



Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

SUBMISSIONS OF COUNSEL ASSISTING

23 May 2023

IN THE MATTER OF WALTER JOHN BEDSER

Introduction

1. These submissions are filed on behalf of Counsel Assisting the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes (**Inquiry**).

Summary of matter

Date and location of death

2. At approximately 2pm on 2 December 1980, in broad daylight, Mr Walter Bedser was attacked and stabbed in the chest multiple times with a knife in his antique shop in Parramatta. He died in Parramatta Hospital shortly afterwards, at 2:15pm. He was 47 years old (DOB 3 September 1933).

Circumstances of death

3. Mr Bedser, known more commonly by his middle name John or “Johnny”, was an antique dealer in Parramatta. He was gay, possibly bisexual. His shop was on the corner of an arcade at 4 Darcy Street, Parramatta.
4. On 2 December 1980, shortly before 2pm, he was fatally stabbed in his shop by a person who to this day has never been identified.
5. There were numerous witnesses to the immediate aftermath of the assault on Mr Bedser, who saw the injured Mr Bedser and/or another person emerge from the shop. However, there were also numerous differences in their respective accounts, as summarised below.
6. Various complexities also surround the question of motive. At the time of the initial investigation, it would seem that there were three main possible case theories:

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- (1) A revenge attack by a parent or family associate of a teenage boy (or possibly girl) with whom Mr Bedser was known or believed to have had, or to have sought to have, sexual interactions;
- (2) An attack by a member or associate of the **Family of NP58**, as a result of acrimony flowing from various financial dealings; or
- (3) An attack for other reasons altogether, such as a robbery or a dispute over jewellery or other property.

7. As will become apparent, the first two case theories may not be completely separable.

Findings of post-mortem examination

8. Clinical notes completed by a Dr M Manning on Mr Bedser's arrival at hospital suggest he was unconscious on arrival and severely hypovolaemic. Initial examination identified two cuts lacerating his liver and lung, and four long slashes on Mr Bedser's left arm. Attempts at resuscitation failed and Dr Manning pronounced Mr Bedser dead at 2:15pm, assessing the cause of death as "hypovolaemic shock" (referring to severe blood and fluid loss).¹
9. The post-mortem by Dr Naaman Malouf concluded that the cause of death was blood loss from a lacerated liver and left lung.² The following injuries were identified:
 - a. 12 cm irregular laceration on the left forearm, more likely caused by glass;
 - b. 8 cm regular laceration on the left arm, more likely caused by a knife;
 - c. 3x2 cm stab wound to the chest;
 - d. 7 cm stab wound to the chest, which lacerated the liver and diaphragm; and
 - e. Small abrasion on the left shoulder.

¹ Synopsis of clinical notes, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00012).

² Autopsy report prepared by Naaman Malouf dated 3 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00017).

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Indicators of LGBTIQ status or bias

10. It was well known among his friends and associates that Mr Bedser was gay.³ One witness went so far as to say that Mr Bedser's sexuality was "common knowledge amongst local people".⁴
11. By soon after his death there were rumours circulating in the antique community that Mr Bedser was murdered due to his sexuality.⁵
12. His mother would not accept he was gay⁶ and his sister did not know he was gay.⁷
13. He had been given a warning in 1977, in a park in Parramatta, for "loitering" when in the company of another man. Police described that man in 1980 as "a dead set poofter", and Mr Bedser himself as "a cat": see below. There was also evidence that he had attended beats from time to time. The Bias Crimes Indicators Form prepared in the course of Strike Force Parrabell, in 2016-7, acknowledged that the Parramatta CBD near Mr Bedser's store included a number of known beat locations.⁸
14. It is clear that Mr Bedser had had sexual interactions with, or had propositioned, a number of teenage boys, some of whom had at one time or another been employed by Mr Bedser in his shop. Most of those boys appear to have been from European, and especially Greek, backgrounds.
15. There is some evidence that Mr Bedser may have been bisexual. One witness claimed that Mr Bedser had been having sex with a sixteen year-old girl,⁹ while another claimed that he had found a ladies white slip in Mr Bedser's back room, and that Mr Bedser had said it belonged to a woman he was interested in. This latter witness also claimed that Mr Bedser had both heterosexual and homosexual pornographic magazines.¹⁰

Persons of interest

16. No persons of interest were identified in the initial police investigation, notwithstanding that numerous witnesses saw the presumed assailant running from the shop.

³ Statement of Raymond Morris Hadley dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00050); Report of interview with Maree Magers, 18 December 1980 (SCOI.45150).

⁴ Report of interview with Emma Ellen Clarke, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45115).

⁵ Report of interview with John, Maree, Andrew and Elayne Margaret Magers, 25 January 1981 (SCOI.10061.00012)

⁶ Jim Pollard, "The riddle of murder arcade", *Daily Mirror*, 27 October 1981 (SCOI.10064.00006).

⁷ Report of interview with Shirley Driscoll (SCOI.00008.00113).

⁸ Strike Force Parrabell Bias Crimes Indicators Review Form (undated), 16 (SCOI.49560)

⁹ Report of interview with Charles Joseph Duffield, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82128).

¹⁰ Report of interview with [REDACTED] 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82143).

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17. According to evidence given by police at the inquest, the initial investigation found no fingerprints on the knife itself.¹¹ If that is correct, it may indicate that the killer either wore gloves or wiped the handle clean, suggesting the possibility of a premeditated and/or professional operation.
18. Some fingerprints were found on various items inside the antique shop, but none matched those of any persons from whom elimination prints were taken (apart from Mrs Mavis Turner, an employee of Mr Bedser: see [24] below).¹²
19. In about 2007/08, further fingerprint analysis was conducted by the Unsolved Homicide Team, from prints which had been lifted from glass display cases at the crime scene. This produced matches with three persons: Geoffrey Smith, [I205] and [I206]
20. Only one of those three persons, Geoffrey Smith, was of an age and description (as at December 1980) possibly comparable to that of the person seen by several witnesses running from the shop at the time of the murder. Mr Smith died in custody in 2002. Nothing in the material available to the Inquiry suggests any connection between Mr Smith and Mr Bedser that would link him to the homicide.
21. At the time of Mr Bedser's death, [I205] would have been 15 years old and [I206] would have been 9 years old. None of the witnesses outside the shop in December 1980 suggested that any person of such an age was seen. Nor is there any indication in the available evidence that either [I205] or [I206] was one of the boys with whom Mr Bedser had any relevant relationship.

Exhibits: availability and testing

22. Some exhibits were recovered from the scene, and some crime scene photographs taken, including photos of the knife used in the attack, which was found on the floor of the shop behind the counter.¹³
23. The exhibits so recovered included the knife, a blood sample from Mr Bedser, and blood swabs from various parts of the scene.
24. On 2 December 1980, the day of the murder, according to an occurrence entry of that day, the fingerprint section attended and obtained numerous prints for examination.¹⁴ Fingerprints other than Mr Bedser's were found at his shop but were not matched with any known person. Two of the prints

¹¹ Transcript of coronial inquest dated 11 July 1983, 4 (SCOI.00008.00139).

¹² Persons from whom fingerprints were taken included [NP58], [NP56] and [NP59], [I147] and [I200], [I35], [I35], Mavis Turner; Edna Bedser; Marjorie Purnell; and Shirley Driscoll.

¹³ Crime scene and autopsy photographs, undated, 32, 34, 35 (SCOI.82618).

¹⁴ Report of occurrence, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00019).

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were found on the top of the cash register, and one on the inside of a vase.¹⁵ Another print, on a large bowl which had traces of blood nearby, was that of Mrs Mavis Turner who was an employee of Mr Bedser. There were also some fragmented latent prints and a partial palm print not accounted for. Investigating police noted that they were not confined to a particular part of the shop and may have been those of customers.¹⁶

25. Also on 2 December 1980, according to the same occurrence entry, Detective Sergeant (**DS**) Carter of the Parramatta Scientific Section took possession of the knife. What DS Carter did with the knife is not recorded.
26. On 10 December 1980, Detectives McHugh and Smith are recorded as conveying the knife (along with the blood samples and swabs) to the Division of Analytical laboratories (**DAL**), now known as the Forensic and Analytical Science Service (**FASS**), where they were received by P.A. Connellan, Forensic Biologist.¹⁷
27. On 22 December 1980, Mr Connellan certified in writing that he had made a “scientific examination” of the knife, as well as of a blood sample and three blood swabs. As to the knife, the certification provided by Mr Connellan was in the following terms:¹⁸
- “The knife (item 2) was stained with human blood of group A, Hp 1-1, PGM 2-1 (subtype 2+1+).”
28. On 24 December 1980, according to DAL records, the knife (and the blood sample and swabs) were removed from DAL by J Rheslop of Parramatta Police Station.¹⁹
29. There is no record, in any of the material produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF, of any examination of the knife for fingerprints. However, at the inquest in 1983 the following exchange took place between the Coroner and the Officer in Charge (**OIC**), Detective Sergeant Hamilton:²⁰

Q. You may have mentioned it but was the knife found?

A. Yes the knife was found near the counter where the deceased was stabbed.

Q. Obviously examined for fingerprints?

A. Yes nothing at all.

Q. Nothing at all?

A. Nothing.

¹⁵ Report of fingerprint discovery, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45108).

¹⁶ Report of fingerprint examinations (SCOI.45109).

¹⁷ Record of exhibits sent for testing, 10 December 1980 (SCOI.82594); Specimen/exhibit examination form, 8 December 1980 (SCOI.10284.00014); Statement of Detective Sergeant Neil Sheldon, 23 January 2023, [7] (SCOI.82591),

¹⁸ Forensic report of Paul Arthur Connellan, 22 December 1980 (SCOI.10284.00013).

¹⁹ Statement of Detective Sergeant Neil Sheldon, 23 January 2023, Annexure A (SCOI.82591),

²⁰ Transcript of coronial inquest dated 11 July 1983, 4 (SCOI.00008.00139).

