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The Presiding Judge
County Court of Victoria

Dear Sir,

Re: ^{Mr Bickley}

I have been asked to confirm certain factual matters pertaining to ^{Mr Bickley} ^{Mr Bickley}. I confirm I am aware that he has pleaded guilty to trafficking not less than a large commercial quantity of MDMA and the circumstances of his offending.

I first met ^{Mr Bickley} the day after his arrest in August 2005. I received a telephone call from Detective Senior Constable Paul Rowe who informed me that ^{Mr Bickley} had been arrested and charged with trafficking not less than a large commercial quantity of MDMA and was in the Custody Centre pending a Filing Hearing that morning. I later learnt from ^{Mr Bickley} that he had been given my mobile number by Tony Mokbel in case he was arrested and required a lawyer.

I informed Detective Senior Constable Rowe that I would not be able to attend Court due to another commitment but that I would arrange for a solicitor to see ^{Mr Bickley} and appear for him at his Filing Hearing. I telephoned Tony Hargreaves, told him the little that I'd been told and asked him if he would appear for ^{Mr Bickley} and act on his behalf.

Later that day I attended upon **Mr Bickley** in the Custody Centre. **Mr Bickley** told me that he couldn't understand why **Solicitor 2** had been to visit him as well as Tony Hargreaves (who did appear for him that morning.) He was confused and distressed and did not appreciate the seriousness of his charges.

Mr Bickley told me that he had been informed that Tony Mokbel would be paying his legal fees and that he would only pay if **Solicitor 2** was his solicitor. He was naïve and confused about which solicitor he should have to act for him; I explained the difference between a solicitor and barrister and their respective roles. I gave **Mr Bickley** some basic advice that one provides to anyone arrested (that is in relation to co-accused, bail applications, restraining orders etc..) It was apparent to me that he had been given different advice by **Solicitor 2** in respect to some matters.

As a consequence of speaking to **Mr Bickley** (and others) I concluded that Tony Mokbel was somehow involved in his charges/investigation, although at that stage I didn't know exactly how, nor did I have any details.

I understand that Tony Hargreaves was subsequently told by **Mr Bickley** that his services weren't required and that **Solicitor 2** was acting for him.

I was asked questions about **Mr Bickley**'s arrest by Tony Mokbel and then briefed by **Solicitor 2** to appear at a bail application for **Mr Bickley**. I went to see him at Melbourne Assessment Prison as I had received no instructions from her. My recollection is that when I got there **Solicitor 2** was already in seeing **Mr Bickley**. I was reluctant to raise certain matters with **Mr Bickley** as a consequence of her being present. This included the option of him assisting the Police given that his co-accused were already taking that very course.

On the following day when **Mr Bickley**'s bail application was listed I had formed the view that I had a potential or an actual conflict and telephoned Detective Senior Constable Rowe before Court in relation to obtaining a Remand Summary

(and to determine the conflict of interest issue which was in part dependent upon what was going to be alleged by the Police.) My instructing solicitor (from whom one would ordinarily receive instructions about issues such as a conflict) took the view that there was no conflict of interest. I found it difficult to explain this to ^{Mr Bickley} who had no experience or knowledge of any of this process and was not being independently advised.

I recall speaking to Detective Senior Constable Rowe and his Sergeant (Steve Mansell) at Court and then withdrawing the bail application. Subsequently, I did not appear for ^{Mr Bickley}. He later engaged a different solicitor due to a lack of confidence in ^{Solicitor 2} and then applied for bail.

After ^{Mr Bickley} was granted bail he remained in contact with me. I have never had any sort of personal relationship with him. ^{Mr Bickley} often called me with questions, saying that he couldn't get hold of Theo Magazis (who replaced ^{Solicitor 2} as his solicitor), wanting to discuss his case. Notwithstanding his awareness that I was then acting for Tony Mokbel (who was not charged with these offences nor was he a co-accused), ^{Mr Bickley} continued to speak to me.

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Please contact me if further information or my attendance is required,

Yours faithfully,

Nicola Gobbo