



Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

Statement of John Russell Goobanko


30 January 2023


This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary to give to the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ Hate Crimes as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

1. My name is John Russell Goobanko. My address is known to the Special Commission of Inquiry.
2. I am employed as a Principal Investigator by Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes.
3. In the course of my duties, I have reviewed and conducted inquiries in relation to the death of Carl Stockton who died from injuries sustained in the vicinity of Bar Cleveland in November 1996.
4. On 16 November 2022, I made email contact with retired Detective Sergeant Neil Walker, who was the principal investigator of Carl Stockton's death in 1996.
5. On 30 November 2022, Mr Walker advised me by email that he "did not receive any information, either direct or anecdotal that Carl's death was as the result of a 'hate crime' against him as a result of his sexual orientation."
6. On the same date, I sent a further email to Mr Walker querying specifically whether his investigation had discovered any evidence of "gay taunts" directed towards Mr Stockton at Bar Cleveland.
7. On the same date, Mr Walker replied advising that he did not recall "any information either directly from witness or anecdotally of any homophobic taunts towards Carl". Mr Walker confirmed that, if he had received such evidence, it would have been included in his statement provided to the inquest into Mr Stockton's death.

Statement of John Russell Goobanko – 30 January 2023

8. A copy of the above email exchange is annexed and marked with the letter "A".

Signature: 
Name: John Russell Goobanko
Date: 31/1/23

Witness Signature: 
Witness Name: Nickola Jones
Date: 31/01/23

Annexure "A"

From: [Neil Walker](#)
To: [John Goobanko](#)
Subject: Re: Contact with Neil Walker
Date: Wednesday, 30 November 2022 6:36:09 PM
Attachments: [image001.wmz](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.wmz](#)
[image003.png](#)

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Good evening John,

I don't recall any information either directly from witness or anecdotally of any homophobic taunts towards Carl. If there had been I would have paraphrased them in my summation of all the evidence/information I gathered during the investigation and included in my Investigators Statement for the Coroners Hearing.

Given the Coroner at the time delivered an 'open finding' as to circumstances under which Carl sustained his injuries. There are a number of scenarios that could explain how he sustained his head trauma. However, the available physical & witness evidence was insufficient to support any?

Of note, the Bar Cleveland is situated within the geographic boundary for the then Redfern LAC (now South Sydney PAC) and the investigation taken on by the Surry Hills LAC (now Surry Hills PAC) because Cleveland Street was the border of the two Commands, Carl resided in the Surry Hills LAC & a lack of available experience CI staff at Redfern. I was assigned the investigation about 48 hours after Carl was taken to St Vincent's Hospital, which impacted both available physical & witness evidence.

If you have access to my Investigator's Statement that I prepared for the Coroner, it may assist you?

Regards,

Neil Walker
 Detective Sergeant (Ret)

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From: John Goobanko [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 5:43 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Contact with Neil Walker

Hi Neil,

Thank you for emailing me. I am sorry to interrupt your retirement. I got a taste of that myself, for about 6 months, as a retired G.D. Sgt / Det Sgt from Queensland.

Can I just ask one question of you, please?

Did your investigation find any gay / homosexual taunts towards Carl Stockton at the Bar Cleveland?

Regards,

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[endif]-->



John Goobanko
Principal Investigator
Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

Chief Secretary's Building 121 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000
 M [REDACTED] E [REDACTED]
www.specialcommission.nsw.gov.au

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, 30 November 2022 10:46 AM

To: John Goobanko <[REDACTED]>

Subject: RE: Contact with Neil Walker

[CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.]

Good morning John,

I apologise for not responding sooner. I don't know that I can assist you any further in relation to this investigation. I summarised all the available evidence I could gather during the course of the investigation, including my conclusions on what may have been the cause of Carl's injuries, in my Investigator's Statement for the Coroner's Hearing. I did not receive any information, either direct or anecdotal that Carl's death was as the result of a 'hate crime' against him as a result of his sexual orientation. The only information I received in relation to Carl, was that he became argumentative and aggressive when he was intoxicated and that on most occasions he drank at the Bar Cleveland he left in a very intoxicated state.

If there are any specific questions you think I may be able to address, I would prefer you email me and I will answer them if I can.

Regards,

Neil Walker
Detective Sergeant (Ret)

From: John Goobanko <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Wednesday, 16 November 2022 9:25 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Contact with Neil Walker

Good morning,

I am trying to make contact with Neil Walker, former NSW police officer, to get some advice regarding the investigation of a death at Bar Cleveland in 1996. Hopefully the contact details I have been provided are accurate and this reaches the correct Neil Walker who was involved in that investigation.

Could you please contact me.

Regards,

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[endif]-->



John Goobanko
Principal Investigator
Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

Chief Secretary's Building 121 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

M [REDACTED] E [REDACTED]

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