

The Leveson Inquiry

Witness Statement for Part 1 Module 2

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WITNESS STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE HAMES

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I, Jacqueline Elizabeth Hames, c/o Bindmans LLP, 275 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8QB will say as follows:

1. I make this statement in my capacity as a Core Participant to assist the Inquiry in relation to Part 1 Module 2 which deals with the relationship between the press and the police and the conduct of each. Where the contents of this statement are within my own knowledge they are true and where the contents are not within my own knowledge I indicate the source of my belief and believe them to be true. I attach as Exhibit JH1 a bundle of relevant documents to which the page references in this statement refer.
2. I am a former Metropolitan Police officer and *Crimewatch* presenter. I joined the Metropolitan Police Service ('MPS') in 1977 at the age of 18 and became a Detective Constable, serving until January 2008 when I took early retirement. I am best known for my role as a presenter on BBC *Crimewatch* between 1990 and 2006 as a result of which I have first hand experience of the way in which the press and the police interact, gained from working on both sides, as follows:
  - (i) Working as a Detective specialising in major crime inquiries such as murder, rape and serial sex offences covering areas such as forensics, exhibits, interviewing witnesses and suspects, conducting enquiries, family liaison and various roles within incident rooms including that of Office Manager and, just prior to retirement, in the area of Organised Crime;
  - (ii) In 1987 I worked on the implementation team for the country's first Crimestoppers project based at New Scotland Yard, which launched in

1988. This was a partnership between the Metropolitan Police, private sector business and the media, and was the first of its kind. We forged good working relationships with newspapers and television channels to appeal on crimes and advertise the Crimestoppers helpline number. (Crimestoppers is now a charity which people can call anonymously with information about crime);

(iii) In 1990 I became a regular presenter on *Crimewatch*, making appeals to the public live on BBC1 every month to help solve crime on behalf of the UK police service. This led to me contributing to many other factual television programmes, thus seeing the media from the inside. I also received some personal press attention and learnt lessons about how to deal with this sort of interest. Being in this unique position I walked a sometimes difficult path between the two. It was lonely at times as there was no one else to whom I could relate in the same position, and I received no support from the MPS Directorate of Public Affairs;.

(iv) In 2002/2003 during a career break, I worked as a part-time press relations officer for the National Crime and Operations Faculty, dealing with requests for information;

(v) Since leaving the police I have pursued my interest in women's safety issues, writing a book on personal safety with Fiona Bruce, undertaken security consultancy within the private and charitable sectors and continue to deliver training in police/media relations and also more recently stalking. I have also continued working in the media on news and factual programmes and assisted with promotional safety campaigns across a wide range of media;

(vi) In 2006 I was asked to write and deliver a regular presentation to the Advanced CID course at the Metropolitan Police Crime Academy on Media Strategies within crime investigations;

(vii)Regrettably, I also have personal experience of being placed under surveillance by the *News of the World*, a deeply unpleasant experience which, I believe, arose from inappropriate relationships between crime suspects and that newspaper. I will say more of this below.

Increased openness

3. I will start with some general observations of how the press-police relationship has changed since I joined the force in the 1970s. The way that the police and the press interact has changed beyond all recognition. When I first joined it was a completely closed shop: all media enquiries were dealt with by what was then called the "Press Bureau" and only officers at the most senior level were authorised to speak to the media. In 1969 the MPS had been rocked when *The Times* exposed massive corruption within the CID and this led to strained relations between the press and the MPS, with stringent rules and heavy restrictions about officers talking to journalists.
4. The media followed this up with regular investigative exposure of corruption and alleged malpractice in programmes like *World in Action* and exclusive investigations by papers such as the *News of the World*. A defining moment came in the early 1980's when the BBC transmitted a series of 'fly on the wall' documentaries called *Police* following Thames Valley Police Officers. One episode featuring officers' demeaning treatment of a rape victim successfully changed the way police dealt with victims of sexual offences forever and was clearly a pivotal moment in how effective the media can be as watchdogs of the police. However, the constant barrage of criticism in the media did nothing to enhance officers' view of the motives of journalists and most tended to avoid contact at all costs. This view was further supported by the lack of positive press coverage of news stories involving the police.
5. This all changed when Sir John Stevens became Commissioner in 2000 and introduced the current "open door" policy by which officers are positively encouraged, sometimes even ordered, to allow the media access to operations and to explain all aspects of their work.

