name in discussions. I expect that I knew Nicola Gobbo's name while I was at the Crime Department and before because of the media coverage she gained through her role as a criminal defence barrister.

66. I have only become aware of the fact that Nicola Gobbo was a police informer with the source number 3838 through media coverage.

67. Since learning about these matters in the media I have put together two recollections I have from when I was at the Crime Department.

68. DC Overland used to regularly meet with Supt Hollowood about Purana Taskforce. Sometimes I would attend. At the time, it was clear that there were things happening that I was not privy to. My view was that if I needed to know, I would be briefed.

69. I have a vague memory of hearing a reference to "the blond one" during one of these meetings. I did not know who they meant by "the blond one".

70. I also have a vague memory of a source being discussed in one of these meetings. The discussion was sort of an aside between the two officers rather than forming part of the general discussion. I cannot recall now whether these two comments occurred at the same meeting.

71. The source number I remember hearing was "31". This stuck with me because I am a Melbourne Demons fan and 31 was Ron Barassi's number. In retrospect, I believe I heard the source number incorrectly.

Awareness of others (Q4)

72. I have no knowledge of this matter.

⁸ Crime Department, Tasking and Coordination Committee meeting on 14 October 2007 (VPL.6042.0006.0052).

Authorisation of the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q5)

73. I have no knowledge of this matter.

Personal contact with Ms Gobbo (Q6)

74. I have not had any contact with Ms Gobbo at any time.

Information & assistance received (Q7 & Q8)

75. I have no knowledge of these matters.

Concerns raised as to the use of a legal practitioner as a human source (Q9)

76. I have no knowledge of this matter.

Concerns raised as to the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q10)

77. I have no knowledge of this matter.

Awareness about disclosure in relation to Ms Gobbo (Q11)

78. I have no knowledge of this matter.

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

79. I have no knowledge of this matter.

Training (Q13)

80. I have been asked about the relevant training or retraining I have received on the following specific topics:

- a. Obligation of disclosure;
- b. The right of accused person to silence and to a legal practitioner;
- c. Legal professional privilege;
- d. Public interest immunity; and
- e. Professional and ethical decision making.

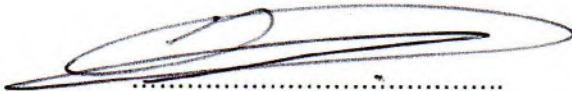
81. I would have received some training on these topics and aspects of the Evidence Act at Subofficers School (whilst a Senior Constable), Detective Training School and Advanced Detective Training School (prior to being promoted to Sergeant).

82. There would have been a degree of "on the job" training and I would have been exposed to some of these issues in practice as a prosecutor in Mildura.

Other information (Q14)

83. I have nothing further to add.

Dated: 22 November 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned above a dotted line.

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Graham James Brown