

This document has been redacted for Public Interest Immunity claims made by Victoria Police. These claims are not yet resolved.

MR GREGOR: So there were a number of discussions that we entered into. Our initial focus was trying to buttress the evidence against Paul Dale because at that stage we were relying very much on the evidence or statement provided by Terry Hodson, and obviously we were trying to corroborate that as much as possible which we were finding quite a bit of difficulty doing. So it was decided that we would try and - we thought there was a real possibility that Terry Hodson could arrange a meeting with Dave Miechel and Paul Dale, either one of them or both of them. So we sort of looked at ways of trying to see how we could go about and do that. We weren't - we thought there was a real possibility that Terry Hodson would be surprised, if you like, or just fronted by either Miechel and/or Dale and that could occur sort of at any time.

So basically I set up something that would allow Terry Hodson to [REDACTED], he'd be [REDACTED] and basically he would be [REDACTED] that [REDACTED], so if he was surprised - if he had a surprise visit from either one of those two people that he'd be in a position to basically [REDACTED], you know, if the opportunity arises. What we did - what we did, there was a meeting early on between Terry Hodson and Jim Valos and Nicola Gobson - not Gobson, Gobbo - Nicola Gobbo, who's a barrister. Nicola Gobbo works very closely with Jim Valos and they appear regularly together on various court matters. They have also appeared on behalf of a number of the Operation Gallop targets which have been arrested and are either currently in demand or on bail.

MR ASHTON: These would include Tony Mokbel, would they?

MR GREGOR: Well, no. The Operation Gallop targets involve a Lebanese guy by the name of Ahmed and Abby Haines and a number of other people which basically related to the manufacture of amphetamines and trafficking of amphetamines which also involved the house at [REDACTED] Dublin Street.

MR ASHTON: Now, in relation to the potential - a meeting between Hodson and Gobbo, was it Hodson's suggestion that perhaps the best means of establishing contact with Dale was through Gobbo?

MR GREGOR: Yes. Terry Hodson told us that he'd heard that Paul Dale had had some sort of sexual relationship with Nicola Gobbo. I don't know how true that is, but he believed there was a relationship there between Dale and Gobbo, and he believed that by using his contact with Gobbo that he could arrange a meeting with Dale. So we obviously explored this area and there were a number of, as I understand from the information relayed to me by Terry Hodson - he made a number of calls and had a number of meetings with Nicola Gobbo and where he attempted to arrange a meeting with Paul Dale through her.

45

This document has been redacted for Public Interest Immunity claims made by Victoria Police. These claims are not yet resolved.

MR ASHTON: Okay. They were basically at your direction at his suggestion that that was the best course of action.

5 MR GREGOR: Yes. Basically, obviously the fact that Terry Hodson was cooperating with us was not known by any person outside a very close few within the Corruption Investigation Unit and, yeah, it was our belief that Paul Dale and David Miechel wouldn't have known that Terry Hodson was cooperating with us at that time. They might have suspected because he's a
10 civilian and because he's an informer and all the rest of it that there is a chance that he would want to cooperate with us, but certainly I don't think there was anything tangible for them to sort of believe that Terry Hodson was actually cooperating with us at the time and certainly Terry Hodson was very careful when he dealt with Jim Valos and Nicola Gobbo that - to ensure that they believed he was not going to cooperate, that he was hanging tough, basically
15 that, you know - for the other two, being Dale and Miechel, not to worry about things, and he passed messages on through Nicola Gobbo - and obviously this is information being relayed to me from Terry Hodson - that, from the information Terry told me, he said that he made contact with Nicola Gobbo and he would be - after making contact by phone or meeting, he would then contact
20 me and tell me, inform me, what actually transpired at the meeting.

MR ASHTON: Just before we get into the meetings themselves, did Hodson relay any other information to you about the nature of the relationship between Dale and Ms Gobbo in relation to whether it was a professional legal
25 relationship or there was just a friendship or - - -

MR GREGOR: From what I - the feeling I got and the information that Terry Hodson supplied was I thought it was more a friendship - friendship based. I didn't believe it was legally based, and from my understanding she was never
30 actually representing Paul Dale in any sort of legal capacity. Whether he obtained legal advice from her, I don't know for sure.

MR ASHTON: She never sought to correspond with you - - -

35 MR GREGOR: No.

MR ASHTON: - - - in relation to a defence of Paul Dale?

40 MR GREGOR: No, not at all.

MR ASHTON: Okay. In relation to the attempts that Hodson has then made to go through Ms Gobbo to arrange a meeting with Dale and/or Miechel, were those meetings recorded at all?

45 MR GREGOR: No.

This document has been redacted for Public Interest Immunity claims made by Victoria Police. These claims are not yet resolved.

that the day preceding 6 November there was an SMS that took place between Dale and Gobbo.

MR GREGOR: Yes.

5

MR ASHTON: Do you know what the phone number of Ms Gobbo was at that time?

MR GREGOR: Well, I mean, the known phone number that I had for Nicola Gobbo was [REDACTED]. Obviously I'm not aware of perhaps other phones she may have had which she may have been receiving calls on, but that's the mobile I had which I had contact with Nicola Gobbo on, I believe.

10

MR ASHTON: I guess - did you then - during the course of then knowing that Ms Gobbo was being used as a conduit in relation to contact with Dale, would you have done CCR checks, call chart records checks on Gobbo?

15

MR GREGOR: I'm confident that we - I requested call chart records in relation to that mobile telephone number and we would have them within our holdings at ESD.

20

MR ASHTON: As a consequence of those meetings, did it become obvious to you that the - that there was a line of communication that had been established between Dale and Hodson that was to be established and that Gobbo was the person that was the link in the chain of that communication?

25

MR GREGOR: Yes. It's my belief that certainly the link in the chain was basically running Hodson, Gobbo, Argyll, Dale and vice-versa, and that's my belief from our investigations and our holdings with ESD. One matter I did forget to state was, on the day of Paul Dale's arrest which was 5 December 2003, it's my belief that when he was brought back - when Dale was actually brought back to the office of the Corruption Investigation Division that he did request to contact some person. He declined to state who that person was. I believe he did say it was relating to legal advice, and it's my belief that Paul Dale contacted Nicola Gobbo on that occasion and had a very lengthy telephone call which from recollection may have gone from 15 to 20 minutes.

30

35

MR ASHTON: Right. And you're understanding of the nature of that call was?

40

MR GREGOR: Well, it was either to contact a friend, relative or legal counsel. I actually can't now recall whether he did say it was for legal reasons but certainly in the circumstances we allowed him to make a private telephone call from an office at the Corruption Investigation Division, and it's my belief that he - that was the only telephone call that he wished to make at that time

45