6. In the early days this created something of a 'free for all' for the press which jumped at the opportunity to have access to newsworthy and exciting incidents. Fly on the wall documentary teams appeared sometimes with little warning and officers had to deal with their presence, and journalists – both print and broadcast - would turn up on operations. For example I recall one occasion in around 2006 when the Intelligence Unit I was working on put together an operation for the Robbery Squad (the 'Flying Squad') to cover an armed raid on a warehouse at Heathrow Airport. It was suspected that a team of armed robbers were going to attempt to steal a large quantity of gold bullion. At the last minute Jeff Edwards the Chief Crime Reporter and a photographer from *The Mirror* were allowed to tag along thanks to their close association with one of the Flying Squad supervisory officers. This resulted in a front-page story showing a picture of the robber sitting on the ground tied up, almost with a smile on his face, under a typically triumphant headline 'You're Nicked'. This is exhibited at page 1 of JH1. Whilst this was undeniably a good news story for the police, as the suspects had only just been arrested it was inappropriate and, quite aside from the contempt risk, lent an almost 'comic book' quality to serious criminal behaviour. I am firmly in favour of openness but appropriate boundaries do need to be established. The gap between arrest and charge of a suspect is a very difficult area for the media who appreciate that, upon charge, the case becomes sealed by laws of sub-judice and their reporting will be severely restricted. Some, anxious to make the most of a good story, will rush out badly thought-out articles before this can happen.
7. The other aspect to this particular incident was that other newspapers and media outlets were upset that *The Mirror* had been given the exclusive rights which left many with the impression that favouritism and undue influence was being given to one publication.
8. The most recent version of the 'open door' policy in the MPS, dated June 2011, is at pages 2 to 7 of Exhibit JH1 and opens by saying (in the Introduction on page 4) that:

*“This updated policy reflects the Met’s continuing commitment to be open....”*

Among other things it states (on page 5 of JH1) that:

*“...we seek to gain maximum positive media coverage...”*

*“It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media...”*

*“We will tell the media things which:*

*are in the public interest to know about*

*help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work”*

However it also sets out (page 6 of JH1) the importance of appropriate limits for the release of information:

*“While advocating greater openness and contact with the media, this policy does not authorise any police officer or member of police staff to divulge information which is beyond their own area of personal responsibility or authority or which represents gossip or rumour.”*

9. Whilst the Policy serves as a general outline, more detailed guidance is supplied in a document entitled: “MPS Media Relations SOP” (Standard Operation Procedures) which is exhibited at pages 8 to 23 of JH1. The guidance sets out that:

▪ In routine operational incidents and investigations:

Inspectors and above are authorised to speak to the media about their own areas of responsibility;

Officers below the rank of Inspector can speak to the media with the approval of a senior officer of Inspector rank or above (page 12 JH1).

- In high profile cases such as serious crime, security, terrorism and major incidents:

There are special strategies for dealing with intense media interest including the appointment of a dedicated police spokesperson. In these cases *“it is unlikely that the GOLD commander or SIO would want other police officers or members of police staff to divulge information which goes beyond the agreed media strategy without his/her express permission”* (page 13 JH1).