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30. That exchange clearly suggests both that the knife was examined for fingerprints, and that no fingerprints were found on it. However, as noted above, the NSWPF has produced no record of any such examination of the knife.
31. In fact, the NSWPF is unable to locate the knife (nor the blood sample, nor the blood swabs, nor Mr Bedser's clothing). On the evidence available to the Inquiry, at some point in time on or after 24 December 1980, the knife and the other items have been lost by police.²¹

Findings at inquest, including as to manner and cause of death

32. An inquest was held on 11 July 1983. The finding of Coroner Gregory Charles Glass was that Mr Bedser died on 2 December 1980, "of the effects of blood loss due to a lacerated liver and a lacerated left lung inflicted earlier that day at the premises of 4 Darcy St, Parramatta, by a person unknown."²²

Criminal proceedings

33. No criminal proceedings have ever been brought against anyone in relation to Mr Bedser's death.

Features of the original police investigation, and opportunities missed

34. **First**, the murder weapon and other crime scene exhibits have been lost. It is therefore now not possible to subject them to more modern forensic analysis. Police obviously should have taken steps to ensure that the knife and other exhibits were retained and preserved, including for future reinvestigations or forensic testing.
35. If the knife was in fact tested for fingerprints, and none were found, its loss may (in that one respect) be less critical. However, whether such testing had actually occurred is not entirely clear, as outlined above. In any event, the loss of the murder weapon in an unsolved homicide is plainly deplorable.
36. **Secondly**, although the police seem to have carried out quite extensive enquiries in relation to numerous aspects of their investigation into Mr Bedser's murder, no comprehensive or detailed statement by the OIC, summarising and outlining the entirety of the investigation, seems ever to have been produced. The Inquiry has been left to surmise the direction and extent of the investigation, from such surviving materials as running sheets, occurrence pad entries and witness statements.

²¹ Statement of Detective Sergeant Neil Sheldon dated 23 January 2023 (SCOI.82591).

²² Findings of coronial inquest, 11 July 1983 (SCOI.00008.00003)

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37. However, as noted in the following paragraphs [38] – [42], that process in turn cannot be undertaken in any comprehensive way, because not all of that material has been produced to the Inquiry. Apparently what has not been produced can no longer be found.²³
38. **Thirdly**, a considerable amount of material appears to be missing from the material that has been produced to the Inquiry.
39. In particular, the running sheets and occurrence entries produced to the Inquiry terminate abruptly in January 1981 (only a little more than a month after Mr Bedser’s murder). Yet it is clear that various avenues of investigation were still being actively explored at that time.
40. In August 1981 the OIC stated that the investigation had not been completed;²⁴ and as noted above, the inquest did not take place until another two years after that, in July 1983. What enquiries were pursued, or sought to be pursued, and what was accomplished or not accomplished, between January 1981 and mid-1983, is unknown.
41. In addition, the coronial file includes only a one-page document provided by the OIC setting out the basic facts of Mr Bedser’s death.²⁵ And it appears that only one volume of running sheets was tendered at the coronial inquest, even though two further volumes of material have been produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF (consisting of both running sheets and witness statements).
42. A notable specific example of the present-day absence of important records is an occurrence entry which records that a statement was taken from Ms Amani Youssef.²⁶ Ms Youssef’s account, as noted in the occurrence entry, seems clearly to be of some importance in terms of identifying the assailant (see [106] below). However, no such statement appears in the material produced by the NSWPF to the Inquiry.
43. **Fourthly**, so far as can be ascertained from the material available to the inquiry, some witnesses were either not spoken to at all, or not pursued, in circumstances where there would appear to have been an obvious line of enquiry. However, as noted above, it is not possible to say with certainty whether that is so, because it is apparent that the Inquiry has not been provided with all the police records of their investigation.
44. **Fifthly**, the use of homophobic language in some of the police documents is striking. For example, an early investigation summary refers to Mr Bedser having been spoken to three years earlier in 1977 in

²³ Case Screening Form, 18 September 2008, 17 (SCOI.02913); Senior Detectives Course review material, 4 August 2011, 3, 21 (SCOI.02914).

²⁴ Senior Detectives Course review material, 4 August 2011, 5 (SCOI.02914).

²⁵ Statement of Detective Sergeant John McGregor, undated (SCOI.00008.00003).

²⁶ Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111).

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a park at Parramatta, in the company of a man described by the investigating officers as “a dead set poofter”.²⁷

45. The whereabouts and alibi of this man from 1977 were pursued by police on the very day of Mr Bedser’s 1980 murder, notwithstanding that there was no suggestion of any connection with Mr Bedser other than that he had been with Mr Bedser in a park some three years earlier. (The man was interviewed but had an alibi.)²⁸
46. The same investigation summary, having referred to Mr Bedser (in connection with the 1977 incident) as having “homosexual tendencies”, concluded as follows in relation to Mr Bedser: “... as previously stated he is a cat.”²⁹ The evidence of Barry Charles before this Inquiry in November 2022 clarifies that the term “cat” is “an old-school slang term for a homosexual”, referring to “tomcats sneaking out for sex”.³⁰
47. The use of such language in a police record of a murder investigation does not reflect well on the prevailing police views, seemingly unremarkable views within the Police Force at the time, towards gay men.

Unsolved Homicide Team reviews

48. So far as can be ascertained from the material produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF, the death of Mr Bedser has twice been the subject of student exercises at a “Senior Detectives Course” (one in 2005 and one in 2011), and has once been the subject of an actual review by the UHT (in 2008).
49. In June 2022, the NSWPF produced a document which suggested that Mr Bedser’s murder had been triaged again “recently.”³¹ (The Inquiry has been informed that the usual procedure within the UHT is that when a death is possibly to be the subject of a review, there is first a “triage” process leading to a recommendation as to whether or not a review is warranted.) However, no document recording or referring to the content or outcome of any such triage process, or any review flowing therefrom, has been produced to the Inquiry.

²⁷ Summary of investigation by Detective Sergeant John McGregor and Detective Graeme Trebley, undated (SCOI.00008.00018).

²⁸ Investigation Synopsis (80/171), 2 December 1980 (SCOI.75586); Summary of investigation by Detective Sergeant John McGregor and Detective Graeme Trebley, undated (SCOI.00008.00018).

²⁹ Summary of investigation by Detective Sergeant John McGregor and Detective Graeme Trebley, undated (SCOI.00008.00018).

³⁰ Exhibit 2 Tab 5, Statement of Barry Charles dated 14 November 2022, [6] (SCOI.77304).

³¹ Review Status Summary, 6 June 2022 (SCOI.83248).

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50. The UHT review in 2008³² does not indicate which officer or officers carried out the review. Neither the “Reviewer’s Certification” nor the “Co-ordinator’s Certification” has been completed or signed. However, its notable features include:
- (a) No recommendation was made for reinvestigation, mainly because the critical exhibits (especially the knife and the blood samples and swabs) were missing, and because “some paperwork may be missing” – apparently a reference to the fact, noted elsewhere in the review, that the running sheets “abruptly terminate in January 1981”;
 - (b) The UHT’s review of the fingerprint file had identified Messrs **I206** and **I205** (who were not considered suspects), and Mr Smith (in respect of whom some further enquiries were suggested).
51. As to the two Senior Detective Courses, in 2005³³ and 2011³⁴:
- (a) in 2005, the participating students recommended that consideration be given to reopening the case;
 - (b) in 2011, the participating students recommended that the case be reinvestigated;
 - (c) neither of those recommendations appears ever to have been adopted;
 - (d) in each case the participating students appear to have assumed and accepted that any progress in any such reopening or reinvestigation would be dependent on locating the missing exhibits, especially the knife and the blood sample and swabs;
 - (e) the 2011 students levelled various criticisms at the original investigating police, in particular in relation to the loss of the exhibits, “*the fragmented style in which the information [gathered in relation to the case] was recorded and stored*”, and the absence of a comprehensive OIC statement.³⁵

³² Case Screening Form, 18 September 2008 (SCOI.02913).

³³ Senior Detectives Course review material, 10 May 2005 (SCOI.02915).

³⁴ Senior Detectives Course review material, 4 August 2011 (SCOI.02914).

³⁵ Senior Detectives Course review material, 4 August 2011, 20-21 (SCOI.02914).

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Strike Force Parrabell

Use of the Bias Crimes Indicators Form

52. In the Bias Crime Indicators Review Form (**BCIF**), nine of the ten indicators were answered “Insufficient Information”.³⁶
53. For the first indicator, “Differences”, the answer “No” was entered in respect of all four options – a response which on its face is illogical if not meaningless.

Results of Strike Force Parrabell

(a) The “Summary of Findings” box at the end of the BCIF

54. In the Summary of Findings box, the overall categorisation is “Insufficient Information”.³⁷ The following matters (derived from the earlier sections of the form) are then noted, amongst others:
- a. There was an overall consensus amongst those who came forward that Mr Bedser was a “homosexual male”.
 - b. It would be reasonable to suggest Mr Bedser liked young males and would employ them at his shop with the intent of engaging in some type of sexual activity with them in the future.
 - c. The sexuality of the offender is unknown.
 - d. There is no evidence to suggest that Mr Bedser was receiving harassing mail or phone calls prior to his death.
 - e. It is unclear what threat was actually made to Mr Bedser by NP59
 - f. There is no evidence in respect to anyone having a remarkable issue with him engaging in sexual activities with younger boys however this certainly cannot be ruled out.
 - g. The motive behind the death of Mr Bedser has not been established, with the result that it was not possible to make comment on the justification for the extreme violence used.

(b) Case Summaries

55. The Strike Force Parrabell case summary (no 4) for this matter reads as follows:³⁸

Identity: Walter John Bedser was 47 years old at the time of his death.

Personal History: Mr Bedser operated an antique shop in a Parramatta arcade.

³⁶ Strike Force Parrabell Bias Crimes Indicators Review Form, 28 February 2017 (SCOI.10064.00002),

³⁷ Strike Force Parrabell Bias Crimes Indicators Review Form, 28 February 2017, 21 (SCOI.10064.00002),

³⁸ Exhibit 6, Tab 49, Strike Force Parrabell: Case Summaries (undated), 2 (SCOI.76961.00014).

