



## QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE STATEMENT OF WITNESS



QP 0125A  
05/22  
A3

Occurrence #: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: **17/08/2022**

### Statement of

Name of witness: **CARROLL Katarina Ruzh**

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: **Police Officer**

### Police officer taking statement

Name: **CARROLL Katarina Ruzh**

Rank: **Commissioner** Reg. no.: **4005454**

Region/Command/Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Station: \_\_\_\_\_

### Statement:

Katarina Ruzh CARROLL APM states:

1. I am the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service (QPS), having been sworn into that position on 8 July 2019. Since joining QPS in 1983 my professional experience has consisted of various roles including Criminal Investigation Branches, a Commission of Inquiry, the Joint Crime Task Force, and the covert unit, in addition to being Operations Commander for G20, Australia's largest peacetime security operation.
2. From December 2014 to July 2019 I also served as the Commissioner of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), and also held roles as the Vice President on the Board of the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) and a member of the AFAC Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee.
3. I hold tertiary qualifications including an Executive Masters in Public Administration, a Degree in Criminology, a Graduate Diploma in Applied Management and an Honorary Doctor of Letters from James Cook University.
4. I have extensive experience in designing and implementing organisational reform, including the QFES Allison Review in 2014 and subsequent evaluation in 2017. These processes, which arose out of an incident of sexual harassment and workplace bullying of female firefighters, reviewed the adequacy of QFES' response to such conduct, and considered whether there were any underlying cultural issues that fostered gender discrimination in the Fire Service.
5. As Commissioner of QFES I implemented the review's 30 recommendations to improve culture across QFES' workforce and volunteer streams, discipline misconduct among senior ranks, and explore new and innovative ways of influencing the QFES workforce to address instances of poor workplace behaviour and gender bias. Implementation of these recommendations formed only one part of much broader reforms I introduced across the QFES.

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years I reviewed and evaluated these reforms to ensure the organisation was making progress and was meeting desired outcomes.

6. Upon commencing as Commissioner of the QPS in 2019 I also ordered and facilitated a strategic review of the organisation by Neil Greenfield from GSA Management Consulting, which resulted in significant ongoing reforms including the creation of the Service Delivery Redesign Project, SOLVE triaging model, establishment and realignment of commands and divisions through the Service Alignment Program, and reinstatement of Commissioner's Performance Reviews and Business Unit Reviews.
7. This also saw the creation of the Communications, Culture and Engagement Division as a dedicated capability owner to inform, engage, partner and inspire our service and communities. Its composition includes the First Nations and Multicultural Affairs Unit and the Change and Engagement Unit.
8. Other reviews, including the QPS Communications, Culture and Engagement Review and QPS Safety and Wellbeing Review, are currently ongoing.

**The Commission of Inquiry**

9. On 2 December 2021 I sent an internal email to all QPS members after the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (WSJTF) handed down its first report. I can provide a copy of the email marked **Attachment A**.
10. In the email I acknowledged that one of the recommendations of the Taskforce was for a Commission of Inquiry to examine widespread cultural issues within the QPS relating to the investigation of DFV, and stated my opinion that a Commission of Inquiry was not necessary considering action the QPS was already taking to improve our response to DFV, and the reform that would be achieved through implementation of the 88 recommendations contained within the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report.
11. The intention of my email was to acknowledge the findings of the report and to advise members that the QPS was committed to implementing reforms and initiatives. At the time I believed that the organisation was undergoing extraordinary reforms to enhance our service delivery, and that it would be beneficial to allow time for those reforms and the other recommendations within the WSJTF report to be implemented and reviewed.
12. Though I did not believe the timing was right for a Commission of Inquiry, I agreed with the Taskforce's recommendations.
13. Since the announcement of the Commission of Inquiry, I have welcomed the opportunity to improve our responses and expressed my support for the process.
14. On 10 May 2022, after the Government's announcement of the Commission of Inquiry, Acting Commissioner Steve Gollschewski sent a Service-wide email. I can provide a copy of this email marked **Attachment B**.
15. This email invited members to 'welcome today's announcement as an opportunity to both strengthen our protection of society's most vulnerable and

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improve the systems we work with' and affirmed that 'the QPS does not shy away from the opportunity to improve, and we will welcome any recommendations to enhance our DFV response.'

