

## Statement of Det Snr Con BIGNELL

**Product Type:** TEXT DOCUMENTS:Statement

**Completed Date:** 20 Aug 2001

**Brief Description:** On the 20/08/2001, the statement of Detective BIGNELL was received at operation TARADALE. The statement is dated the 17/08/2001 and details Detective BIGNELL's involvement in the investigation in gay related homicides within the Eastern Suburbs area. Detective BIGNELL was a member of the Homicide Unit, Major Crime South at this time. See statement summary for further details.

### Summary:

- Para 3:** In making the statement Detective BIGNELL makes reference to nineteen documents (19), these are described as annexures 1 to 19.
- Para 4:** In making his statement he did not have access to any duty book or notebooks covering the period of time as they are unavailable.
- Para 6:** On 28/10/1990, commenced duty with Homicide Unit, Major Crime South. His work partner at the time was Det Sgt McCANN. Was involved in brief preparation relating to the murders of Richard Norman JOHNSON at Alexandria on 24/01/1990 and Kritchikorn RATTANAJURATHAPORN at McKenzies Point Bondi on 20/07/1990.
- Para 7:** During the investigation into the death of a homosexual victim, Ludwig Johann GERTSCH at Paddington, the inquiry was expanded after the investigation identified other incidents involving other homosexual males committed by groups of youths in Bondi and Alexandria. The youths targeted two parks frequented by homosexuals in the area, these area's are commonly known as being 'beats'.
- Para 8:** No link was establish between the murder of GERTSCH and the incidents involving the groups of youths targeting homosexual males in Bondi and Alexandria.
- Para 9:** The inquiries indicated above indicated possible links between incidents involving; the murder of William ALLEN at Alexandria on 28/12/1988, the suspicious death of John RUSSELL at South Bondi on 24/11/1989, the assault upon David McMAHON at Bondi on 21/12/1989, the murder of Wayne TONKS at Artarmon on 19/05/1990, [REDACTED] and the disappearance of Ross WARREN from South Bondi on 21/07/1989.
- Para 10:** On 08/04/1991, prepared a listening devices affidavit to record the conversation between [NP21] and [NP18] [NP21] was assisting police in this process, who had previously had conversations with [NP19]. The LD application was in relation to the murder of ALLEN. Produces annexure 6 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 11:** The listening device was used pursuant to the warrant between 1.28pm & 3.08pm on 11/04/1991 at the Minda Detention Centre recording the conversation between [NP21] and [NP18]. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person. Produces annexure 20 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 12:** On the 15/04/1991, prepared a listening device affidavit to obtain a warrant to further investigate the murders of a number of homosexual me in Sydney and to listen and record private conversations between [NP21] [NP19] [NP15] and [NP18]. Produces annexure 8 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 13:** The listening device was used pursuant to the warrant between 10am and 1.30pm on 24/04/1991 at the Minda Detention Centre to record those persons stated in paragraph 12. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person. Produces annexure 21 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 14:** On the 15/04/1991 assisted Det Sgt McCANN prepare a report on victims of homosexual crime in the Alexandria and South Bondi areas'. Produces annexure 9 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 15:** On the 19/04/1991, interviewed and obtained a statement from [Miss M] who states that she had a conversation with [NP57] who bragged of an involvement in the murder of Ross WARREN.
- Para 16:** On the 24/04/1991, interviewed and obtained [Miss X] who states that she had a conversation with [NP57] who bragged to her about being in a group of eight who had thrown Ross WARREN

off the rocks.

- Para 17:** On 03/07/1991, assisted Det Sgt McCANN in preparing an affidavit for the use of listening devices to be used to gain further evidence relating to homosexual crimes committed by a group of juveniles in the Alexandria and Bondi areas'. The LD was to record conversations between [NP21] and [NP16] at Minda Detention Centre. Produces annexure 13 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 18:** The LD warrant was used on three occasions in July 1991 at the Minda Detention Centre recording conversations between [NP21] and [NP16] including [NP16] involvement in a number of assaults upon homosexual men in Alexandria and Bondi. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person as the exact time, date and location could not be established. Produces annexure 21 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 19:** On 10/08/1991, again assisted Det Sgt McCANN prepare an overview report entitled, 'Over view of homosexual murders and incidents within the inner city area - inner city gay murders.' Was aware of the accuracy of the information it contained. Produces annexure 18 into evidence relating to this paragraph.
- Para 20:** The investigation was suspended due to absence of admissible evidence to support criminal charges against any individual or group of individuals. The investigation established that members of homosexual community had been the subjected to serious assaults by predatory groups of juveniles. The recorded conversations and intelligence indicated that the group were prolific in their violent offences against homosexuals between December 1988 to July 1990 in these areas although many such incidents remained unreported to police.