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Location of Body/Circumstances of Death: Mr Bedser was stabbed numerous times inside his antique shop before running to and collapsing in a nearby grocery store. He was conveyed to hospital where he later died of his injuries. Police interviewed many witnesses who describe seeing a man leave the antique shop moments after the stabbing of Mr Bedser, yelling 'get an ambulance'. The man was possibly accompanied by a young woman. A man with the same description as the person seen running from the antique shop had purchased the murder weapon (a sheath knife) from a Toyworld store located in the same arcade as Mr Bedser's antique shop shortly before the murder. No clear motive has been established for the murder of Mr Bedser. No suspects have been identified.

Sexual Orientation: Mr Bedser's sexual orientation could not be confirmed however he was described by people who knew him as same sex attracted or bisexual.

Coroner/Court Findings: Mr Bedser's murder remains unsolved.

56. There was an abundance of evidence that Mr Bedser was gay, as well as some evidence that he may have been bisexual. The BCIF acknowledges this evidence. For Strike Force Parrabell then to say, in the Case Summary, that "Mr Bedser's sexual orientation could not be confirmed", seems remarkable.

(c) The Strike Force Parrabell Report

57. The Strike Force Parrabell officers, in the Final Report, classified 6 cases (8%) as "motivated by paedophilia".³⁹ In the relevant pie chart (on p 37), that group of cases is described as "Paedophile/vengeance". The Report does not indicate which individual cases fall into any particular category or classification. However, since the BCIF categorised the Bedser case as "Insufficient Information", and the Case Summary for Mr Bedser makes no mention of a paedophile/vengeance hypothesis, it may presumably be inferred that Mr Bedser's case was not one of the 6.

(d) Academic review

58. The academic reviewers distinguished between cases where there was evidence of "anti-gay bias" (said to be 17) and cases of "anti-paedophile animus" (said to be 12).⁴⁰ They devoted several pages to a discussion of why such a distinction was considered appropriate.⁴¹
59. Professors Asquith and Lovegrove, in their respective expert reports, expressed a number of reservations about the academic review team's approach in this regard..⁴²
60. However, in any event:

³⁹ Exhibit 1, Tab 2, Final Report of Strike Force Parrabell (undated), 37 (SCOI.02632).

⁴⁰ Exhibit 1, Tab 2, Final Report of Strike Force Parrabell (undated), 92 (SCOI.02632).

⁴¹ Exhibit 1, Tab 2, Final Report of Strike Force Parrabell (undated), especially at 51, 84-86, 101-104 (SCOI.02632).

⁴² Exhibit 6, Tab 255, Expert Report of Professor Nicole Asquith, 20 December 2022, [193]-[195], [207]-[209] (SCOI.82836.00001); Exhibit 6, Tab 256, Expert Report of Professor Austin Lovegrove, 22 December 2022, [124] (SCOI.82366.00001).

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- (a) the academic reviewers, like the Strike Force Parabell officers, actually categorised the Bedser case as “Insufficient Information” – and thus not, it would seem, as either “anti-gay bias” or “anti-paedophile animus”;
- (b) although (as noted above) the academic reviewers wrote in their report that there were 12 cases categorised by them as “anti-paedophile animus”, in fact the actual number of cases categorised by them in that way seems to be 19, as indicated in the Case Summaries.⁴³ The explanation for this inconsistency is not known.

61. The approach of the academic reviewers to matters relating to paedophilia will be the subject of submissions by Senior Counsel Assisting in respect of Public Hearing 2.

Investigative and other steps undertaken by the Inquiry, and their outcomes

62. Various investigative and other steps were undertaken by the Inquiry in relation to Mr Bedser’s case. The Inquiry has reviewed and analysed all the material and information produced and received as a result of those steps, which are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Request for coronial file

63. On 11 May 2022, the Inquiry issued a written request to the Registrar of the Coroners Court of NSW to obtain the coronial file in relation to the death of Mr Bedser. The Coroners Court answered the request on 26 May 2022.

Summons for police file and documents

64. On 18 May 2022, a summons was issued (Summons NSWPF1) to the NSW Police Force (**NSWPF**) for, *inter alia*, the investigative file in relation to the death of Mr Bedser. Some documents were produced on 8 June 2022.

Summons for crime scene exhibits

65. On 21 December 2022, the Inquiry issued a further summons to NSWPF, Summons NSWPF49, seeking production of the crime scene exhibits in relation to Mr Bedser’s death (the knife, blood samples taken from the body of Mr Bedser, swabs of blood taken from the crime scene, and the clothing of Mr Bedser removed from his body at the mortuary).

⁴³ Exhibit 6, Tab 49, Strike Force Parrabell: Case Summaries (undated), cases numbered 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17, 23, 24, 41, 47, 59, 61, 62, 64, 72, 78, 81, 83 and 84 (SCOI.76961.00014).

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66. On 23 January 2023, the NSWPF responded by way of a statement from DS Neil Sheldon who stated that the exhibits have not been located despite what he describes as “an exhaustive search” by police.⁴⁴
67. As noted above, according to DS Sheldon’s statement the position appears to be that the exhibits including the knife were lost by police at some time on or after 24 December 1980. Exactly when they were lost, and how that was allowed to happen, is not known and, it seems, cannot now be ascertained. That is an utterly unacceptable state of affairs.

Development of crime scene and other photographs

68. Amongst the material produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF, in answer to Summons NSWPF1, were undeveloped photographic negatives in several envelopes. Two of those envelopes were marked such as to indicate that they contained photographs taken by police in the course of the original investigation, including of the crime scene and police surveillance at Mr Bedser’s funeral. A third envelope was an unmarked Kodak prints envelope, containing a large amount of loose snippets of photographic film. There is no information in the material produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF as to the source or sources of those negatives.
69. The Inquiry took steps to develop all of those photographs. The photographs from the labelled envelopes were crime scene and post-mortem photographs, and photographs taken at Mr Bedser’s funeral. They included a photograph of the murder weapon in situ.⁴⁵
70. The photographs from the unmarked envelope are very different. They include *inter alia* photographs of boys, some in sexually suggestive positions, and photographs of what appear to be family events involving various boys, including photographs which appear to have been taken overseas, probably in Greece. Whether these photos had been in the possession of Mr Bedser, or whether, for example, they were obtained by police for some investigative purpose, is unknown.
71. Whether police had themselves developed any of these negatives in the course of their investigations is also unknown. If that step was taken, no record of it, and no such developed photos, appear in the material produced to the inquiry by the NSWPF. That would indicate another inadequacy in the original investigation.

⁴⁴ Statement of Detective Sergeant Neil Sheldon, 23 January 2023 (SCOI.82591),

⁴⁵ Crime scene and autopsy photographs, undated (SCOI.82618).

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Family members of Mr Bedser

72. Through interagency cooperation, the Inquiry has identified one living family member of Mr Bedser. The Inquiry has made attempts to make contact with that person, but no response has been received to date.

Attempts to locate witnesses and persons of interest

73. Through summonses issued to BDM and various other forms of interagency co-operation, the Inquiry has made extensive efforts to ascertain whether significant witnesses are still alive and, if so, whether they can be located.
74. Unsurprisingly, since it is now more than 42 years since Mr Bedser's death, many of those witnesses are deceased or unable to be located.
75. In particular, on 9 May 2023 the Inquiry sent email correspondence to a person likely to be Mr Bedser's solicitor, seeking to confirm that fact and obtain any further records regarding Mr Bedser which may be in his possession. No response has been received to that correspondence to date.

Review of fingerprint evidence

76. The Inquiry undertook a review of the available fingerprint evidence, including that associated with the 2008 UHT review, as to which see [50(b)] above.
77. It is not possible, from the records still available, to determine where the remaining unidentified fingerprints were located in the antique shop. Ultimately, given that difficulty and noting that it could be expected that items in an antique shop would be frequently handled by customers, and noting further that the assailant had (apparently) left no fingerprints on the knife itself, the Inquiry considered there was no utility in attempting to pursue further fingerprint examinations in this matter.
78. By letter dated 8 May 2023, the Inquiry wrote to the NSWPF seeking a statement from a relevant officer as to whether the knife had been fingerprinted as stated by DS Hamilton in the course of the inquest and attaching relevant records, including the fingerprint evidence referred to above. On 17 May 2023, the NSWPF produced a statement of Detective Inspector Nigel Warren outlining further searches taken by the NSWPF to identify a record of that fingerprinting, which were ultimately unsuccessful.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Statement of Detective Inspector Nigel Warren dated 17 May 2023 (SCOI.83247).

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Summons for police and custodial records

79. On 2 September 2022, a summons was issued to the NSWPF seeking, *inter alia*, criminal antecedents for Geoffrey Smith (Summons NSWPF14). Relevant records were produced by the NSWPF on 12 September 2022.
80. On 7 October 2022, a summons was issued to Corrective Services NSW (**CSNSW**) seeking custodial records in relation to Mr Smith (Summons CSNSW2). Relevant records were produced by CSNSW on 23 and 24 October 2022.
81. There was nothing contained in these records to indicate that any further consideration of Mr Smith by the Inquiry was necessary.
82. Summons NSWPF14 also sought criminal antecedents in relation to various other persons. On 15 May 2023, a further summons was issued seeking criminal antecedents in relation to various further persons (Summons NSWPF105), which were produced on 19 May 2023. The material obtained as a result of those summonses also did not lead to or assist with any line of enquiry.