10. This document also gives general guidance about “Withholding Information” and “Off the record” (page 14 JH1). Whilst the policy is wide ranging and helpful, I have found very few officers attending my courses who have heard of, let alone read, the document.
11. Whilst this increased openness is a positive development that I believe to be in the public interest, it has brought its own problems, especially for police officers who, with little or no training and/or limited experience of dealing with the media, have found themselves having to make difficult and stressful decisions in relation to the handling of information.
12. Prior to 2006, to my knowledge there was no media training available to most MPS officers. The Directorate of Public Affairs ran small presentation skills courses which were notoriously difficult to get a place on. Nowadays Trainee Detectives receive one hour on policy and media awareness from their course instructor, and later formulate and role-play a media appeal during a wider training scenario as part of their Detective Training Course. Newly promoted Detective Sergeants receive 1.5 hours of input on policy, authority levels and general media, plus conducting a media appeal. Detective Inspectors are given a half day during the Advanced CID Training Course. I present that input and have done so since 2006. The first two hours are spent covering subjects such as working with the media when investigating crime, negotiating the demands of 24 hour rolling news, how to conduct yourself during a media interview and the challenges and opportunities of new media and technology. We also explore issues created by the immediacy of modern news such as

when the press may receive tip-offs from the public using mobile phones or Twitter and can be the first on the scene or indeed film events on their phones which can then sent on to news programmes to be broadcast almost immediately. Typically between 12 and 18 officers will attend the training and the content is often driven by the kind of questions that they ask. This is followed by three different practical role-play scenarios of broadcast interviews and appeals.

13. The Senior Investigators' Course for Detective Chief Inspectors ('DCI') and Detective Inspectors ('DI') dealing with the most serious cases involves two days training from an outside consultant with assistance from a working broadcast journalist and myself.
14. What is very clear from the sessions I present is that officers reaching the rank of DI do not generally feel well-equipped to handle the media and often find it stressful and difficult. Whilst they are keen to 'do the right thing' and supply appropriate information, they are also very worried about the media having some sort of hidden agenda and trying to catch them out. As such there is a lack of confidence and much suspicion. General frustration is often exhibited at the lack of guidance they are given and they feel ill-prepared.
15. Officers I have spoken to also sometimes feel aggrieved at the way some stories are covered in the print media. For example, an officer might spend a long time with a particular journalist to supply information about a story and trust is built up. However, because ultimately the decision about what is published rests with a news editor, once the journalist files the story to the news desk, the news editor may completely change the angle.
16. Another area that is constantly commented on is the closeness between some senior officers and publications or individual journalists. There is a common perception that there is a separate set of rules for some senior ranks when it comes to media relations. This may be because the very nature of a journalist's job dictates that they establish good relations with people in all walks of life who can provide accurate information and comment about events and it is

particularly desirable to maintain this with someone clearly headed for higher ranks. Over the years these 'working' relationships can develop into genuine friendships that could further muddy the waters in terms of how they are perceived by others.

17. During my training presentation I pose the question: 'Do you think it is possible for police officers to have a good working relationship with a journalist whilst maintaining their professional integrity?'. Initially this would easily provoke a 90% to 10% response against with some very robust and extreme views being expressed. However, in recent years this has shifted and when I asked the question recently it was about 50/50. However in many officers, confidence in their own ability to deal with the media is still quite low and many still avoid having to do so wherever possible.
18. Whatever the particular issue, in my view MPS officers are inadequately prepared for the glare of the media spotlight that is now part of modern policing and find they are having to navigate complex media issues with very limited media training. Most of the delegates on my courses express the view that they would like this level of input earlier and indeed would like to spend longer on the subject. This need is particularly acute in the London area where the MPS has to meet the demands of the highly resourced 24-hour national news media and a media savvy population ready to act as unofficial journalists.
19. The first few hours after the discovery of a major crime are by their very nature chaotic. That is not to say they are not under control, but the flow of information can often be contradictory and pressure to release facts to the media can be immense.
20. It is in the nature of most investigations that some aspects have to be kept confidential, even from the family of victims. The circulation of misinformation can open up huge rifts of distrust between police and witnesses/victims.



