

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

STATEMENT OF BRETT JOHN CURRAN

1. My full name is Brett John Curran. I am a Commander of Police and the Chief of Staff to the Chief Commissioner of Police.
2. I make this statement in response to a request from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 25 March 2019.

Educational background and employment history

3. I commenced employment with Victoria Police in 1981 and graduated from the Police Academy in 1981. A summary of my employment history since that time is set out below:
 - Between 1981 and 1997, I performed the roles of General Duties Police, Sergeant Prosecutions Division and Detective Sergeant Crime Department;
 - Between 1998 and 2003, I performed the roles of Detective Senior Sergeant of the Criminal Proceeds Squad and then Detective Acting Inspector in charge of Computer Crime and Criminal Proceeds Squad;
 - Between 2003 and 2005, I was the Inspector, Deputy Chief of Staff and Government Liaison for Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon;
 - From 2005 to 2006, I was the Inspector of the Moreland Police Service Area;
 - In 2006, I was the Acting Superintendent of the Counter Terrorism Coordination Unit;
 - In 2007 I was the Chief of Staff to the Chief Commissioner of Police, Christine Nixon;
 - In 2007, I was the Acting Divisional Commander, Detective Acting Superintendent North West Region, of Crime, Road Safety and Division 2;
 - In October 2007 to November 2010, I was the Chief of Staff to the Office of the Minister of Police, Emergency Services and Corrections. During this period I was not an employee of Victoria Police;
 - Between January 2011 and 2013, I was the Chief of Staff to the Office of the Opposition Leader of the Victoria State Parliament. During this period I was not an employee of Victoria Police;

- In June 2014 I returned to Victoria Police as the Superintendent at the Licensing & Regulation Division responsible for the regulation of firearms and the security industry.
 - In October 2015, I commenced as the Chief of Staff to the Chief Commissioner of Police, Graham Ashton.
4. I have undertaken qualifications and training including the following:
- Prosecutor Training Course;
 - Detective Training School;
 - Graduate Certificate in Fraud Investigation;
 - Australian Federal Police Management of Serious Crime; and
 - Masters of Organisational Leadership (ongoing).

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

5. My only involvement or association with an investigation which had dealings with Ms Gobbo occurred between 1999 and 2000.
6. I have little recollection of this time and have not had access to my relevant police diary or day book in making this statement, as they have not been able to be located.
7. In 1999 and 2000 I was a Detective Senior Sergeant at the Asset Recovery Squad. At times I was performing upgraded duties as a Detective Acting Inspector and at times I performed duties at the Computer Crime Squad.
8. The Asset Recovery Squad investigated activities related to the *Confiscations Act 1997*. This included forfeiture applications, money laundering and profits derived from criminal offending.
9. I recall that Ms Gobbo was registered as an informer in relation to an operation concerning alleged money laundering by her employer, **Section 26 (1)** That operation was called *Operation Ramsden*.
10. The reason that I recall dealing with Ms Gobbo is because of her surname. I was aware that her uncle was, or had been, the Governor of Victoria and a Supreme Court Judge.

11. I recall that when Ms Gobbo was registered D/S/C Jeff Pope was her handler. Gavan Segrave was Pope's Detective Sergeant. I believe that D/S/C Pope and D/S Segrave would have discussed Ms Gobbo's registration with me, but I don't specifically recall this.
12. I have been shown an Informer Registration Application for Ms Gobbo from 1999.¹ I believe that I would have seen this at the time but I don't specifically recall this. I see from the Application that Kevin Sheridan was an Acting Superintendent at the time Ms Gobbo was registered and therefore assume that I was a Detective Acting Inspector at that time.
13. I believe that Ms Gobbo was registered in order that information could be obtained from her regarding **Section 26 (1)** I never personally met with Ms Gobbo as part of *Operation Ramsden*. I may have been updated by D/S/C Pope and D/S Segrave about contact with Ms Gobbo because it was standard practice for me to receive verbal updates during the course of an investigation. I cannot however, independently recall receiving these updates.
14. My recollection of *Operation Ramsden* is that the investigation did not progress. This was not unusual for money laundering investigations.
15. I have been shown a document titled 'Request that status be reclassified from 'active' to 'inactive'' and dated 3 January 2000.² I recognise my signature at the bottom of the page and a handwritten notation of 'deregistration recommended'.³ I have no further recollection as to why Ms Gobbo was deregistered.
16. I have been informed that D/S/C Pope's diary records that on 6 January 2000, following Ms Gobbo's deregistration, DSC Pope delivered his diary to me for audit. I cannot independently recall this although I did usually check members' diaries during this time. I have sighted a copy of D/S/C Pope's diaries and recognise my signature alongside various entries which I am told relate to Ms Gobbo.

Use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (questions 3-8)

Question 3

17. I refer to my response to question 2 concerning my state of knowledge as to information or assistance provided by Ms Gobbo during 1999-2000.