Professional opinion of Dr Danny Sullivan, forensic psychiatrist

83. The Inquiry requested an expert report by Dr Danny Sullivan, consultant forensic psychiatrist, in relation to, *inter alia*, whether there were any aspects of the death and/or crime scene that may indicate that the homicide occurred in the context of “LGBTIQ hate/prejudice/bias”.
84. In his report, dated 24 October 2022, Dr Sullivan expressed the views that “there are no features of the crime scene suggesting hate crime”. However, he also acknowledged that the available evidence leaves open the possibility of an argument between Mr Bedser and his assailant over sexual relationships, including that the assailant may have been a male relative of one of the young persons with whom Mr Bedser had sexual interactions (although other possibilities are also available, including arguments over money). Dr Sullivan considered that “the purchase of a knife beforehand suggests that the protagonist had intended to kill Mr Bedser specifically”.⁴⁷

Summons to Local Court

85. On 4 April 2023, a summons was issued to the Local Court of NSW (Parramatta Registry) for records relating to the legal proceedings commenced by Mr Bedser against the **Family of NP58** in 1980 (Summons LCP1). On 17 April 2023, the Local Court of NSW advised that it was unable to identify any documents as sought.

⁴⁷ Expert report by Dr Danny Sullivan, Forensic Psychiatrist dated 24 October 2022 (SCOI.82111).

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Property searches

86. Via interagency co-operation, the Inquiry took steps to seek to ascertain the property holdings of the **Family of NP58** as at 1980. The search revealed several other people who may have been linked to the **Family of NP58**. There appeared to be two sets of families with the same surname. The information caused the Inquiry to revisit the evidence to better understand who the police spoke with from the family. One of the running sheets⁴⁸ refers to police speaking with a Mr [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] about his son **I267**. The date of birth of **I267** was recorded as [REDACTED]. This is in fact a different [REDACTED] to **NP58** who worked for Mr Bedser and had the birth date of [REDACTED]. The very same running sheet refers to police speaking with **NP59** is at [REDACTED] about her son **NP58** (DOB: [REDACTED]). It appears therefore that police spoke to a Mr [REDACTED] about a different [REDACTED]. There was a message left for **I267** to contact police. There is no record of **I267** doing so nor of police following up or identifying him. His father did indicate to police that his son was 'only of short stature'.
87. Further, it is apparent on the evidence that police never spoke with the father of **NP58** who worked with Mr Bedser. This is confirmed by the 2005 UHT review which states that **NP60** 'appears to have never been spoken to despite his wife owing the deceased money unbeknownst to **NP60**'. The review goes on to state that **NP60** does not appear to have been effectively eliminated by obtaining an alibi although the review notes that 'ID doesn't match suspect'. It is not clear what is meant by this. It is not clear on the evidence whether police ever sighted this **NP60** and made a call that his identity did not match the identikit.
88. It has not been possible to make any links between the various people with the surname **Surname of NP58 and I267**. It might be inferred that they are related. The other **I267** was conceivably of the right age at the time of Mr Bedser's murder (34 years old). The Inquiry will continue to make enquiries beyond today in an attempt to better understand what, if any, links there are between the two families.
89. The property search revealed a number of properties being linked to the **Family of NP58** but only one property could be definitively linked to the family in 1980.

⁴⁸ Report of interview with **NP59** and **NP60** 2 December 1980 (SCOI.82126).

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Submission as to the evidence now available

90. This part of the submission sets out key matters arising from the Inquiry's consideration of the evidence and the conclusions that it is suggested can be drawn from the evidence.

Witness accounts on the day of the murder (2 December 1980)

91. In all, the records available to the Inquiry indicate that some 22 witnesses were interviewed by police about what they heard and saw at various times on the day of Mr Bedser's murder. For eighteen of those persons, statements were prepared and signed. For one witness, Ms Youssef, a statement is recorded as having been taken, but has not been produced to the Inquiry. For all 22 witnesses there are running sheet entries summarising what that person said to police. For three witnesses, including Ms Youssef, these entries are the only record of what they saw and heard.
92. At least 15 of those 22 witnesses are deceased.
93. Twelve of the 22 witnesses were near the antique shop at 2pm and witnessed the immediate aftermath of the assault, while ten provided evidence relating to possible sighting of the suspect earlier that same day. None of the 22 witnesses was inside the shop when the murder took place.
94. The accounts of these various witnesses present around the time of the assault have some similarities but many differences. Among the features of their various recollections were the following:
- Six of them involve hearing sounds of a struggle or argument (crashing, grunts, screaming or other noises) in the vicinity of the antique store shortly before 2.00pm,⁴⁹ with four expressly reporting the sound of crashing glass.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Report of interview with Amani Youssef re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45138); Statement of [REDACTED] dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁵⁰ Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Report of interview with Amani Youssef re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45138); Statement of [REDACTED] dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

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- Six saw a man hurriedly leaving the shop and fleeing down the street,⁵¹ and three others, more distant, did not see the man exit the shop but saw someone who was probably the same individual as he ran from the vicinity.⁵²
- Two (see below) referred to having seen a woman in the shop just prior to the incident or leaving the shop just afterwards.
- Eight saw the badly wounded Mr Bedser stumble out and collapse in a nearby greengrocer shop on the opposite side of the arcade.⁵³ Of those, five said he exited after the man,⁵⁴ and one prior to the man.⁵⁵ The other two saw Mr Bedser but did not see the man at all,⁵⁶ and of those two, one saw a woman exit the shop after Mr Bedser.⁵⁷
- Five said that the fleeing man shouted for an ambulance to be called,⁵⁸ while three said it was the wounded man (Mr Bedser) himself who did so,⁵⁹ and one did not know who it was that shouted.⁶⁰
- One reported the fleeing man as calling out, as he fled, something to the effect that he had nothing to do with it.⁶¹

95. An ambulance was called and took Mr Bedser to the casualty section of Parramatta Hospital, where he died shortly later at 2.15pm on that day (2 December 1980).

⁵¹ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111).

⁵² Statement of Gail Mary Marshall dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00060); Statement of Rofiena Mary Davis dated 3 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00027); Report of interview with Jean Daniels, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45113).

⁵³ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Statement of [redacted] dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁵⁴ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111).

⁵⁵ Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116).

⁵⁶ Statement of [redacted] dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁵⁷ Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁵⁸ Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Philip Stephens dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00099); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Statement of Rofiena Mary Davis dated 3 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00027).

⁵⁹ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of [redacted] dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁶⁰ Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010).

⁶¹ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003).

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96. Attending police observed that two glass display cases behind the counter inside the shop had been smashed (possibly as a result of someone having fallen into them), and the cash register was overturned and bloodstained.⁶² A knife, stained with what was subsequently identified as Mr Bedser's blood, was found lying behind the counter.⁶³ These observations, as to the display cases and the knife, are consistent with the crime scene photos that were developed by the Inquiry during its investigation into the matter. Police believed the suspect would have had blood on his hands and clothes as he ran down Darcy St and across Church St and into the Churchyard in Parramatta, and at least one witness reported as much.⁶⁴
97. Despite the fact that the escaping suspect was seen by numerous witnesses, he has never been identified.
98. As noted above, two of the witnesses said that there was a woman in the shop with Mr Bedser, immediately before his death. Those accounts were provided by [redacted] **I41** and John Roland Peck.⁶⁵ None of the other witnesses referred to seeing a woman.
99. [redacted] **I41**, a teenage school-girl collecting for charity, said that she entered Mr Bedser's antique shop at around 2pm and spoke briefly with a man and a woman, both of whom were standing behind the counter. They declined to give to charity, and she left the shop. Moments later she heard the sound of glass breaking and someone screaming who sounded like a woman. Thereupon she turned around and saw the man she had seen in the shop (evidently Mr Bedser) come through the door bleeding and calling for an ambulance, before entering the nearby fruit shop. She saw the ambulance arrive and then went about her business.
100. [redacted] **I41** described the woman as "about 50 years of age, about 5/6, fattish build, greying hair and curly". She said she did not see any other person run out of the shop before the injured man came out, nor did she observe the woman leave.⁶⁶
101. Mr Peck also said he had seen a woman at the scene, but his description of that woman differed in numerous ways from that given by [redacted] **I41**.

⁶² Running sheet entry by Sergeant K.S. Kerr re attendance at scene, 8 December 1980 (SCOI.82204).

⁶³ Specimen/exhibit examination form, 8 December 1980 (SCOI.10284.00017); Forensic report of Paul Arthur Connellan, 22 December 1980 (SCOI.10284.00013).

⁶⁴ Doug Button, "The Strange, Violent Death of the Quiet Antique Dealer", publication unknown, undated (SCOI.10064.00005); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054).

⁶⁵ Statement of [redacted] **I41** dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136); Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁶⁶ Statement of [redacted] **I41** dated 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82136).

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102. Mr Peck said that he was near the “second hand shop” at around 1:40 or 1:45pm when he heard the sound of breaking glass and something “like a murmur” from within the shop. Seconds later, as he was standing near the doorway, a man appeared at the doorway holding his side or his arm and covered in blood. The man was calling out “Help me, get a doctor, get ambulance, I’m done for”. Mr Peck looked away for a second “because of the shock”, and when he looked back the man was in the nearby greengrocer shop on the floor. He looked back at the shop and saw a woman come out. He thought she closed the door behind her.
103. Mr Peck described the woman as being “about mid-twenties, 5’6”, not plump but slightly overweight, natural olive complexion, straight dark brown hair,” and wearing a blue top.
104. Mr Peck did not see any other person exit the shop before or after the injured man.⁶⁷
105. None of the other witnesses referred to a woman. Most described an adult male somewhere in the vicinity of the shop or running from it. Most thought his age was about 30 to 40.⁶⁸ Several recalled him wearing a jacket or cardigan.⁶⁹
106. In particular, one witness, Ms Youssef, said she had looked in through a window of the shop and had seen two men fighting. One (whom she recognised as being the deceased, Mr Bedser) was behind the counter and the other man was on the customer’s side of the counter.⁷⁰ She described the other man as “in his mid to late 30s, about 6’ to 6’2” tall, strong to solid build, an Australian, clean shaven, wearing a light coloured safari suit top, possibly a light grey colour. Possibly light coloured pants. He had a round face and his hair was parted on one side. Well dressed and neat looking.” As noted above, while the occurrence entry refers to a statement having been taken from Ms Youssef, no such statement has been produced to the Inquiry.
107. The police evidently regarded the account of Ms Youssef as decisive in concluding that the assailant was a man, and noted also that the sightings of a woman by 141 and Mr Peck were not inconsistent with that being so.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Statement of John Roland Peck dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00077).

