



**Commission of Inquiry into
the Tasmanian Government's
Responses to Child Sexual
Abuse in Institutional Settings**

WITNESS STATEMENT OF GLENN HINDLE

I, Glenn Hindle, Police Officer, do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

1. This statement made by me, is in response to the Notice to Prepare and Produce a Document or Statement, RFS-POL-003, requested by the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings (**the Commission of Inquiry**). The information in this statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Acronyms

AFP	Australian Federal Police
DOH	Department of Health
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

Background

Question 1

What is your current rank and station within Tasmania Police?

2. I am a Detective Senior Constable, currently attached to the Northern Criminal Investigation Branch, stationed at Launceston.

Question 2

What is your service history within Tasmania Police and/or any other policing or law enforcement organisations?

3. I joined The New Zealand Police in in 2007 and transferred to the Tasmania Police in October 2013.

Question 3

What professional experience do you have with dealing with children and young people who are at risk of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviours, harmful sexual behaviours and child sexual exploitation?

4. For a period of (about) 2 years prior to my departure from the New Zealand Police, I was attached to a Child Protection Unit investigating instances of child sexual abuse and exploitation. Prior to joining that unit, I investigated complaints relating



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to adult sexual assault. In 2018 I commenced as an investigator within the Northern Criminal Investigation Branch, Victims Unit.

Question 4

What professional experience do you have dealing with allegations of child sexual abuse?

5. I have investigated an array of complaints of sexual abuse against children, including some more complex investigations involving multiple offenders and victims. I have previously investigated complaints regarding institutional abuse, examples include but are not limited to Department of Education, and Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

James Geoffrey Griffin

Question 5

Outline your role in the investigation of Mr Griffin.

6. I was allocated duties of lead investigator in the 2019 investigation of Mr Griffin.

Question 6

Outline what you have learned about Mr Griffin, particularly in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse by Mr Griffin.

7. I learned Mr Griffin was not sophisticated, however he employed a sense of familiarity and trust to remain unassuming and offend opportunistically.

Question 7

Detail any barriers you faced when investigating Mr Griffin.

8. The Griffin investigation was not complex. No specific barriers were identified, however due to 'identified inefficiencies,' I did request for some aspects of the investigation to be expedited outside of normal practice. Namely:
 - a. Forensic analysis of his computer devices
 - b. Office of the DPP (authority to charge with Persistent Sexual Abuse)
 - c. Working with Vulnerable Persons Permit



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Question 8

Have Tasmania Police continued to take allegations and/or complaints in relation to Mr Griffin after his death?

a) If yes, please explain this process and what happens with these complaints (including outlining whether statements are taken and assisting them with, or giving them any assurances regarding, any child exploitation material that may contain images of the complainant or their children),

b) If not, please explain why not.

9. No, due to Mr Griffin's passing, the ability to prosecute him for his actions have ceased. Complaints of any additional offending are recorded, but not acted upon in terms of an investigation occurring. However, a degree of reassurance and referral to support agencies was provided to victims.

Question 9

How many potential victim-survivors have come forward to Tasmania Police with allegations of child sexual abuse by Mr Griffin?

10. 1-2 additional complainants as recorded under Operation Barrow contained on the Atlas Database.

Question 10

Based on your knowledge of the investigation in relation to Mr Griffin, please outline whether the complainants who came forward to Tasmania Police also made complaints to Launceston General Hospital about Mr Griffin (whether at the time of the alleged abuse or since)?

11. My investigation revealed that (1) victim survivor had previously raised concerns with the Launceston General Hospital.

Question 11

Is there anything else you consider the Commission of Inquiry should know about Mr Griffin or complaints or allegations made about him?

12. No



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Question 12

Outline the approach taken by Tasmania Police and Launceston General Hospital in relation to the child exploitation material that belonged to Griffin, including:

a) Whether there were any steps taken to identify and notify potential victim-survivors of child sexual abuse or grooming by Mr Griffin, and if so, please identify those steps, and

b) Whether you consider those steps to be adequate or appropriate.

13. a) 'Hospital related' images were detected. I generated sanitised copies of those images. I along with an additional member of Tasmania Police attended a pre-arranged meeting at the Launceston General Hospital. We met with selected DOH Personnel with a view to identifying the patients depicted. Upon some positive identifications being made, additional actions were implemented which I was not part of.

14. b) As I do not have a full appreciation as to the sum of actions undertaken, I reserve my opinion as to whether they were adequate and appropriate.

Launceston General Hospital

Question 13

Detail the interactions you had with Launceston General Hospital and/or the Department of health in relation to complaints made about, or your investigations into, Mr Griffin?

