COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950
Section 5(1)(d)

STATEMENT OF AUDRA JEWEL MOANA POLLARD

Name of Witness:	Audra Jewel Moana Pollard
Date of birth:	[redacted]
Occupation:	Sergeant, Communications Room Supervisor Mackay Police Communications Centre
Contact details (phone/email):	[redacted] [redacted]

I Audra Jewel Moana Pollard make oath and state as follows:

1. I am 42 years of age. I am currently employed by the QPS as a Sergeant Communications Room Supervisor at Mackay Police Communications Centre.

2. As of 30/06/2022, I will formally resign from the QPS after 23 years and 8 months. During my time at the QPS, I worked at stations in various locations, approximate periods:

   - Gold Coast – between April 1999 – August 2002
   - Mt Isa – between August 2002 – November 2005
   - Mornington Island – for short periods during May 2003 – July 2004
   - Innisfail – between November 2005 – June 2006
   - Townsville – between June 2006 – September 2013
   - Brisbane – between September 2013 - September 2016
   - Longreach – between September 2016 – August 2019
   - Mackay – between August 2019 – June 2022

Experiences and observations between 1999 and 2008

3. Between 1999 – 2008, I performed general duties on the Gold Coast, Mount Isa, Mornington Island, Innisfail, and Mundingburra (Townsville).

4. I learnt and adopted policing practices which were heavy handed and encased in a mentality of "us vs them", which meant police vs the public. I learnt self-preservation by suppressing emotions, managing stress through self-medicated options such as alcohol abuse, and I

didn't care about the public. The more times a person became known as a regular, the less support and empathy they received regardless of their reason for interaction with police.

5. The operational culture at that time was largely influenced by the many supervisors and managers who had an overviewing impact upon my operational performance and divisions operational outcomes. Unfortunately, the many different supervisors and managers have their own agenda, motivations, and opinions. Many of my experiences with supervisors and managers have a mixture of positive and negative, which influence the operational performance and outcomes of subordinate staff including myself. I have worked with managers who are only interested in getting calls for service cleared from the job list; or were only interested in the statistics regardless of how they were achieved. The Fitzgerald Inquiry may have been instrumental in reducing corruption in the beginning; but the culture of that pre-Fitzgerald inquiry was still present in the above period and now.

6. The cultural, gender or socio-economic diversity of persons sometimes factored into how victims and respondents were treated. This became evident during my service in Mount Isa, Mornington Island, Innisfail, and Townsville.

7. During that period, I was guilty of and witnessed:

- Police avoiding / delaying attendance to DFV calls for service
- Showing little empathy towards victims and respondents
- Stereotyping and being judgemental towards the aggrieved (male & female) for remaining in a DFV relationship
- Performing the minimum action required to fulfil my policing responsibility
- Rushing through the DFV investigation with no care for the persons involved or their lives beyond the policing involvement
- Treating the DFV as just another job to get through quickly and move onto the next call for service.
- Judging an aggrieved more than the respondent and determine whether they are a genuine victim or someone who is using the QPS / judicial system to inflict punishment on the respondent
- Mistreating or lecturing the aggrieved based on their choices to remain in a DFV relationship
- The more times police reattend DFV incidents involving the same people for the same reasons, the less support, care, or compassion they received.

Experiences and observations between 2008 and now

8. Between 2008 – 2016 and 2020 – 2021, I performed roles as a Sergeant Communications Room Supervisor in Townsville, Brisbane, and Mackay. In this phase of my career, I started to grow beyond the mentality of my previous roles. My transition into a Police Communications Centre was one of constant conflict with experienced and capable civilian staff, but the attitude and demeanour of some was problematic to the consistent and professional operability of the workplace environment.

9. During my experience as a Communications Room Supervisor, I have witnessed the following policing behaviours:
   - Inconsistency with how a DFV call for service is categorised as a job code 312. I have seen supervisors automatically categorise a disturbance as a DFV incident when there is no details of relationship type between the involved parties.
   - I have seen DFV incorrectly finalised with the approval of a on road supervisor.
   - I have witnessed crews delay their response to DFV calls for service and actively self-initiate a diversionary or alternative task which means another policing resource needs to be tasked to the DFV incident.
   - I have witnessed civilian operators and Police Link jobs contain absolute rubbish information which is difficult to read let alone understand what the actual job details are.
   - I have seen conflict between operational crews and communications staff over the quality of information within the QCAD job; how the crews have dealt with the job, how long it has taken crew to do the job, what the crews did or didn't do with the job; and it is seemingly never ending.
   - I witnessed crews divert DFV incidents to the front counter.
   - I witnessed front counters divert DFV to operational crews.

10. Between 2016 – 2020 I performed roles as a Disaster Management Executive Officer in Longreach and Mackay.

11. In 2021 I returned from maternity leave to my substantive position in the Mackay Watchhouse. I would take respondents into my care from DFV matters.
   - Not all were affected by drugs or alcohol, not all of them understood what was going on.
   - Some believed they were the victim not the aggressor.
   - I don't know if an instant barrier appears between first responders and respondents but there is a clear communication disconnect between them.
   - I also think police misuse the Watchhouse as a first choice and only choice to place offenders, respondents, and the like. Not all persons who enter the Watchhouse should be lodged or received at the Watchhouse for various reasons including medical.

Reflection on the changes I have observed over my career

12. Unfortunately, I don't believe the policing culture has changed enough over the past 23 years. Police are trained once in DFV at the academy and given an online learning product (OLP) to complete every now and again. The OLP is a liability exercise for the QPS and as a OLP student, I don't know what I learnt.

13. Furthermore, police train police. This can be detrimental to learning outcomes. The policing culture is not just one thing. The policing culture is a combination of laziness, self-service, corporate ladder climbers, jaded and disgruntled people. Training is not taken seriously.

14. In my experience, the policing culture is influenced by the personal motivations, prejudices and experiences or lack thereof. There is inconsistency between written operating procedures and execution of those practices. This creates confusion and affect client service outcomes. Junior police are influenced by peer pressure, management treatment, inadequate supervision, and inadequate training delivery methods.

867 (DECLARATION)

I AUDRA POLLARD do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

(1) This written statement by me dated 04th July 2022 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief: and

(2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867.

[redacted] ....Signature

Taken and declared before me at MACKAY this 4TH day of JULY 2022.

Taken By [redacted]

Justice of the Peace / ~~Commissioner for Declarations / Lawyer~~ 130907.