⁶⁸ Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Statement of Gail Mary Marshall dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00060); Statement of Rofiena Mary Davis dated 3 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00027); Report of interview with Jean Daniels, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45113).

⁶⁹ Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Jean Daniels, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45113).

⁷⁰ Report of interview with Amani Youssef, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45111); Report of interview with Amani Youssef re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45138).

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108. On 2 December 1980, the day of the murder, police published a description of the suspect as “Australian, mid to late 30’s early 40’s, 5’10” tall, solid build, thick dark brown hair, wearing a safari style top, light colour possibly grey or fawn”.⁷² This description was evidently a composite or synthesis of some of the varying accounts provided by witnesses on that day. A “Crime Information Report” added that his “racial appearance” was “European” and that he had an olive complexion.⁷³
109. On 12 December 1980, an identikit image (referred to as a “penry” in some police documents) of the fleeing man was completed and released to the public. It appeared in news media on that and following days. It was pieced together from descriptions by three of the witnesses who saw the suspect running from the crime scene on 2 December 1980.⁷⁴
110. Police subsequently reinterviewed numerous witnesses as to whether the identikit image was consistent with their recollections. Some but not all of the responses were to the effect that the likeness was at least similar to the man they had seen, with varying suggested corrections.⁷⁵

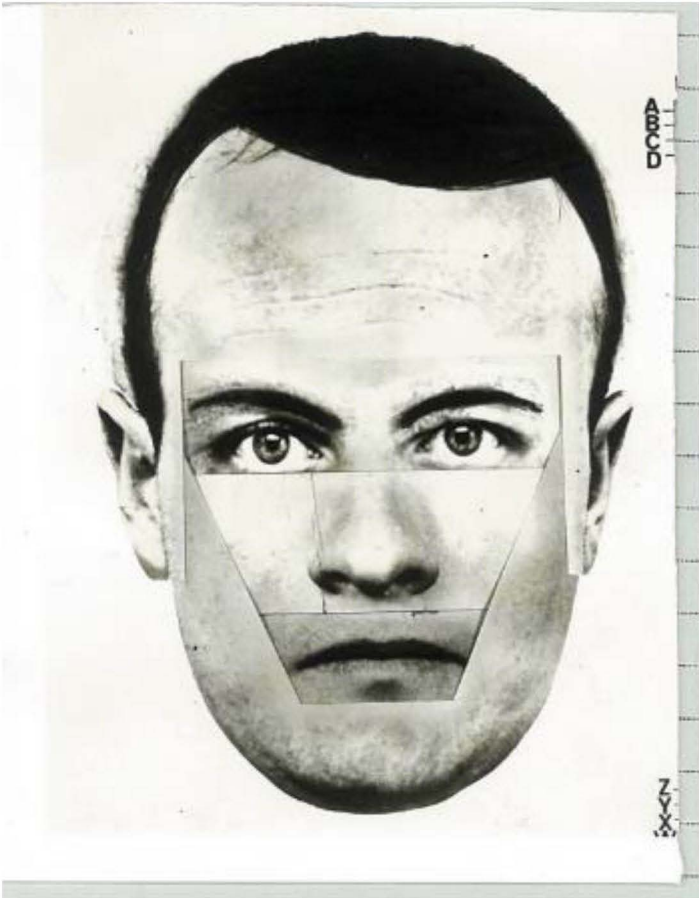
⁷² Description of man wanted for fatal stabbing, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00020).

⁷³ Crime information report regarding assault on Mr Bedser, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00021).

⁷⁴ Identikit photo of assailant, 12 December 1980 (SCOI.45110); News report, “Plea for information on mystery killer”, *Daily Telegraph*, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.10064.00003).

⁷⁵ See, for example, Report of interview with Jean Daniels re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45127); Report of interview with Amani Youssef re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45138); Report of interview with Wendy Calkin re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45139); Report of interview with Ross Calkin re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45141); Report of interview with Elsie Nealon re identikit photo, 14 December 1980 (SCOI.45144); Report of interview with Clive Watt re identikit photo, 18 December 1980 (SCOI.45151); Report of interview with Gail Marshall re identikit photo, 28 December 1980 (SCOI.45154); Report of interview with Charles Wheat re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45131); Report of interview with Ruth Decker re identikit photo, 13 December 1980 (SCOI.45140); Report of interview with Gwen Noblett re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45132).

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Identikit image of assailant, 12 December 1980 (SCOI.45110)

Purchase of a knife earlier on 2 December 1980

111. Police also spoke to two witnesses about a man who had purchased a knife from a nearby store earlier that day.
112. Debbie Faye Smith, a shop assistant at the Arcade Sports Store in the same arcade as Mr Bedser's shop, approximately 50 feet away, recalled a man purchasing a sheath knife from her, in the Toy section of the store, at "about 10am" that morning. The price of the knife was \$15.50 and it was a Mundial "Sheriff" knife. It had a five or six inch blade, the handle was black in colour with silver rings around it, and it was contained in a light brown leather sheath.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Statement of Debbie Faye Smith dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00103).

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113. Ms Smith described the man as “about 35 old, 5’5” to 6” tall, average build, I think his hair was brown”. She said he “did not have any accent, I would say that he was an Australian”.⁷⁷ She said she could not recall what he was wearing, other than that he was “dressed in casual clothes”.
114. On 11 December 1980, nine days later, Ms Smith was shown the identikit image. However, according to a police occurrence entry on that day, “she stated that she could not remember what the man looked like who purchased the knife at the Arcade Sports Store about 9.15am on the 2.12.80. She was of no assistance”.⁷⁸
115. The police reference to “9.15am” in that entry (compared to Ms Smith’s statement which had actually put the time at “about 10am”) may be derived from an account given by another witness, Emma Clarke. In her statement dated 14 December 1980, Mrs Clarke said that she was present in the Arcade Sports Store on 2 December when, at about 9.15am, a man had said to the sales girl that he wanted the “black handled knife in the window”. Mrs Clarke said that the girl produced such a knife from the display case and the man said “That’s the one”. The girl put the knife back in its sheath, and Mrs Clarke then left the shop. She did not see him pay for the knife, but she saw him come out just afterwards.⁷⁹
116. Mrs Clarke described the man as “Australian, 35 to 40 old, 5/10 tall, solidly built around the chest, tanned complexion, dark brown hair, untidy appearance, ... clean shaven”. She thought he was wearing light coloured or brown trousers, and a jacket which was a darker brown.⁸⁰ Ms Clarke was shown the identikit image on 11 December and said it was similar to the man she had seen, except that his hair was curly and untidy.⁸¹
117. The crime scene photos show the knife as found behind the counter, on the floor, blood splatter evident around it. The knife shown in those photos matches the description of the “Mundial Sheriff” knife sold earlier that morning to the man in the sports store, as was confirmed by police at the inquest.⁸²

Other sightings on 2 December 1980

118. At around 10:50am on 2 December, Enid Woollorton saw a man crossing the road towards the antique shop. She described him as 28 to 30 years old, 5’9” tall, slim or “athletic” build, dark brown

⁷⁷ Statement of Debbie Faye Smith dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00103).

⁷⁸ Report of interview with Debbie Smith re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45129).

⁷⁹ Statement of Emma Ellen Clarke dated 14 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00018).

⁸⁰ Statement of Emma Ellen Clarke dated 14 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00018).

⁸¹ Report of interview with Emma Clarke re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45133).

⁸² Transcript of coronial inquest, 11 July 1983 (SCOI.00008.00139).

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hair, with a “normal” or “slightly suntanned” complexion and wearing a caramel or light tan coloured safari jacket, with pants of a different colour.⁸³

119. At about 12:10pm, Ruth Decker collided her shopping trolley with a man walking quickly towards the antique shop. Her description of him included that he was about 35 years old, with an olive complexion (possibly Greek), with dark wavy hair and wearing a beige jacket “with a zipper done right up to the neck” and chocolate trousers. He was still standing in the middle of the arcade near the antique shop when she returned ten minutes later.⁸⁴
120. Sometime around 12.10pm or 12.30pm (on their slightly varying accounts), Ross and Wendy Calkin visited the store and saw a man in conversation with Mr Bedser. Their descriptions differed somewhat but both said that the man had an olive complexion and dark brown hair, was 45 to 50 years old, and wore a tan or light brown cardigan.⁸⁵
121. At about 12.30pm, according to Raymond Hadley (an auctioneer who worked at 20 Hassel St, a short distance from the murder scene), a man came to his showrooms and asked for a price on an antique lounge suite. Mr Hadley mentioned a figure of \$300 to \$400. The man said he had already been offered \$850 by an antique dealer in Parramatta. Mr Hadley said the man should accept that offer (which he thought was too high). The man left without saying another word. Mr Hadley assumed that the man was referring to Mr Bedser (who he regarded as the only antique dealer in Parramatta).⁸⁶
122. Mr Hadley described the man as “about 6’-6’1” tall about 30-35 old, medium to solid build, about 14 stone, fair hair and complexion wearing a beige/fawn safari jacket and a pair of dark brown trousers”. When shown the identikit image, Mr Hadley stated that it was identical to the person that entered the premises (notwithstanding he had previously indicated the person had fair hair), except that the person’s hair was curly.⁸⁷
123. Between about 1 and 2pm, Brant Browne, a proprietor of a coffee lounge within the arcade, saw a man whom he thought “appeared to be agitated” standing at the front of the alley way next to the antique shop. When the man noticed he was being observed by Mr Browne, he walked off up Darcy Street where he disappeared into an unspecified building.⁸⁸

⁸³ Report of interview with Enid Wooltorton, 10 December 1980 (SCOI.83196); Report of interview with Enid Wooltorton re identikit photo, 28 December 1980 (SCOI.83195).

⁸⁴ Report of interview with Ruth Decker, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45118).

⁸⁵ Statement of Ross Augustus Calkin dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00020); Statement of Wendy Calkin dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00024).

⁸⁶ Statement of Raymond Morris Hadley dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00050); Report of interview with Raymond Morris Hadley, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45117).