¹ VPL.0005.0013.0952.

² VPL.0002.0002.0053.

³ VPL.0002.0002.0053.

18. I subsequently became aware of Ms Gobbo's role as witness in the proceedings against Paul Dale from the media reports following the murder of Carl Williams.
19. In October 2015, after I commenced my role as Chief of Staff to the Chief Commissioner, Graham Ashton, I gained some awareness in relation to Ms Gobbo's involvement with Victoria Police. I became aware of the Kellam and Comrie reports, although I have not read these reports. I also became aware the disclosure discussions that occurred between Victoria Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions, and of the litigation that Victoria Police was involved.

Question 4

20. I refer to my response to question 2. The other people I believe were aware that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police were, D/S/C Pope, D/S Gavan Segrave and Acting Superintendent Paul Sheridan. Whoever was the Superintendent of the Major Fraud Group at that time may also have known, but I can't recall whether John Whitmore or Jack Blayney occupied that position at the time.
21. I have no knowledge of any other member or organisation being aware of Ms Gobbo's role.

Question 5

22. I believe that A/Supt Sheridan authorised Ms Gobbo as a human source. The Informer Registration Application⁴ is the basis of my belief.
23. I believe that ongoing authorisation would have been provided by whoever was the Superintendent of the Asset Recovery Squad at the relevant time. I cannot recall whether that was John Whitmore or Jack Blayney.

Question 6

24. I have never had personal contact with Ms Gobbo during the period when she was a registered informer.
25. I subsequently had contact with Ms Gobbo during the early 2000s in the context of a Graduate Certificate in Fraud Investigation at La Trobe University on Franklin Street, Melbourne. I completed the course and subsequently lectured in it. Ms Gobbo also undertook that course. I cannot recall if I was a student or lecturing when Ms Gobbo undertook the course, however I believe that we were both students. I did not have a lot

⁴ VPL.0005.0013.0952.

of interaction with Ms Gobbo during the course. I was aware that she was a defence lawyer at that time.

Question 7

26. I do not recall the information that Ms Gobbo provided to Operation Ramsden. I recall that no one was charged as a result of the operation.

Question 8

27. I do not have first-hand knowledge of these matters.

Concerns in relation to Ms Gobbo (questions 9-11)

Question 9

28. I do not have any awareness of such concerns.

Question 10

29. I do not recall any people being concerned about Ms Gobbo's role as an informer in 1999-2000.

30. I have only become aware of concerns raised by the Director of Public Prosecutions about information and assistance subsequently provided by Ms Gobbo since I've been in my role as Chief of Staff and in the context of the litigation that has occurred.

Question 11

31. I have no awareness of these matters.

Other relevant matters

Question 12

32. I do not recall a human source who was subject to legal obligations of confidentiality or privilege providing information or assistance to Victoria Police in any registration that I was involved in. I have some awareness of such persons as a result of disclosures that have been made since the announcement of the Royal Commission.

Question 13

33. In the time available, I have not had an opportunity to undertake a detailed review of the courses I have undertaken and the content of those courses. However, my recollection of the relevant training or retraining I have received is as follows:

- a) I undertook the Prosecutor's Training Course in 1986 and subsequently taught in that course. I would also have received training on disclosure at Detective Training School in the context of preparing briefs. The importance of disclosure has evolved during and since my time as an investigator and prosecutor. I have not been involved in prosecutions for 20 years.
- b) I received training on the right of an accused person to silence during the Academy, Retention, Detective Training School and the Prosecutor's Training Course. I am fully aware of section 464 of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic).
- c) I received training on the right of an accused person to a lawyer at the Academy and Detective Training School. Training was also provided after it was mandated in section 464 of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic).
- d) I received training on legal professional privilege during the Prosecutor's Training Course and Detective Training School.
- e) I received training on public interest immunity during the Prosecutor's Training course, Detective Training School and I learnt it over the course of being an investigator.
- f) Professional and ethical behaviour is a concept that is taught in every course I have ever completed, including at the Academy and Sergeant's Training Course. Professional and ethical behaviour is a constant theme during every Victoria Police training course and is always raised when applying for jobs including promotions.

Question 14

34. I wish to inform the Commission that I was a Detective Senior Sergeant at the Asset Recovery Squad in the early 2000s when a *Confiscations Act 1997* investigation was being conducted in relation to Tony Mokbel. This investigation was run concurrently with a criminal investigation into drug trafficking by Mr Mokbel. I am aware, through knowledge that I have obtained as Chief of Staff to Chief Commissioner Ashton since October 2015, that Mr Mokbel is a person who might be affected by matters the subject of this Royal Commission. I had no knowledge at the relevant time, nor do I have any knowledge now, of Ms Gobbo providing police with information or assistance with respect to these investigations. I provide this information to the Royal Commission in case it is of relevance or assistance to the Commission.

Dated: 28 March 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Brett John Curran', written over a dotted line.

Brett John Curran