16. After my return to Australia, I sent an email to my entire workforce on 30 May 2022 stating:

*'The QPS will be very open to any recommendations that will help us, as a Service, improve how we prevent and respond to DFV. We know you need the best processes, tools and resources in place to help you with this work.'*

*I am also optimistic the COI will present an opportunity for us to not only showcase what we are already doing, but also push for systemic reform and a change to DFV responses as a whole, beyond just policing.'*

17. I can provide a copy of this email marked **Attachment C**.

**Cultural issues**

18. Throughout the public hearings of the Commission of Inquiry I have listened to and been briefed on the evidence given, including evidence of negative and concerning workplace behaviours. Appropriate matters have been referred for review and investigation.

19. Evidence has suggested that there is a widespread culture of misogyny, sexism and racism in the QPS, or beliefs and values that do not align with the organisational values, and our ethos of caring for victims. There has been much discussion about what is meant by the term 'widespread'. This is not easy to quantify. What I have seen from victims who have come forward to the Taskforce and Commission of Inquiry clearly shows me there are cultural issues in areas around the state of Queensland. However, the term 'widespread' to me implies that there are entrenched and ingrained cultural issues with all, or the majority of us in the Service. I do not accept this. I accept that there are some people in the organisation who do not act in the manner expected, and where we identify this, we do take action. The fact that 30% of all complaints about police are generated by police, tells me that the QPS are committed to addressing inappropriate behaviour.

20. I truly believe we have a workforce that genuinely cares deeply about keeping victims safe. I accept that there is widespread frustration from dealing with the complexities of the system required of them in DFV matters which is often inefficient and time-consuming, which together with high demand and the consequent impact on morale and fatigue is having an impact.

21. For example, I am aware that Assistant Commissioner Codd was asked about the frustration of members having to fill in a document that then has to be printed off, scanned, put back on the QPRIME system before being sent to the courts. This is a very good example of the kind of red tape our people are faced with when they are required to complete an affidavit of personal service. It requires signing by the police officer and the Justice of the Peace or Commissioner of Declarations as per section 12 of the Oaths Act 1867. In practice this is not

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always in a position to do this electronically or insert their electronic seal as required, and as a consequence the time taken to complete the required paperwork is drawn out causing frustration.

22. The QPS has for some time been talking with other government agencies to review the legislation that would allow for better protection of victims and also streamline the system so that more time can be dedicated to protecting and responding to the community. It has taken many years to enable a trial of video recorded evidence to take DFV victim statements, which will start later this year. Feedback from other states that already have this in place demonstrates that the change benefits victims in that they do not have to continually retell their story or worry about pressure being placed upon them to change their story by respondents. Additionally, fewer protection orders are contested and a greater proportion of offences are pleaded to without the need for hearings. If the results for Queensland are similar, it will mean better victim support and time savings that can be reinvested in community protection and response.
23. Other legislative reform discussion has involved enabling electronic signatures, electronic service of documents, simplifying the process to add new conditions to an existing order, a simpler method for police to commence an application for a protection order, removing automatic expiration of PPNs, uniform rank of authority for the issue of conditions on a PPN and PPNs with mandatory and cool-down conditions capable of remaining enforceable.
24. There are more than 17,000 members in the QPS, and I believe the vast majority of our members do an incredible job responding to DFV. Responding to DFV matters is both challenging and complex for frontline officers and demand for policing services for DVF continues to rise substantially.
25. Last year more than 138,000 occurrences of DFV-related matters were recorded by the QPS. Frontline officers attend more than 370 DFV incidents on average each day across Queensland. The number of calls for service for DFV has dramatically increased over the last ten years. I can provide a graph illustrating the escalation in DFV calls for service since 2012 marked **Attachment D**. Data also shows that contravention offences have significantly increased since we have commenced our reforms, demonstrating that our members are taking action on this important issue.
26. I acknowledge the officers, victims and representatives from community organisations who have given evidence to the Commission of Inquiry and thank them for coming forward.
27. I am deeply disappointed to hear that we have let down victims and the community, and I am committed to restoring public confidence in the QPS' response to DFV.
28. However, I am also regularly told of positive stories from victims and stakeholders about how well our people have responded to DFV occurrences.

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In the most recent NOUS survey instigated by the COI, I am advised that 25% of participants have received positive feedback from victims they have assisted.

29. The evidence is clear that cultural issues do exist in some areas of the QPS. This must change, and I am committed to improving our culture to ensure that we respond to DFV appropriately.

30. Similarly, I accept there are broader issues to be addressed on an organisational level. The Commission of Inquiry has looked at many issues including culture, training and resourcing. Work is well under way in each of these areas. For example, additional resources are now being allocated from the government growth commitment of 2025 by 2025. These allocations are being informed by the demand modelling introduced by the Service Delivery Program, and the DFV maturity model assessments. Over the next three years there will be a significant increase in resources across the state and this will include not only additional frontline resources to respond to DFV but also DFV specialist positions, some of which have already commenced roll out.