⁸⁷ Report of interview with Raymond Morris Hadley, 12 December 1980 (SCOI.45135).

⁸⁸ Statement of Brant Warland Browne dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00013).

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124. Mr Browne described the man as wearing “brown coloured trousers, a light brown patterned shirt, with a similar coloured long sleeve jacket”. When shown the identikit image, he could not say whether it was similar to the man he had seen.⁸⁹
125. At about 1:20pm, Charles Wheat noticed a man leaning on the “reinforcement wire” just past the antique shop, “between 36 and his early 40s”, with an olive complexion and collar length wavy dark brown hair. He was wearing medium brown trousers and a shirt of a similar colour.⁹⁰
126. At 1:30pm, Elsie Nealon saw a man leaning against a wall in the alleyway near the antique shop, who stared at her with a vacant expression as she passed. She described him as having a tanned face, dark well-groomed hair brushed back and a mid-brown jacket.⁹¹
127. As is apparent, the descriptions given by each of Mrs Clarke, Ms Wooltorton, Ms Decker, the Calkins, Mr Hadley, Mr Browne, Mr Wheat and Ms Nealon as to what the man they saw was wearing, were broadly similar. Six of the witnesses who described the man fleeing the shop after Mr Bedser had been stabbed, gave similar descriptions of the man’s clothing as generally brown in colour,⁹² although only three clearly identified a layered top, with significant variations in reported style.⁹³ However, whether some or all of these sightings were of the same man is impossible to say.

Motive, and possible case theories

128. If the man seen by any or all of Ms Smith, Mrs Clarke, Mr Hadley and Mr Browne (who may have been the same man) was the man who killed Mr Bedser, then the man’s behaviour in the hours leading up to the murder suggests some degree of premeditation.
129. Further, if (as the evidence of DS Hamilton at the inquest would suggest must have happened) the killer removed his fingerprints from the knife handle after stabbing Mr Bedser, or wore gloves so as to leave no fingerprints, that would also suggest a degree of premeditation, as well as perhaps some degree of criminal experience.
130. As noted above, there is not, in the material produced to the Inquiry, any overall or detailed statement or summary of what appears to have been, so far as can be ascertained from the available material,

⁸⁹ Report of interview with Brant Browne re identikit photo, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.45128).

⁹⁰ Statement of Charles Evan What, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00121).

⁹¹ Statement of Elsie Nealon dated 6 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00067).

⁹² Statement of Athole Janice Aldwinkle dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00003); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Eddie Mikha dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00054); Statement of Gail Mary Marshall dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00060); Statement of Rofiena Mary Davis dated 3 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00027); Report of interview with Jean Daniels, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45113).

⁹³); Statement of Elizabeth Beck dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00010); Statement of Clive Mervyn Watt dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00116); Report of interview with Jean Daniels, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.45113).

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an extensive investigation into Mr Bedser's death. However, the available evidence would suggest that the police considered three main possible case theories, none of which could be established. The limited and incomplete evidence available to the Inquiry is also insufficient to enable a conclusion to be reached that any one of those three hypotheses is more likely than the other.

131. The following paragraphs outline the evidence relating to those three case theories.

(1) A revenge attack by a parent or family associate of a teenage boy (or girl) with whom Mr Bedser was known or believed to have had, or to have sought to have, sexual relations

132. There is abundant evidence that Mr Bedser had had sexual relations with, or had propositioned, a number of teenage boys, some of whom had at one time or another been employed by Mr Bedser in his shop. Most of those boys appear to have been from European, and especially Greek, backgrounds.

133. One such boy was [NP58]. As at 2 December 1980, [NP58] was aged 17, having been born on 19 February 1963. The associations and dealings involving Mr Bedser and [NP58] and Mr Bedser and [NP58]'s family, seem to have been both close and complex, as outlined below.

134. [NP58] was first interviewed by police on 3 December 1980. He said that his association with Mr Bedser had commenced about "two years ago" (ie about December 1978 when [NP58] was 15) and ended about "4 or 5 months ago" (ie about July-August 1980).⁹⁴

135. [NP58] said he initially started working for Mr Bedser, including doing deliveries for him. After about two or three months, they developed a relationship in which they would have oral sex in a room above the shop, for which Mr Bedser would pay [NP58] \$10.00.

136. That Mr Bedser was having a so-called "affair" with [NP58] was known amongst several people in Mr Bedser's and [NP58]'s orbit.⁹⁵

137. [NP58] said that the end came after he and Mr Bedser had an argument because Mr Bedser had refused to lend money to [NP58] to buy a car, having previously promised to do so. He claimed that that was the last time he had seen the deceased.⁹⁶ This aspect of the relationship is discussed further in relation to the second possible case theory, below.

⁹⁴ Report of interview with [NP58], 3 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00074).

⁹⁵ Report of interview with Gregory James Bolton, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.82138); Report of interview with [139], 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82133); Statement of [135], undated (SCOI.10058.00079).

⁹⁶ Report of interview with [NP58], 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82144).

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138. Three other youths, all of whom were aged between 15 and 20 as at December 1980, also told police that Mr Bedser had had sexual interactions with them.⁹⁷
139. A further five youths said that Mr Bedser had propositioned them but that they had rejected his advances, although police appear to have suspected at least two of them of lying (for unspecified reasons).⁹⁸
140. The available evidence indicates that at least two, and perhaps more, of the parents of these boys had come to know or suspect something of the nature of their sons' relationships with Mr Bedser. That evidence includes the following:

As to **NP58**

- In a taped conversation in about June 1980 (see further at [156] – [160] below), **NP58**'s mother, **NP59**, is recorded as saying to Mr Bedser that she had some letters that Mr Bedser had written to **NP58** "when he was young", which amounted to "big proof against" Mr Bedser.⁹⁹

If they were aware of Mr Bedser's sexual interactions with **NP58** or other boys, there is no indication in the available evidence of any hostility by **NP58**'s mother (**NP59**) or father (**NP60**) towards Mr Bedser in relation thereto.

As to **I37**

- **I37** told police that he had refused homosexual advances by Mr Bedser, but that his father had found out that Mr Bedser was homosexual and had an argument with Mr Bedser in which he told him to keep away from his son.¹⁰⁰
- **I38** told police that, in 1979, Mr Bedser had been threatened by the father of a boy called **I37** who worked for him, over advances made by Mr Bedser towards **I37**.¹⁰¹ It would seem that the **I37** referred to by Mr Smith was **I37**.

⁹⁷ Report of interview with **I47**, 12 December 1980 (SCOI.82140.00001); Statement of **I35**, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00079); Report of interview with **I39**, 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82133).

⁹⁸ Report of interview with Gregory James Bolton, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.82138); Report of interview with **I40**, **I40**, 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82143); Report of interview with **I46**, 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82134); Report of interview with **I37**, 14 January 1981 (SCOI.82122); Report of interview with **I36**, 9 January 1981 (SCOI.82216).

⁹⁹ Transcript of recorded conversation between Walter Bedser and **NP59**, including police summary, 11 June 1980 (SCOI.82120).

¹⁰⁰ Report of interview with **I37**, 14 January 1981 (SCOI.82122)

¹⁰¹ Report of interview with **I38** (SCOI.82131).

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As to others

- Mrs Margaret Horwood, who did some bookkeeping work for Mr Bedser, told police that “numerous young boys used to hang around the shop” and that one of them, “a young Greek boy”, had told her that he could have \$5.00 from the till which he said was authorised by Mr Bedser. She said that the father of that boy once “came into the shop and spoke to [Mr Bedser] about his son”.¹⁰²
- [redacted] **I146** (DOB [redacted]) told police that he himself had rejected homosexual advances by Mr Bedser. He also said that the father of one of his friends, [redacted] **I44**, had found out about the “relationship” between [redacted] **I44** (or possibly **NP58**) and Mr Bedser.¹⁰³ There is no indication, in the material produced by the NSWPF to the Inquiry, that police interviewed [redacted] **I44** or his father.

141. The hypothetical possibility thus exists that one of the fathers of one of these youths, or another family member or associate, killed Mr Bedser in retribution for his actual or feared sexual interactions with that youth. It is not clear to what extent police ultimately pursued this possible motive, principally because the material produced by the NSWPF to the Inquiry breaks off at January 1981.
142. A variant on this possibility was provided by Mr Charles Duffield, who told police that Mr Bedser was bisexual and had been having sex with a 16 year-old girl, and had been “thrown out” of her father’s delicatessen in the Harris Park area.¹⁰⁴ Police made numerous enquiries with local delicatessens without identifying anyone matching that description.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, another witness told police that Mr Bedser had a dislike of women.¹⁰⁶
143. As noted above, many of the people who might have had some recollection of any of these matters are deceased or cannot be located. The time available to the Inquiry, under its Terms of Reference, is not such as to enable further attempts to locate at least some of these people and to ascertain whether they would now be able to be of assistance.

¹⁰² Report of interview with Margaret Heather Horwood, 14 December 1980 (SCOI.45145)

¹⁰³ Report of interview with [redacted] **I46**; 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82134).

¹⁰⁴ Report of interview with Charles Joseph Duffield, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82128); Report of inquiries as a result of information provided by Charles Duffield, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45119).

¹⁰⁵ Report of inquiries as a result of information provided by Charles Duffield, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45119); Report of inquiries as a result of information provided by Charles Duffield, 5 December 1980 (SCOI.45120); Report of inquiries as a result of information provided by Charles Duffield, 5 December 1980 (SCOI.45121); Report of inquiries as a result of information provided by Charles Duffield, 5 December 1980 (SCOI.45122); Report of interview with [redacted] **NP59** and [redacted] **NP60**, 16 December 1980 (SCOI.82139); Report of inquiries re [redacted] **I202**; 25 January 1981 (SCOI.82135).