21. Many journalists are often talented investigators and can find out information about a case almost in parallel with a police investigation. As police are restricted by compliance with the due process of criminal law, this can also lead to frustration on the journalists' part as they can be aware of significant developments, make their own judgements and feel that officers are being too secretive. Off-the-record briefings to established and well-known journalists are an effective way of managing the process and can help to build trust on both sides. However in recent years the power wielded by the Crime Reporters Association has given the impression of a closed club of people given special treatment by the police.
22. Media relations within the MPS are supported by the Directorate of Public Affairs, a large civilian support department. There are 3 levels of operations, with the major desks covering individual departments such as:
- (i) Press Bureau (24 hr press communications);
  - (ii) Corporate Communications (supporting the commissioner);
  - (iii) Specialist Operations, Diversity and media monitoring (all at New Scotland Yard).

Then there are four Area Press Offices and a Borough Press Liaison Officer (BPLO) at each Borough Police Station. The top two levels tend to recruit staff from either civil service communications departments or ex-journalists. The BPLOs tend to be entry level and as such generally have little or no press liaison experience, but are placed in a situation where they are advising officers who themselves have very little media training or experience.

23. There are a lot of very committed highly skilled press officers within DPA but the culture is set at the top and there has long been a sense of disquiet amongst many officers at the close nature of the relationship between people at the top of the Directorate of Public Affairs and print journalism. It may well be that as a result of all the negative press that I mentioned earlier, a genuine and honest effort was made to engage those in powerful media positions during the initial period of the new era of the 'open door' media policy, to try to tackle the

reputational damage inflicted over the previous years. Whatever went on, the perception was that the Directorate of Public Affairs was more interested in serving the journalists and those at the top of the MPS than it was in the majority of police staff.

24. In my view the press-police relationship works well during high profile cases when an experienced officer is detailed to do nothing but handle media inquiries. This is what happened during Operation Sumac, the investigation sparked by the Ipswich serial murders in 2006. The investigation attracted enormous national and international coverage and a Detective Superintendent was nominated to handle the media, which he did very successfully. His previous experience and understanding of the case meant that he was well equipped to make appropriate judgment calls about what information could be released. At times there is an information vacuum where there is simply nothing that can be reported to the media. During those times someone dedicated can keep everyone interested for example, by providing background information about the victims, photographs, video or interviews with family or friends or general non-sensitive background information about the enquiry itself, thus preventing the media from filling the gap with mere speculation, but still maintaining the story' momentum with the public. As well as keeping the media happy and protecting the rights of those under investigation, this arrangement prevents the officers who are trying to conduct the actual investigation from being swamped by inquiries so that they can get on with their job.

25. In contrast to this, when a major incident breaks without a suitable media strategy being put in place, the situation can get completely out of hand very quickly. The bottom line in many of these cases is that the press would love to be instrumental in solving the crime before the police do and, unless handled robustly, will try to 'run the show'. It is widely recognised that that is what happened during the first couple of weeks into the investigation that followed the disappearances of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman from Soham in 2002. In the absence of an immediate robust police media strategy the media started to dictate police action. The press were putting pressure on the police to follow

lines of investigation such as sightings called in by members of the public to the media, and criticised the police when they were not immediately followed up. Some examples of this are as follows:

- **Sunday August 2nd 2002:** at approximately 10pm: Holly and Jessica were reported missing
- **Thursday August 6th:** *The Sun* offered a front-page reward of £150,000 without informing the police investigation team and *The Daily Express* offered a front page reward of £1m. *The Daily Express* did contact police on the eve of publication and were asked not to offer the reward without further discussion. *The Daily Express* went ahead and published the reward anyway. The effect of this was that the police received in the region of 12,000 of calls from the public offering ideas, speculation and sightings of the girls at locations all over the country, thereby swamping the incident room. In addition people began arriving in Soham from far and wide to search the streets and surrounding countryside.
- **Tuesday August 11th:** *The Daily Mirror* reported on a sighting of a “green car” containing two children on the back seat heading towards Newmarket Racecourse.
- **Wednesday August 12th:** *The Daily Express* reported that a “jogger” believed he may have heard screams at Newmarket racecourse the night the girls disappeared. The effect of this was that Police spent all night excavating part of Newmarket racecourse and discovered nothing.
- **Thursday August 13th:** *The Sun* headline that day was: “Not one clue” and *The Daily Mail* headline: “Back to Square One”. This was extremely demoralising for the investigating officers who were in fact following up many lines of enquiry.