15. I liaised with Doctor Peter Renshaw (Executive Director Medical Services) being a direct point of contact. Dr Renshaw and his staff initially assisted in terms of suspending Griffin from duty. Additionally, I liaised with Dr Renshaw regarding previous or existing complaints and Mr Griffin's immediate and ongoing welfare.

Question 14

Based on your investigations, explain your views as to what Launceston General Hospital's staff or management team knew about Mr Griffin's behaviour during his employment. Please explain the basis for your views,



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including whether, by whom and when this knowledge was passed onto Tasmania Police.

16. It is my view that Dr Renshaw and his management team were immediately unaware, and unexpectant of any allegations surrounding Mr Griffin. This was evidenced by their initial reactions, and immediate willingness to share what scant details were immediately at hand.

Question 15

Do you hold any concerns about how Launceston General Hospital or other agencies responded to matters involving Mr Griffin?

17. I do not hold concern, I identified Dr Renshaw and his staff to respond appropriately. They proved to be very approachable and efficient with their assistance. No immediate barriers presented.

Investigating child sexual abuse cases

Question 16

In relation to the Northern Police Division, please outline:

- a) *How many officers are responsible for investigating matters involving child sexual abuse*
- b) *The geographical area that the Northern Police Division covers*
- c) *The training provided to officers in relation to matters of child sexual abuse particularly focused on training related to:*
 - i. *Interviewing children*
 - ii. *Interviewing victims of child sexual abuse, and/ or*
 - iii. *Trauma informed practices.*

In your answer, please detail the frequency of the training, whether it is compulsory and who provides it.

- d) *The facilities and equipment used to interview victim-survivors in your region (for example, interview rooms or audio-visual recording) and whether, in your view, these facilities are fit-for-purpose and suitable, and*



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- e) *Whether any referrals are generally given to complainants, their families, witnesses and/or alleged perpetrators in matters involving child sexual abuse (for example, to support services).***
18. (a) There are (2) Detective Sergeants positions and (6) Detective Constable positions. These members have a varying degree of investigative responsibility.
19. (b) I will explain the geographical area of the Northern Police District in terms of locations serviced. They extend to encompass Ross in the South, Seymour in the East, Poatina through to Mole Creek in the West and Elizabeth Town across to the Coast in the North of the state. Both Flinders Island and Cape Barron Island are included.
20. (c) As I was granted recognition of prior learning from New Zealand Police, I have not undertaken 'localised training,' so I am unable to comment further in relation to such training, other than to state that I know it exists.
21. (d) Soft interview rooms exist and are in use. In my view, the location of those interview rooms, being situated within police stations is contentious. The outdated audio-visual technology installed in Launceston does not function and is, in my view, no longer fit for purpose.
22. (e) Yes, referrals are generally given to complainants, such as brochures and business cards to support agencies such as Laurel House which are openly displayed and provided by investigators.

Question 17

Please explain:

- a) *The limitation or barriers faced by police to investigate matters involving child sexual abuse***
- b) *How police officers manage responding to allegations of child sexual abuse with their other duties***
- c) *Whether there are any delays or backlogs in the investigation of matters involving child sexual abuse in your region and if so, why, and***
- d) *Whether data is collected in a way that would enable you or your superiors to identify if there was a backlog of matters involving child sexual abuse in your region.***



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23. (a) Limitations for investigators exist in terms of technology, compromised communications with partner agencies and conflicting priorities such as shift work and investigations unrelated to sexual offending.
24. (b) Police officers liaise with immediate supervisors with a view to appropriately prioritising their responsibilities.
25. (c) There are no identified delays or backlogs regarding child abuse investigation matters.
26. (d) Data is collated by way of referrals and offence reports, assessed in terms of priority thus enabling superiors to appropriately, efficiently, and effectively allocate investigations.

Question 18

Please describe any major changes in the investigation and management of matters involving child sexual abuse:

- a) Since you began your policing career in Tasmania; and***
- b) Since the investigation to Mr Griffin?***
27. (a) More accountability imparted onto investigators to addresses investigation requirements in a timely manner. More oversight by immediate supervisors.
28. (b) Since the Griffin investigation, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Child Safety Services has been strengthened. Efficiencies in information sharing by Education Legal has improved. Increased awareness of accountability in terms of Working with Vulnerable Persons accreditation. In essence a notable improvement in joint / partner agency relations.

Question 19

Do you often collaborate with the Australian Federal Police in matters involving matters involving child sexual abuse? If so, describe your experience of collaborating with them.

29. I often collaborate with The Australian Federal Police involving matters of Child Sexual Abuse. As investigators we have direct access to a nominated Tasmanian based AFP member, my experiences with this collaborative relationship have yielded an effective and efficient results.