31. The training reforms have been extensive, and I have no doubt these reforms will go a long way in addressing issues around being more trauma informed, victim centric, culturally sensitive and ensuring we identify the person most in need of protection. Our training delivery was significantly impacted by our large scale commitment to the Covid pandemic. However, we have since rolled out three DFV training products for the broader workforce. A DFV enhancement OLP was released in 2021, and a victim centric coercive control OLP in January this year. This product was developed with the assistance of Dr. Heather Nancarrow from Australia's National Research Organisation on Women's Safety. More recently we have commenced a three day face to face training program on DFV and coercive control that has been informed by victims with lived experience and external experts in DFV.

32. There are many other reforms which have been implemented or remain underway, including:

- Establishment of a dedicated DFV and Vulnerable Persons Command to drive capability, culture and process enhancements across the organisation.
- Implementation of the DFV Strategy 2021-23 that contains five strategic priorities to drive service improvement. An accompanying action plan lists the activities being undertaken to enhance:
  1. Victim survivor protection
  2. Perpetrator accountability
  3. Building capability in our people
  4. Building community confidence
  5. Maximising integrated partnerships.
- Business unit performance reviews are now being undertaken across districts and commands to measure performance against these priorities.
- Increased the number of DFV Coordinators across the state by an additional 24 specialists.
- Increased the number of DFV Coordinators in the police communications centre to 6, to provide real time assistance to frontline members.
- Delivery in 2019 of the Culture Change Coaching Program to facilitate culture change champions across 15 police districts. This training package has been developed by the

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Nous Group to enable localised training in addition to service wide corporate training.

Covid impacted the roll out of these localised training programs but this has since been reinitiated.

- Delivery of short shot training sessions on DFV culture and compliance to frontline officers.
- Development of a capability maturity model to map district DFV capability levels and inform future police growth placements.
- Conducting operations using focussed deterrence methodology to disrupt high risk perpetrators. The operations conducted in 2020 and 2021 saw a 56% and 50% reduction in contravention offences respectively. The QPS is now partnering with the Australian Institute of Criminology to continue and assess this initiative, which has been widely acclaimed by leading academics.
- Release of a High Risk High Harm Dashboard (HRHHDB) to equip our frontline with real time data on those that pose the most risk and focus prevention and disruption activities.
- Introduction of artificial intelligence to inform the HRHHDB to pick up on future offenders who may not have a history of DFV but have a tendency for significant violence. This is particularly important given the fact that approximately 69% of victims killed in a DFV event are not known to the QPS in a DFV sense prior to their death.
- Establishment of the DFV Advisory Group involving key stakeholders that help inform the QPS on DFV issues and strategy.
- Commencement of work to develop a dedicated DFV manual to strengthen policy and processes contained in the QPS Operating Procedures Manual.
- Trialling the embedding of police officers in two domestic violence service providers, in recognition of barriers to victims reporting at police stations.
- Establishment in 2020 of the Communications, Culture and Engagement Division and First Nations and Multicultural Affairs Unit to build enhanced relationships with our community, recognising that First Nations peoples are overrepresented as both victims and perpetrators of DFV.
- Conduct of a 9 month trial in 2020/21 embedding a women's advocate into a police station to support victims. The trial is currently being evaluated by Griffith University.
- Academic review and modification of the DFV-PAF risk assessment framework.
- Implementation of SMS reporting in 2020 to assist victims to report DFV to police.
- District Officers attending and completing the Griffith University MATE (Motivating Action Through Empowerment) bystander program.
- Requirement for body worn camera to be turned on during DFV attendances in the field and at stations.
- Enhancements to the QPS QLITES to provide frontline members a more enhanced view of DFV histories and risk ratings, to improve identification of the person most in need of protection. This is a significant advancement for the QPS, reducing the difficulties frontline members experience navigating the QPRIME system to get a true understanding of what DFV history exists.
- Auditing of body worn camera footage from DFV attendances to ensure compliance.
- Implementation 5 years ago of First Nations and CALD- specific pre-recruit programs to increase representation within QPS ranks and build trust within communities.
- Distribution of Operational Improvement Notices to all employees upon becoming aware of shortfalls in service delivery, and regular messaging to all QPS members via a range of internal messaging mediums on lessons learnt.
- Convening of the DFV state conference for DFV specialists to hear from and share learnings from victim survivors, academics and leaders from interstate.