26. The media consultant called in to assist Operation Sumac was Matt Tapp of Matt Tapp Associates who is also currently Head of Communications at Nottinghamshire Police. Mr Tapp has conducted research into rewards offered

by newspapers to the public for information in solving crime between 1992 and 2002 and discovered that, during that period, rewards in excess of £2 million had been offered by British newspapers from the News International stable alone and no money had been paid out.

27. On Day 10 of the Soham investigation Mr Tapp was brought in by the police and took control of the police media strategy ensuring that the media were kept up to date with developments but also that, when there were none, suitable material was supplied to keep the press focussed on the relevant official appeal points.

28. Turning to another example, I recall working on a murder case in a tower block in Feltham in the mid 1990's in which an elderly couple had been murdered and mutilated. The police were called at about 2 am and by the time we got there and set up an incident room the press had already knocked on the doors of the tenants of the tower block and learnt about the mutilation angle. At that point we had not informed the victims' family about the mutilation and, because we were told that the press were on their way to see the family, we had to rush round and inform them of this aspect of the crime when we would like to have handled things differently. We also had a fly on the wall documentary team working alongside us who, when the suspect was arrested, were instructed not to take footage of him in police custody. It turned out that they had used a hidden camera and in fact transmitted his image against the wishes of the Investigating Officer. Whilst the PCC Code is designed to prevent certain behaviour, such as intrusion into grief or shock, in my experience, if there is a good enough story, the press will tend to disregard the Code.

#### My personal experience of media surveillance

29. As well as encountering press-police issues during my professional life, I have also unfortunately had first-hand experience of being placed under surveillance by the *News of the World*.

30. In 1987 a man called Daniel Morgan was murdered and found dead in the car park of the Golden Lion Pub in Sydenham, South London. He had been hit in the head with an axe. Mr Morgan was a private investigator with the company 'Southern Investigations', which he ran with his business partner, Jonathan Rees.
31. The initial murder investigation was compromised when it was discovered that Metropolitan Police officers had been corruptly involved with Southern Investigations and that Rees, a suspect, was also a friend of Detective Sergeant Sid Fillery, a member of the murder enquiry team. After that enquiry was completed, Fillery medically retired from the Police and became Rees' business partner at Southern Investigations. No one was charged in connection with Mr Morgan's murder.
32. In 1988 Hampshire Constabulary conducted an enquiry for the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) after a complaint was lodged by Mr Morgan's family. Whilst Hampshire police concluded that they had sufficient evidence to charge Rees with Mr Morgan's murder, the DPP considered the evidence and discontinued the case.
33. In 1997 the Metropolitan Police's Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS) initiated a further investigation using covert evidence gathering techniques concentrating on the business premises of Southern Investigations, from where Rees and Fillery still operated. This investigation was thwarted when Rees and others (including a serving police officer) were identified as having planted cocaine on a woman to assist her husband, (their client), to get custody of their son. To prevent a miscarriage of justice, those implicated were arrested and Rees was convicted and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. Fillery continued running Southern Investigations in his absence.
34. In 2002 the police decided to issue a fresh appeal for information in connection with Mr Morgan's murder. My then husband, David Cook, who was then a Detective Chief Superintendent, was tasked with being the public face of the inquiry by appearing on *Crimewatch*. He duly made the appeal on

26 June 2002, asking for anyone with information to come forward and announcing a £50,000 reward. He later became the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) on the inquiry, which lasted until March 2011. After the appeal was transmitted, the MPS received intelligence that one of the suspects in Southern Investigations had been discussing David's involvement in the inquiry and intended to make life difficult for him. A police panic alarm was installed in our house, along with additional security and we were placed under the umbrella of the Witness Protection Unit.