## New South Wales Police

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STATEMENT in the matter of:  
TARADALE

Place: MASCOT  
Police Station  
Date : 17 August 2001

Name: James Edward BIGNELL  
Address: MASCOT Police Station  
Occupation: Senior Constable of Police.

Tel. No.:

STATES:-

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable for prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

2. I am 41 years of age.

3. In making this statement I have refreshed my memory by referring to the following documents:

- Annexure 1: Statement of [187] dated 21 March, 1991.  
Annexure 2: Statement of [187] dated 25 March, 1991.  
Annexure 3: Handwritten notes of a conversation of [187]  
Annexure 4: Statement of [186] dated 2 April, 1991  
Annexure 5: An Application by S.F.Emmett (Affidavit) for a Listening Device Warrant dated 8 April 1991 and report.  
Annexure 6: An Application (Affidavit) I made for a Listening Device Warrant dated 8 April, 1991 and report by S.F.Emmett.  
Annexure 7: An Application (Affidavit) made by S.F.Emmett for a Listening Device Warrant dated 9 April, 1991 and his report.

Witness:



Signature:



J.B. BIGNELL  
17 AUG 2001



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STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: TARADALE

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- Annexure 8: An Application (Affidavit) I made for a Listening Device Warrant dated 15 April, 1991 and report of S.F.Emmett.
- Annexure 9: A report by Detective Sergeant McCann dated 15 April, 1991 re homosexual victims in Alexandria and South Bondi.
- Annexure 10: A statement I obtained from Miss M on 25 April, 1991.
- Annexure 11: A statement I obtained from Miss X on 25 April, 1991.
- Annexure 12: A statement of 187 dated 27 June, 1991.
- Annexure 13: An Application (Affidavit) by S.D.McCann for a Listening Device Warrant dated 3 July, 1991.
- Annexure 14: A report I completed on the execution of the Listening Device Warrant (Annexure 13) dated 5 August, 1991.
- Annexure 15: A statement of Kay Warren dated 15 July, 1991.
- Annexure 16: A statement of Daniel Robinson dated 16 July, 1991.
- Annexure 17: A statement of David McMahon dated 1 August, 1990.
- Annexure 18: A report by S.D.McCann -Inner city Gay murders dated 10 August, 1991.
- Annexure 19: A statement of Detective Sergeant Gary Phillips dated 14 August, 2001.

4. In making this statement I have not had access to my duty books or notebooks covering this period of time as they are unavailable.

5. Following Regionalisation of the New South Wales Police Service in 1986 I was attached to Kings Cross Detectives Office where I was involved in the investigation of general crime in the Kings Cross Area.

Witness:



Signature:



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6. On 28 October, 1990 I was transferred and commenced duty with the Homicide Unit of the Major Crime Squad South. My work partner at this time was Detective Sergeant Steve McCann. Prior to my transfer to the Homicide Unit, Detective McCann had been involved with the investigation of two murders, one being Richard Norman Johnson at Alexandria on 24 January, 1990 and the other being Kritchikorn Rattanajurathaporn at McKenzies Point, Bondi on 20 July, 1990. Both these investigations resulting in people being arrested. My involvement with those investigations related to brief preparation.

7. During these investigations and in a subsequent inquiry into the murder of Ludwig Johann Gertsch at Paddington, another homosexual victim, we expanded the inquiry and identified other incidents involving other homosexual males committed by groups of youths in Bondi and Alexandria. Both the parks at Alexandria and Bondi were identified at that time as being a meeting place for male homosexuals who engaged in sexual liaisons. These locations were referred to within the gay community as being 'beats'.

8. As it transpired we established there were no links between the murder of Gertsch and the incidents involving the groups of youths targeting homosexual males at Bondi and Alexandria, although the murder of Gertsch had been a catalyst in expanding the inquiry into the other incidents.

9. These inquiries indicated possible links between these murders and a number of offences committed against homosexual males who had associations with 'gay beats':-

Witness:



Signature:



J BIGNELL

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STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: TARADALE

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- (a) the murder of William Emanuel Allen at a toilet block at Alexandria Park on 28 December 1988,
- (b) the suspicious death of John Alan Russell at South Bondi on 24 November, 1989.
- (c) the assault upon David John McMahon at Bondi on 21 December, 1989.
- (d) the murder of Wayne Tonks at Artarmon on 19 May, 1990
- (e) [REDACTED]
- (f) the disappearance of Ross Warren from South Bondi on 21 July, 1989.