¹⁰⁶ Report of interview with [redacted] **I38**; 18 December 1980 (SCOI.82131),

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144. More fundamentally, the loss of the murder weapon and the blood samples means that it is now impossible to tie any person, who might theoretically be the subject of any such recollection on the part of any such witness, to the killing of Mr Bedser.
145. It is submitted that this first hypothesis cannot be established on the evidence available to the Inquiry.
- (2) An attack instigated by a member or associate of the Family of NP58, as a result of acrimony flowing from various financial dealings**
146. The financial and other dealings between and among Mr Bedser, NP58 and the Family of NP58 were both numerous and of some complexity. Police investigations revealed that the facts relating to those dealings included those outlined in the following paragraphs [147] – [176].
147. In about late 1978, NP58 started working for Mr Bedser, and a few months later began having oral sex with him: see [134134], [135135] above.
148. Mr Bedser frequently travelled with NP58 on work trips to the country,¹⁰⁷ and had given NP58 items including a digital watch and clock radio.¹⁰⁸
149. On the other hand, NP58 had stolen jewellery from Mr Bedser (possibly on multiple occasions)¹⁰⁹ and had gone joyriding in his car. Mr Bedser was aware of these incidents and had confronted NP58 over them.¹¹⁰
150. In 1979 Mr Bedser’s mother won \$60,000 in a lottery and gave \$20,000 to each of Mr Bedser and his sister.¹¹¹ Mr Bedser must have told NP58 and/or his family, as other documents make it clear that at least NP58 and NP59 were aware he had “won” the lottery.¹¹²
151. At some stage Mr Bedser gave NP58 a gift of \$500.00.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Report of interview with I47, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82127); Report of interview with NP58, 8 December 1980 (SCOI.82217).

¹⁰⁸ Report of interview with NP58, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00074).

¹⁰⁹ Report of interview with I39, 5 December 1980 (SCOI.82133); Report of interview with I37 (SCOI.82122); Report of interview with NP58, 8 December 1980 (SCOI.82217); Report of interview with I40, 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82143).

¹¹⁰ Report of interview with I37 (SCOI.82122).

¹¹¹ Report of interview with Edna Bedser, 9 December 1980 (SCOI.45126).

¹¹² Transcript of recorded conversation between Walter Bedser and NP59, including police summary, 11 June 1980 (SCOI.82120).

¹¹³ Letter from Walter Bedser to NP59, 3 June 1980 (SCOI.10061.00009); Transcript of recorded conversation between Walter Bedser and NP59, including police summary, 11 June 1980, 6 (SCOI.82120).

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152. On 9 March 1980, Mr Bedser lent [NP58] or the family, \$2,900.00 to assist him/them to purchase a car (a 1973 Ford Escort).¹¹⁴ On 20 March 1980, motor vehicle insurance in the amount of \$2,999 was taken out on the car by [NP58]'s parents.¹¹⁵
153. Of that \$2,900.00, all but \$220.00 had been repaid by about June 1980.¹¹⁶
154. At some point Mr Bedser also lent \$300.00 to [NP59] to assist her in relation to her sick father in Greece.¹¹⁷
155. On 3 June 1980, Mr Bedser wrote a letter to [NP59] demanding that the \$220.00 and the \$300.00 be repaid.¹¹⁸
156. On 11 June 1980, Mr Bedser secretly taped a conversation that he had with [NP59] in his shop.¹¹⁹
157. The next day, 12 June 1980, Mr Bedser wrote to his solicitor, enclosing the tape.¹²⁰
158. After Mr Bedser's death, the solicitor provided it to police. The police had it transcribed.¹²¹
159. The transcript is barely comprehensible but it is clear that the conversation was heated and emotional. Among many other subjects discussed:
- (a) Each party accused the other of broken promises and/or letting the other down.
 - (b) [NP59] said she was aware that [NP58] "loved" Mr Bedser and kept secrets for him. At one stage she described Mr Bedser as a "second father" to her son.
 - (c) [NP59] said that she "loved" Mr Bedser, "like a son", and would "never forget" him.

¹¹⁴ Letter from Walter Bedser to [NP60], 3 June 1980 (SCOI.10061.00009); Note prepared by Walter Bedser recording money owed by [NP60] and [NP59], undated (SCOI.10061.00008); Statutory Declaration of [NP58] dated 30 October 1980 (SCOI.83091); Report of interview with [NP58], 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82144).

¹¹⁵ Statement of Douglas George Samuels dated 17 December 1980, [2] (SCOI.82125); Car insurance proposal form, 20 March 1980 (SCOI.83103).

¹¹⁶ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123); Letter from Walter Bedser to [NP60], 3 June 1980 (SCOI.10061.00009).

¹¹⁷ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123); Note prepared by Walter Bedser recording money owed by [NP60] and [NP59], undated (SCOI.10061.00008); Report of interview with [NP59], 7 December 1980 (SCOI.82142).

¹¹⁸ Letter from Walter Bedser to [NP60], 3 June 1980 (SCOI.10061.00009).

¹¹⁹ Letter from Walter Bedser to Bruce Macdonald, undated (SCOI.10059.00007); Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123).

¹²⁰ Letter from Walter Bedser to Bruce Macdonald, undated (SCOI.10059.00007); Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123).

¹²¹ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123); Transcript of recorded conversation between Walter Bedser and [NP59], including police summary, 11 June 1980 (SCOI.82120)

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- (d) [NP59] accused Mr Bedser of seeking to be repaid relatively small sums of money despite being a “millionaire” after winning the lottery.
- (e) Mr Bedser accused [NP58] of repeatedly seeking money from him, and accused [NP59] [NP59] of coming to him for money when [NP60] had \$35,000.¹²²

160. Mr Bedser appears to speak to a “Zena” or “Zina” at the conclusion of the transcript. Police inquiries were unable to conclusively identify that person. It appears some enquiries were made regarding a [I70], a 17 year-old girl recalled by Ms Driscoll who worked at a clothing shop in Mr Druitt. However, there are no records to confirm whether police followed through with an expressed intention to speak with her, nor any evidence directly connecting her to Mr Bedser beyond Ms Driscoll’s familiarity with her, for reasons which are not expressed.¹²³
161. Soon afterwards Mr Bedser asked the solicitor (Mr Bruce Macdonald) to write a letter of demand about the \$220.00 and the \$300.00, which Mr Macdonald did.¹²⁴
162. On 24 July 1980, having had no response to the letter of demand, Mr Macdonald issued two small debt summonses, which were served on 25 July 1980.¹²⁵
163. However, on that same day (25 July 1980), Mr Bedser contacted Mr Macdonald and told him that he had come to an arrangement with the family and asked Mr Macdonald to take no further action and to send him a bill, which Mr Macdonald did.¹²⁶
164. In about July 1980 (“four or five months ago” according to [NP58] on 3 December 1980), Mr Bedser offered to lend [NP58] another \$1,000.00 towards the purchase of another car (a Gemini). However, again according to [NP58], Mr Bedser then resiled from that offer, as a result of which they had an argument and [NP58] told Mr Bedser to “piss off”. [NP58] told police that was the last time he saw Mr Bedser.¹²⁷

¹²² Transcript of recorded conversation between Walter Bedser and [NP59] including police summary, 11 June 1980 (SCOI.82120).

¹²³ Report of inquiries re identity of “Zina”, 29 December 1980 (SCOI.45159); Report of inquiries re identity of “Zina”, 20 December 1980 (SCOI.45159); Report of inquiries re identity of “Zina”, 31 December 1980 (SCOI.45159).

¹²⁴ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123).

¹²⁵ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123).

¹²⁶ Report of interview with Bruce Macdonald, 19 December 1980 (SCOI.82123).

¹²⁷ Report of interview with [NP58] 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82144); Report of interview with [NP58], 7 December 1980, 3 (SCOI.82217),

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165. On 27 September 1980, the Ford Escort (which had been purchased in March 1980) was allegedly stolen, and was found burnt out. On 2 October 1980, [NP58]'s parents made a claim on the insurer, NRMA.¹²⁸
166. On 3 October 1980, an anonymous caller alleged to NRMA that [NP58] had paid a person to burn the car for him. The caller stated that he had lent money to the [NP58's family] to purchase the car, but that some of that loan had not been repaid. The caller made several subsequent calls to NRMA to check on the progress of the matter.¹²⁹
167. [NP58] was interviewed by NRMA on 30 October 1980. He told NRMA that Mr Bedser had lent money for the car, but that all but \$200.00 had been repaid. [NP58] said that his father had told him that he would have to pay the final \$200 himself, and that an argument had ensued between him and Mr Bedser because the repayment was late (although it was ultimately made). He denied any wrongdoing in relation to the car.¹³⁰ [NP58] signed a statutory declaration setting out his account of the theft on the same day.¹³¹
168. NRMA subsequently formed the view that the anonymous caller was Mr Bedser and interviewed him on 21 November 1980. Mr Bedser denied having made the calls.¹³²
169. Mr Bedser told NRMA that all the money lent for the vehicle had been paid back to him. He showed the investigator a copy of a receipt dated 23 September 1980 made out to [NP58's surname] for \$100, and said this was the final payment for all outstanding monies for the loan on the car.¹³³
170. On 25 November 1980, NRMA interviewed [NP58]'s friend [I42], who supported [NP58]'s account of the theft and produced a statutory declaration to that effect.¹³⁴
171. The insurance claim had not been finalised as at 2 December 1980, the date of Mr Bedser's death.
172. On 26 December 1980, police interviewed [I42], who now admitted that the claim was false, that he had lied to the NRMA, and that [NP58] had told him he had arranged for another friend to steal the car so that he could make a false claim and buy a different car. [I42] also said he had

¹²⁸ Statement of Douglas George Samuels dated 17 December 1980, [6] (SCOI.82125); NRMA Motor vehicle claim form, 2 October 1980 (SCOI.83098); NRMA Stolen vehicle report, 2 October 1980 (SCOI.83104).

¹²⁹ Statement of Douglas George Samuels dated 17 December 1980, [3]-[5] (SCOI.82125); NRMA file note re conversation with anonymous informant, 3 October 1980 (SCOI.83099),

¹³⁰ Statement of Maria Carmen Ariti, 17 December 1980 (SCOI.82121).

¹³¹ Statutory declaration of [NP58], 30 October 1980 (SCOI.83091).