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33. Throughout 2021 and 2022, there have been ten separate emails and five Workplace posts under my hand specifically regarding DFV. I can provide a copy of those emails and workplace posts as a bundle marked **Attachment E**.

34. I have also referenced DFV responses in two of my monthly newsletters this year and particularly, our support for the Commission of Inquiry.

35. In those emails from across the past year I clearly call out unacceptable behaviour and emphasise the importance of strengthening our response to this issue, including where I stated the following:

*I cannot emphasise enough the importance of responding to these matters in a manner which surpasses community expectations and withstands the highest scrutiny. To be clear, I consider the prevention of and responding to DFV in a timely and professional manner as one of the highest priorities (6 May 2021).*

*Upon review of some incidents, at times our responses have not met the expectation of the QPS or the community. As a learning organisation, we should acknowledge there are always opportunities for improvement (2 December 2021).*

*For all the excellent work we do in the DFV space, unfortunately there are instances where we have failed victims. In these cases, we have failed those very people who rely on us to keep them safe. We all know how difficult and relentless this work is. Dealing with these cases is long, detailed and extremely challenging. But if we do not do what is expected of us, it is, quite simply, unacceptable (10 March 2022).*

36. In my email of 2 December 2021 I made several comments about the importance of DFV responses and the ongoing reforms across the organisation, including:

*From an initial review of the Report, there are about 17 recommendations that apply specifically to police. About 10 of those recommendations are already under way or are initiatives that we welcome and have advocated for.*

*Many of the [Taskforce's] recommendations are an opportunity to drive change to build a better Service that supports you in your role as first responders and assists victims and survivors. To be clear, my focus is on improving our response to DFV through supporting our frontline personnel.*

37. In my communications issued this year, I have continually expressed my support for the Commission of Inquiry. This extends beyond just emails and has been communicated at each Executive Leadership Team meeting and ongoing briefings. In June, we developed a communications pack regarding the Commission of Inquiry and sent this to all 15 districts. Our commitment to improving our DFV responses is continually pushed through a variety of communications mediums within the organisation.

38. In my role as Commissioner, there must be a continual balance between calling out unacceptable behaviour while also supporting my workforce, which responds to an extraordinary amount of DFV each day.

39. As an organisation we need to support our officers in responding to DFV, and the QPS will continue to carefully examine all matters raised during the course of the Commission of Inquiry.


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40. I am aware that members of the QPS have posted, or otherwise interacted with, negative social media posts about DFV on certain Facebook pages in 2021 and 2022.
41. Posts such as these are very upsetting and disappointing, and indicate that there are officers who have attitudes that do not align with QPS values. The posts themselves promote behaviour that is inconsistent with our duty to protect the community.
42. On both occasions after becoming aware of these posts I have sent emails to every member of the service to make my expectations clear regarding the appropriate use of social media, and the unacceptable nature of the content of such posts. I also advised that I had ordered full investigations into the conduct. I can provide copies of these emails marked **Attachment F** and **Attachment G**.
43. Following the discovery of inappropriate social media posts in 2021 the QPS' Use of Social Media Policy was revised. The new policy was released in January 2022 and provided to all members in a service-wide Commissioner's Update. I can provide a copy of this email marked **Attachment H**.
44. The revised Use of Social Media Policy makes clear to members that the policy applies at all times on any account they may use, and that their mere presence in a group containing derogatory or inappropriate comments is improper. I can provide a copy of the policy marked **Attachment I**.
45. In 2021, 30 members of the QPS were identified responding to an inappropriate social media post. All were investigated, with 22 members receiving Local Managerial Resolution.
46. I am bitterly disappointed that negative posts have continued to occur. I consider conduct like this, and the attitudes that underpin these posts, incompatible with the values of QPS. The most recent posts, and the 78 members identified as responding to them, are being investigated and I expect that the outcomes of that investigation will not only deal with those members involved but also help eliminate behaviour of this nature in the future.
47. Members who participate in conduct of this kind may be subject to disciplinary action for improper use of social media as per section 8.2.4 of the QPS Use of Social Media Policy. Where a member has repeatedly engaged in such conduct, ~~their past conduct~~ will be considered in determining the appropriate sanction.

  
Commissioner Katarina Ruzh Carroll APM

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*Justices Act 1886*

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(6C)(c) of the *Justices Act 1886* that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 17/08/2022 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 99 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false

Signature

Signed at Brisbane this 17th day of August, 2022  
(place) (day) (month) (year)

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