35. During this period an email was received at the *Crimewatch* production office suggesting that I was having an affair with a Senior Police Detective. Whilst completely untrue, this obviously caused me some considerable concern, as it was clear someone was trying to stir up trouble for me at the BBC and damage my reputation. I also remember that someone had rung Surrey Police Finance Department pretending to be from the Inland Revenue and attempting to obtain our home address. This was identified quickly as bogus and no information was given out. We also identified one occasion when our mail had been tampered with.
36. David decided to start going into work later, walking our dog and taking the children to school. One morning around the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2002 he saw a van parked in the park opposite where we lived, which aroused his suspicions. The following day there were two vans. When he left later to take my son and daughter to nursery and school, both vehicles started following him and it was clear he was being kept under surveillance.
37. When it happened again, (which may have been the following day although I am not now sure), he was able to contact other police officers who arranged to have one of the vehicles stopped because of a broken tail light. He later told me that the vehicles were leased to News International and that Southern Investigations had close links to the *News of the World* through the senior news editor Alex Maranchak. I also spotted a white van in the lane opposite my house. There were two occupants who I believed were taking photographs.

I passed the details to our witness protection officers and left the house by the back entrance.

38. This series of incidents caused us great anxiety. Our house was on the market for sale at the time and with the worry over allowing strangers access to our home, it had to be taken off, causing us to review our plans to move house. We had to speak to the headmistress of my daughter's school and the head of my son's nursery to highlight the possibility of strangers hanging around outside. These were not easy conversations in light of concerns generally about child safety. We also had to consider carefully whether inviting our children's friends round to the house was sensible. In fact all aspects of our daily lives had to be reconsidered in light of these events.
39. Dick Fedorcio, the Head of the MPS Directorate of Public Affairs, duly sought an explanation from Rebekah Brooks (then Wade) who was then editor of the *News of the World*. The explanation supplied by the *News of the World* for placing David and I under surveillance was that they were investigating suspicions that we were having an affair with each other. This was utterly nonsensical as we had by then been married for four years, had been together for 11 years and had two children. Our marriage was common knowledge to the extent that we had even appeared together in *Hello!* magazine.
40. The *News of the World* has never supplied a coherent explanation for why we were placed under surveillance. In 2003, David, together with Dick Fedorcio and Commander Andre Baker, met Rebekah Brooks to discuss the matter. She repeated the unconvincing explanation that the *News of the World* believed we were having an affair. She agreed to look into Alex Marunchak's associations with Rees and Fillery but to my knowledge nothing further was ever said about the subject. Indeed Mr Marunchak was subsequently promoted. I believe that the real reason for the *News of the World* placing us under surveillance was that suspects in the Daniel Morgan murder inquiry were using their association with a powerful and well-resourced newspaper to try to intimidate us and so attempt to subvert the investigation. These events left me distressed, anxious and needing counselling and contributed to the break-down of my

marriage to David in 2010. Given the impact of these events, I would like to know why the police did not investigate why we came to be placed under surveillance by a newspaper like this.

41. In May 2011 police officers from Operation Weeting contacted me and informed me that my details had been found in Glenn Mulcaire's notebooks. I was then shown details of investigations undertaken by the *News of the World* into David and I back in 2002, which I had had no idea were going on at the time. The information that I was shown in the notebooks included detail such as my payroll and warrant numbers, the name of the police section house that I lived in when I first joined the police in 1977, the name, location and telephone number of my place of work in 2002, my and David's full home address and mobile phone number and some notes about my previous husband and his work details. The notes also contained notes about David, including his name, telephone number, rank and reference to "appeal" which I presume to be a reference to his appeal for information on *Crimewatch*. The date at the top of the notes was 3 July 2002, a week or so before the *News of the World* vans began to appear outside our home. This demonstrates to me that the *News of the World* knew full well that I was married to David at the time of the surveillance and thus gives the lie to their explanation for it.