¹³² Statement of Ross William Thompson dated 17 December 1980 (SCOI.82129); NRMA file note re interview with John Bedser, 21 November 1980 (SCOI.83097)

¹³³ Statement of Ross William Thompson dated 17 December 1980 (SCOI.82129); NRMA file note re interview with John Bedser, 21 November 1980 (SCOI.83097).

¹³⁴ Statutory declaration of [I42] dated 25 November 1980 (SCOI.83089),

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overheard **NP58** stating, shortly after Mr Bedser's murder, that he was happy Mr Bedser was dead but that it was a "slack" way for him to die.¹³⁵

173. Whether police interviewed **NP58** or his parents thereafter about these matters is unknown, on the material available to the Inquiry.
174. Some other witnesses were aware, at least in a general way, of tensions between Mr Bedser and the **NP58's family**. One of these was Gregory Bolton, an antique dealer in Parramatta and associate of Mr Bedser, who told police that Mr Bedser had told him of "an alleged threat" made to him by **NP59**, apparently relating to the \$300 owed by her to Mr Bedser. It was Mr Bolton who suggested Mr Bedser record his conversations with her.¹³⁶ Another was Beverley Carn, a long-time associate of Mr Bedser, who was aware of his plans to tape a "Greek woman" who was refusing to repay him money and had abused his mother.¹³⁷
175. On 19 December 1980, the solicitor Mr Macdonald spoke to police. There is no indication, in the material produced to the Inquiry by the NSWPF, that police spoke to **NP59** or **NP60** again after that point. As noted earlier, the material produced to police does not extend past January 1981.
176. **I46** a friend of both **NP58** and Mr Bedser, spoke to **NP58** after finding out about the murder. He said that **NP58** had had "a lot of problems with his parents" because of his association with Mr Bedser, and that his parents had often used the words "what are we going to do with this bloke" when referring to Mr Bedser.¹³⁸ To what extent that information was pursued by police with either **NP58** or his parents is not known.
177. **NP58** supplied fingerprints for elimination, with no match, and he did not match the description of the man fleeing from the crime scene. Although it is not apparent from the material before the Inquiry that police expressly ruled out his father **NP60**, it would seem that he was regarded as unlikely to be involved due to suffering from back injuries for which he was receiving worker's compensation.¹³⁹ Any similarity between **NP60** and the identikit image would presumably have been remarked upon by police who interviewed him. As mentioned above, the review undertaken by the Senior Detectives Course participants in 2005 noted that there was no evidence that **NP60** had been further spoken to

¹³⁵ Report of interview with **I42**, 26 December 1980 (SCOI.75565).

¹³⁶ Report of interview with Gregory James Bolton, 11 December 1980 (SCOI.82138).

¹³⁷ Report of interview with Beverly Carn, 12 December 1980 (SCOI.45137).

¹³⁸ Report of interview with **I46**, 24 January 1981 (SCOI.82134).

¹³⁹ Report of interview with **NP58**, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.82144).

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about the money apparently owed by **NP59** to Mr Bedser, and that the initial investigation had failed to conclusively eliminate him by way of alibi.¹⁴⁰ **NP60** died on 15 November 2016.

178. The extent to which police checked whether other members or associates of **NP58's** family resembled the identikit image is not known.
179. It is clear that there had been considerable animosity during the course of 1980 between Mr Bedser and **NP58's** family in relation to these various loans and other financial and legal dealings. Whether that animosity still prevailed as at 2 December 1980 is less clear. **NP58** bore no resemblance to the man the subject of the witness descriptions and shown in the identikit image, and it would seem that neither did his father.
180. The Inquiry has endeavoured to establish the extent of the property holdings of **NP58's** family in 1980. Whilst it has not been possible to confirm the exact holdings of the family, there are a number of properties linked to the family name with at least one property definitively owned in 1980. In those circumstances the likelihood that **NP58's** family would have been involved in the murder of a man over \$220 or \$520 seems remote. Possible resentment over Mr Bedser's apparently having alerted NRMA to a false insurance claim may perhaps be different, but the evidence available to the Inquiry does not enable anything more than speculation on that point.
181. The Inquiry has had regard to the criminal antecedents of **NP59** and **NP60**. They do not raise sufficient concern to warrant further investigation in that regard. As noted above, the Inquiry has also undertaken searches to identify other relevant family members who might meet the description of the assailant, and those searches are ongoing.
182. The existence of a motive for killing Mr Bedser, stemming from any or all the financial and other dealings referred to above, is theoretically possible. However, on the available evidence it is submitted that it is unlikely that such a motive in fact lay behind the murder of Mr Bedser, and that in any event no such motive can be established.

¹⁴⁰ Senior Detectives Course review material, 10 May 2005, 15 (SCOI.02915).

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(3) *An attack for other reasons altogether, such as a robbery, or a dispute over jewellery or other property*

183. In the immediate aftermath of the attack on Mr Bedser, on 2 December 1980, his sister Mrs Shirley Driscoll attended the shop and indicated to police that nothing in the shop appeared to have been stolen.¹⁴¹
184. However, at the inquest in July 1983, Mrs Driscoll raised concerns that twenty to thirty thousand dollars worth of French watches, which had been advertised by Mr Bedser the day after his death, had not been located, nor any money indicating their sale. The OIC, DS Hamilton, acknowledged that police could not rule out the possibility that they had been stolen, although it was possible they had simply been sold beforehand. Police had made enquiries with pawnbrokers and elsewhere, to no avail.¹⁴²
185. The Inquiry conducted an extensive media search to find the advertisement relating to the French watches that Mrs Driscoll mentioned at the Inquest. The relevant advertisement was found in the Parramatta Advertiser dated 3 December 1980.¹⁴³ The ad describes a number of antiques, amongst them a ‘gold fob chain and pocket watches.’ Whether these are the watches Mrs Driscoll was referring to is unknown. In the absence of any extant records regarding Mr Bedser’s stock and transactions, there is little the Inquiry can do to further advance the case theory that Mr Bedser was the victim of a robbery.
186. Two witnesses reported observing separate confrontations between Mr Bedser and male customers in his store at different times on the day before his death, but neither man matched the description of the man who fled the scene, and the disputes did not appear to rise to the level of violence.¹⁴⁴
187. While the man seen by Mr Hadley on the day of Mr Bedser’s death was inquiring as to the sale price of antique chair, there is nothing which connects that matter to Mr Bedser’s death or even a dispute. Indeed, that evidence suggests that Mr Bedser had made an overly generous offer for the item.¹⁴⁵
188. It is possible, on the evidence available, that Mr Bedser was the subject of a robbery or attempted robbery that did not proceed as planned, perhaps due to Mr Bedser displaying unexpected resistance,

¹⁴¹ Running sheet entry re initial police attendance at scene, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.00008.00019).

¹⁴² Transcript of inquest, 11 July 1983 at pp. 4-5 (SCOI.00008.00139).

¹⁴³ Advertisement for Parramatta Antiques, *Parramatta Advertiser*, 3 December 1980 (SCOI.83195).

¹⁴⁴ Statement of John Richard Dempster dated 23 December 1980 (SCOI.82141); Report of identikit photo prepared from description provided by John Richard Dempster, 24 December 1980 (SCOI.10059.00012); Report of interview with Simon Dikranian, 2 December 1980 (SCOI.45112); Report of interview with Simon Dikranian re identikit photo, 20 December 1980 (SCOI.45152).

¹⁴⁵ Statement of Raymond Morris Hadley dated 2 December 1980 (SCOI.10058.00050); Report of interview with Raymond Morris Hadley, 4 December 1980 (SCOI.45117).

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or the scuffle drawing unwanted attention by the breaking of a glass cabinet. In such hypothetical circumstances, the attacker may have fled before taking anything of value. However, there is no positive evidence to support that theory.

189. By contrast, the prior purchase of the knife that day, its abandonment at the scene and the absence of any fingerprints on it would more strongly suggest it was intended to be used to kill Mr Bedser while leaving minimal traceable evidence, as opposed to an opportunistic robbery gone awry.
190. The available evidence is insufficient to found a submission one way or the other as to whether this third hypothesis is a probable or even possible motive for the murder of Mr Bedser.

Submission as to bias

191. Whether Mr Bedser's death was motivated in whole or in part by gay hate bias turns largely on two factors, namely:
 - (a) whether the motive for his murder was related to his sexual interactions with one or more teenage boys; and
 - (b) whether such a motive can be said to be correlated with a "gay hate bias" motive in these specific factual circumstances.
192. For the reasons outlined above, the motive behind Mr Bedser's violent stabbing cannot be determined on the available evidence.
193. If the person who bought the knife in the sports shop, quite possibly the same person seen by various people in the vicinity of the arcade on the day of Mr Bedser's murder, was indeed the killer, some premeditation seems to have been involved. Further, if the knife was wiped clean of fingerprints or if gloves were worn, that may suggest that the killing was the work of someone with some criminal experience. However, for the reasons outlined above, none of those various possibilities can be established.
194. If the murder of Mr Bedser was motivated by knowledge of his sexual interactions with one or more teenage boys, that would raise for consideration the question whether that motivation, in the mind of the killer in question, was derived from animosity towards paedophiles or from animosity towards homosexuals – bearing in mind, also, that some offenders, wrongly, conflate homosexuality with paedophilia.

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195. It will be submitted elsewhere that such a conflation, in the mind of an offender, does not mean that a case is not one involving “gay hate bias”; to the contrary, it supports a positive conclusion that such a bias is present. However, the case of Mr Bedser, it is submitted, is not one where this issue falls to be considered. That is because, on the available evidence, it is simply not possible to ascertain who killed Mr Bedser and why, with the consequence that the question of whether a “gay hate bias” was a factor in the death cannot be answered.

Submission as to manner and cause of death

196. It is submitted that the coronial finding as to Mr Bedser’s death remains appropriate. That is, Mr Bedser died as a result of knife wounds inflicted on 2 December 1980 at his antique shop in Darcy St, Parramatta, by an unidentified person.

Peter Gray SC
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Christine Melis
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