10. On 8 April, 1991 I prepared a Listening Device Affidavit to record conversation between [NP21] and [NP18] [NP18] [NP21] was assisting Police in this process and had already previously had conversations with [NP19] recorded by Listening Device subject of a Supreme Court authorisation. The basis of the application was inquiry into the murder of Allen continuing on from the recorded conversations between [NP21] and [NP19]

I PRODUCE THAT APPLICATION LAPS 91/51 (a) & (b). (ANNEXURE 6)

11. The Listening Device was used pursuant to the Warrant between 1.28pm and 3.08pm on 11 April, 1991 at the Minda Detention Centre to record the conversation between [NP21] and [NP18]. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person. I PRODUCE THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. (ANNEXURE 20)

12. On 15 April, 1991 I prepared a Listening Device Affidavit to obtain a Warrant to further investigate the murders of a number of homosexual men in Sydney and to listen and record private conversations between [NP21], [NP19], [NP15]

Witness: Signature: 

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and [ NP18 ].

I PRODUCE THAT APPLICATION LAPS 91/52 (a) &amp; (b). (ANNEXURE 8)

13. The Listening Device was used pursuant to the Warrant between 10am and 1.30pm on 24 April, 1991 at the Minda Detention Centre to record the conversation between [ NP21 ], [ NP42 ] and [ NP15 ] [ NP15 ]. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person.

I PRODUCE THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. (ANNEXURE 21)

14. On 15 April, 1991 Detective Sergeant McCann prepared a report entitled, 'Overview of reported crime and its possible connection involving victims of the homosexual community primarily in the Alexandria and South Bondi areas.' I assisted in the preparation of this report and was at that time familiar with the information on which the report was based.

I PRODUCE THAT REPORT SIGNED BY DETECTIVE SERGEANT MCCANN. (ANNEXURE 9)

15. On 19 April, 1991 I interviewed [ Miss M ] at [REDACTED] and obtained a two page statement from her. Within that statement she related a conversation with [ NP57 ] [ NP57 ] who bragged of an involvement in the murder of Ross Warren.

I PRODUCE THAT STATEMENT (ANNEXURE 10)

16. On 25 April, 1991 I interviewed [ Miss X ] at [REDACTED] and obtained a one page statement from her. Within the statement she related a conversation with [ NP57 ] who had bragged about being involved in a group of eight who had thrown Ross Warren off the rocks.

I PRODUCE THAT STATEMENT (ANNEXURE 11)

Witness:



Signature:





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17. On 3 July, 1991 Detective Sergeant McCann prepared an affidavit for the use of Listening Devices relative to the investigation of the deaths of a number of male persons who were believed to be homosexuals. These offences were believed to have been committed by groups of juveniles. The purpose of this application was to record conversations between [NP21] and [NP16] at the Minda Detention Centre. I assisted in the preparation of this Affidavit and was aware of the accuracy of its contents at the time.

I PRODUCE THAT AFFIDAVIT (ANNEXURE 13)

18. The Listening Device was used pursuant to the Warrant on three occasions:

Between 10am and 12.30pm on 5 July, 1991 Minda Detention Centre.  
 Between 9am and 11.40am on 7 July, 1991 Minda Detention Centre.  
 Between 9am and 12.30pm on 15 July, 1991 Minda Detention Centre.  
 The conversations between [NP21] and [NP16] included [NP16]'s involvement in a number of assaults upon homosexuals in the Alexandria and Bondi areas. Insufficient evidence was obtained for the arrest of any person due to insufficient information to establish the exact time, date and location of offences and information was often heresay.

I PRODUCE THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS. (ANNEXURE 21)

19. On the 10 August, 1991 Detective Sergeant McCann prepared a document entitled, 'Over view of homosexual murders and incidents within the inner city area - inner city gay murders.' I assisted in the preparation of this report and was aware of the accuracy of the information it contained.

I PRODUCE THAT REPORT (ANNEXURE 18)

Witness:

Signature:



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20. The investigation was suspended due to absence of admissible evidence to support criminal charges against any individual or group of individuals. The investigation established that during this period members of the homosexual community within the Bondi and Alexandria beat areas had been subjected to serious assault and robbery offences by predatory groups of juveniles. The recorded conversations and intelligence indicated that the group were prolific in their violent offences against homosexuals between December 1988 to July 1990 in these areas although many such incidents remained unreported to police.

Witness:

*M. Nicholls*  
C. NICHOLLS  
SERGEANT  
17/8/07.

Signature:

*J. Bignell*  
J BIGNELL