42. This information could only have come from one place: my MPS file. I was horrified by the realisation that someone within the MPS had supplied information from my personnel file to Mr Mulcaire, and probably for money. Similarly distressing was the realisation that the MPS had known about these entries in Mr Mulcaire's notebooks since 2006 but had chosen neither to inform me nor to investigate it adequately. Normal procedure when faced with a large quantity of documentary evidence during an enquiry would be at the very least to analyse samples of it to ascertain its significance and scope the benefits of further investigation time being spent. This was particularly worrying because at the time when the information must have been leaked I was serving in a covert intelligence unit on a highly sensitive inquiry concerning airport security. If I had been given any indication that my mobile number had been compromised I would have changed it immediately to avoid



any potential security breaches. I have always been loyal to the MPS but I do feel very let down by this failure to inform or protect me from the unlawful actions of the press.

43. It is the media's job to set the agenda for public concern, a position of huge responsibility easily open to abuse if left unchecked, particularly when balanced against the economic demands of supporting a profitable business. Whilst there are guidelines in place for the press, it is the lack of transparency in the basic decision making process when it comes to whether and how a story is pursued, which in my view has caused the problems. I have heard stories from journalists about how they paid police officers for information and have then criticised the police service for corruption. I find this deeply hypocritical. Instead of paying these officers, they should have been exposing corruption within the police. That is not to say I disapprove of genuine whistle-blowers. There has to be a place of last resort at times of genuine desperation when there is nowhere else to go. But if exceptions are to be made, proper enquiries have to be made to ensure this goodwill is not abused.
44. When police investigators make decisions as to whether to undertake covert action against individuals, it has to be justified and the action taken has to be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the allegation. Consideration is also given as to the potential impact on the subject, and anyone else who could be caught up in the action taken. That decision-making process is recorded and therefore open to scrutiny should problems or counter allegations arise at a later stage. I do not see why this should not also apply to journalists employing these tactics and the use of private investigators to delve into the privacy of individuals as well.
45. Looking forward in terms of how to ensure this situation never arises again, I do not believe that it is necessarily the answer to bring in more legislation when there is much already in place. It is more the case that nothing was implemented or adhered to. For instance, Section 2 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 gives police powers to act when an individual is subjected to two or more incidents of harassment causing them 'alarm or

distress'. The Act also provides a civil remedy for individuals under Section 3 if victims prefer not to go down the criminal law route. This is simple and powerful legislation that is under-used and provides a route for redress should an individual wish to pursue it.

46. The police service needs to be seen as being totally independent and therefore fair and even-handed in its implementation of the law and brave enough to take a stand against media wrongdoing, even if it means the police could be subject to attack and criticism as a result. No one joins the police to be popular but a reputation of fairness and honesty is paramount. Good relations and partnerships with the media are very important, but the price in recent years has been too high. The public needs to be reassured as to the police's role as a beacon of safety and discretion. Reporting crime as a victim or witness can often be one of the most difficult and vulnerable times of someone's life, and a time when trust in the police is a crucial part in how the person copes with it. In recent years that respect has been tainted and I sincerely hope that this Inquiry acts as a crossroads and the police take this opportunity to improve their relationship with the public and to re-establish the trust that it so badly needs to be effective.

47. With regard to the press, for me the issue is about transparency and proportionality. I, (and I believe other members of the public), do not want to curb the media in exposing wrongdoing and hypocrisy, but every institution has to be seen to abide by rules of professional and ethical standards. However good the majority of police and journalists are, the public's faith in both has been damaged and we need reassurance that, should the mark be overstepped in the future, there will be severe consequences.

48. Recommendations

- A clear complaints procedure for police officers wishing to correct inaccuracies in a story or who are unhappy with the conduct of a journalist;

- Enhanced training in media and communication skills for officers at all levels of the police service;
- Review of the role of the Crime Reporters Association to ensure transparency in terms of access to information;
- News editors should be required to complete decision logs where invasion of an individual's privacy and/or use of a private investigator is contemplated.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2012