



STATEMENT OF POLICE

In the matter of: Special Commission of Inquiry (SCOI) – LGBTIQ Hate Crimes
Response to Summons 49.

Place: Homicide Squad - State Crime Command

Date: 23 January 2023

Name: Neil SHELDON Tel. No: [REDACTED]

Rank: Detective Sergeant

Station/Unit: Homicide Squad

STATES:


1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that 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 will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything that I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 37 years of age.
3. I am a Detective Sergeant in the Homicide Squad of the New South Wales Police Force (**NSWPF**). I am currently a Team Leader within the Unsolved Homicide Team (**UHT**).
4. As part of my role, I am assisting the NSWPF in responding to requests issued by the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ Hate Crimes (**Inquiry**).
5. I make this statement in respect of Summons NSWPF49 issued by the Inquiry to the Commissioner of the NSWPF on 21 December 2022 with a return date of 23 January 2023 (**Summons 49**). I make this statement on the basis of information known to me and information provided to me by colleagues in the NSWPF and believe that information to be true at the time of making this statement.

3459-6129-4112v1

Witness: _____


Samantha MEREDITH
Detective Senior Constable
Homicide Squad
23 January 2023

Signature: _____


Neil SHELDON
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6. Summons 49 requested the production of exhibits associated with the death of Walter John BEDSER (DOB: 3 September 1933) on 02 December 1980 in Parramatta, NSW. Those exhibits being:

- a) knife located at the scene of the assault;
- b) two samples of blood taken from the body of Mr Bedser;
- c) swab of blood taken from showcase glass at Darcy St, Parramatta;
- d) swab of blood taken from wall behind counter at Darcy Str, Parramatta; and
- e) clothing of Mr Bedser removed from his body at the mortuary.

together referred to as **Exhibits**.

7. In addition to Summons 49, the Inquiry provided three documents to contextualise the request:

- a) Occurrence Pad Entry dated 10 December 1980: The Occurrence Pad entry detailed Detectives SMITH and McHUGH conveying the Exhibits to the Division of Analytical Laboratories (**DAL**) now known as NSW Forensic and Analytical Science Service (**FASS**). There is no entry in the Occurrence Pad detailing the return of the Exhibits to the Police Station conducting the investigation (or any other location).
- b) Two P377 – NSW Police Exhibit Examination Forms: The two P377 – NSW Police Exhibit Examination Forms detail that the Exhibits were conveyed to DAL by Detective Senior Constable B C McHUGH on 10 December 1980. The examinations were conducted by Detective Sergeant 3rd Class G C CARTER. The date of the examination is not listed.
- c) Review - Homicide Case Screening Form dated 21 February 2007: The Review - Homicide Case Screening Form dated 21 February 2007 also details the Exhibits being taken to DAL on 10 December 1980. The screening form also details the following Exhibits were removed from DAL on 24 December 1980:
 - i. Knife located at the scene of the assault

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- ii. Two samples of blood taken from the body of Mr Bedser
- iii. Swab of blood taken from showcase glass at Darcy St, Parramatta
- iv. Swab of blood taken from wall behind counter at Darcy Str, Parramatta

The screening form also notes that the location of one of the exhibits requested under Simmons 49 – *Clothing of deceased removed at mortuary* - was unknown.

8. I can confirm from my experience when exhibits are removed from DAL/FASS the current common practice is the exhibits are returned to the Police Station with carriage of the investigation. In the case of Mr BEDSER, it would have been Parramatta Police Station. However, there is no documentation such as Standard Operating Procedures or training manuals to indicate whether this is consistent with the process in December 1980. As such, we have taken a comprehensive approach to enquiries in order to locate the Exhibits.
9. The NSWPF has conducted the following enquiries to locate the Exhibits:
- a) Searches of the NSWPF exhibit management system - Exhibits Forensic Information and Miscellaneous Property System (**EFIMS**) were conducted. The EFIMS system catalogues exhibits maintained by NSWPF. No Exhibits were located as a result of this search.
 - b) Searches of all NSWPF investigative holdings – WebCOPS, Historical COPS Data, Pre-COPS data, E@glei and KODA ('Google' Style Search Engine across NSWPF systems) were reviewed. No records of the Exhibits were located as a result of these searches.
 - c) Enquiries were made with the exhibits section of Parramatta Police Area Command (**PAC**) formerly Parramatta Police Station as this was the Police Station which would likely have been returned the Exhibits as discussed above. UHT investigators were informed that the Parramatta Police Station is currently being renovated and as a result all exhibits have been moved to Riverstone Police Station. As a result of the move of the exhibits, an audit of all exhibits held at Parramatta Police Station was conducted. A