Question 20



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Have you had any experiences working with witness intermediaries? If so, please provide your reflections on these experiences.

30. I have had experience working with witness intermediaries. Although that programme is still in its infancy, it is proving to promote effective outcomes.

Question 21

Have you had any involvement in the Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team? If so, please describe your involvement.

31. No, I have not had any engagement with the Joint Review Team.

Question 22

In your opinion, what is required to ensure Tasmania Police conduct a competent investigation into matters involving child sexual abuse?

32. Tasmania Police are already conducting competent investigations involving matters of Child Sexual Abuse. Any proposed recommendations would only enhance existing competencies.

Question 23

Do you experience or observe any barriers to information-sharing with other organisations and agencies (in particular Child Safety Services, employers of an alleged perpetrators and the Working with Vulnerable People Unit)?

33. I have experienced and observed barriers with information sharing regarding partner organisations and agencies

Examples are:

- i. Ineffective lines of communication with Child Safety Services
- ii. Emails from alternate policing jurisdictions defaulting to junk emails
- iii. The communication between police and the Justice Departments Working with Vulnerable Persons unit is exemplary.

Question 24

Based on your experience, what impact does the quality of an investigation of child sexual abuse have on a victim?



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34. From my experience any victim would not have a full comprehension as to the quality of their investigation.

Operation Hope (New Zealand)

Question 25

In relation to Operation Hope, please outline:

- a) *How Operation Hope came to be*
- b) *The purpose of Operation Hope*
- c) *Your role, if any, within Operation Hope or responding to Operation Hope;
and*
- d) *The outcome of Operation Hope.*

35. (a) Operation Hope was initiated by the New Zealand Police upon the realisation of a back log, and mismanagement of sexual abuse investigations.

36. (b) The purpose of Operation Hope was to improve efficiencies and prevent a repeat of identified failings.

37. (c) I worked within the confines of the recommendations implemented, namely a Multi-Disciplinary Type Centre.

38. (d) The outcome of Operation Hope promoted for a more collaborative relationship with partner agencies, therefore improving efficiencies.

Question 26

Are there any differences between Operation Hope and the investigation of matters involving child sexual abuse by Tasmania Police?

39. Operation Hope resulted in improved practices, some of which have not yet implemented by Tasmania Police for example Multi-Disciplinary Centres.

Question 27

What (if anything) can Tasmania Police learn from Operation Hope?

40. In my opinion Tasmania Police could adopt a more victim centric approach to Child Investigations, such as providing a neutral location providing a range of services from investigation to support.



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Question 28

Are there any other reforms from New Zealand relating to child sexual abuse which you think would be useful for the Commission of Inquiry to consider?

41. New Zealand Police included provisions to promote persons of varying cultures to report abuse, such as removing their logo or banner (livery) from view where practicable.

Question 29

Do you know of other models of investigating matters involving child sexual abuse in other jurisdictions that have been successful? If yes, please outline your understanding of that model and what you see as contributing to the success of that model.

42. I have on occasion engaged with counterparts of other jurisdictions; I have not encountered any improved practices of note.

Possibility of further reform

Question 30

Please detail whether you believe there are other areas of reform that the Commission of Inquiry should consider that may improve Tasmania Police's response to child sexual abuse in institutional contexts?

43. I believe that the Commission should consider aspects of 'prevention' as well as response, for example Community Protection Offender Reporting Management.

Question 31

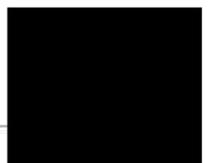
What if anything do you see as a barrier or challenge to the reforms you have suggested in your response to this request?

44. Staffing availability and number of staff allocated to that area.

Source of information for this statement

Question 32

Have you refreshed your memory for the purposes of this statement by reviewing any documents or other records or by speaking to any other person (other than a lawyer assisting you with the statement)? If so:





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- a) *Please give details of each person you spoke to and the matters you discussed; and*
- b) *Please provide a list of, and attach to your statement a copy of, each document you have used to assist you in making this statement, including but not limited to diary notes, emails, text messages, policy documents, incident reports and correspondence.*

45. Sources of information for this statement have been obtained from memory and experience.

B Requests for documents

Question 33

Produce a copy of any document referred to in response to any paragraph in this Notice (including any document which you used to refresh your memory referred to in paragraph 32 above).

46. N/A.

Conclusion

47. I am available to assist the Commission of Inquiry as required.

I make this solemn declaration under the *Oaths Act 2001* (Tas).

Declared at



on 21 June 2022



Glenn Hindle
Before me