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search was conducted of all exhibits held at Parramatta PAC, no records relating to BEDSER were located. Furthermore, the audit did not reveal any unidentified exhibits.

- d) Enquiries were made with Forensic Evidence & Technical Services (**FETS**). FETS maintains the exhibit and exhibit records for cold cases and works closely with UHT on cold cases. Senior Sergeant Anne COADY, Coordinator – Cold Case, DNA Management Unit is the contact point for UHT within FETS for these types of requests. After conducting searches of FETS systems, Senior Sergeant COADY confirmed no records for the Exhibits could be located. Senior Sergeant COADY provided the reference number of FS 80/511 for the BEDSER investigation to assist with future enquiries.
- e) Enquires were made with NSWPF Records and Information Management Unit (**Archives**) to locate any records for the Exhibits under the reference FS 80/511. Archives hold historical crime scene files which can contain exhibit examination information, location of exhibits and exhibit/crime scene photographs. Archives confirmed all records and material held in relation to BEDSER was provided to the Inquiry on 01 August 2022. Archives noted there was a record on the system detailing negatives relating to crime scene photographs from FS 80/511 were missing.
- f) Enquiries were made with Dr David BRUCE, Senior Forensic Biologist for FASS (which, as noted above was formerly known as DAL). FASS's role is to test exhibits during the conduct of investigations. In some instances, exhibits are not returned to NSWPF but are rather retained by FASS whether that be for further testing or other reasons. Dr BRUCE is the contact point for UHT within FASS for these types of requests and after conducting searches of FASS systems confirmed no record of samples similar to the Exhibits were currently held at FASS. Furthermore, Dr BRUCE stated there is no record of the Exhibit – *Clothing of deceased removed at mortuary* being received or examined at FASS. Dr BRUCE provided a copy of the DAL Exhibit Register for December 1980 which shows the Exhibits being received from Detective Senior Constable McHUGH of Homicide on 10 December 1980 and being removed by J RHESLOP of Parramatta

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Police Station on 24 December 1980. As discussed above, PAC have no record of the Exhibits. A copy of this DAL Exhibit Register is attached to this statement and marked "A".

10. No Exhibits or documents relating to the Exhibits have been located as a result of the above searches and enquiries. I consider the above searches and enquiries to be an exhaustive search for the Exhibits and no further avenues of enquiry are available to locate the Exhibits.

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23 January 2023

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A

This is the document referred to as Annexure "A" in the statement of N Sheldon signed on 23 January 2023.

FORENSIC BIOLOGY LABORATORY

F.S. No DATE TIME BY	PERSONS DELIVERING EXHIBITS/STATION	LOCALITY	SUSPECT/S	VICTIM/S
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
80/511	Det S/C	P'matta		Walter John BEDSER
10.12.80	McHugh			
10.15am.	Homicide.			
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

POLICE EXHIBITS REGISTER

87

ITEM(S)	TAKEN BY	REPORTING OFFICE	TOTAL ITEMS
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
1. Blood - BEDSER 3, 4, 5 - Swabs. 2. Knife	[REDACTED]	PAC	5.
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

EXHIBITS REMOVED BY:
 SIGNATURE: *[Signature]*
 NAME (PRINT): J. R. HESLER
 Station: *[Station]* Date: 2/12/00