QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

QP 0125
01/06
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Occurrence #: _____

Statement no.: _____ Date: **04/07/2022**

Statement of

Name of witness: **SINCLAIR-FORD, Andrew**

Date of birth: [redacted] Age: [redacted] Occupation: **Police Officer**

Police officer taking statement

Name: _____,

Rank: _____ Reg. no.: _____

Region/Command/Division: _____ Station : _____

Statement:

Andrew Sinclair-Ford States:

Career Experience

1. I am a constable with the Queensland Police Service.
2. I joined the QPS as a member of Intake 1 of 2022 on 10 January 2022. I was inducted as a sworn officer on 30 June 2022, the proud recipient of the Commissioner's Executive Award.
3. Prior to joining the QPS I served as a Police officer with Merseyside Police, UK from April 1993 until August 2000. During that time, I served in General Duties, Support Division (specialist riot squad, plain clothes targeted crime patrolling and counter-terrorist bomb search) and Community Section (particular responsibility for community interaction and support in a defined beat area).
4. I hold a Bachelor of Laws, with honours from Liverpool John Moores University. I was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland on 13 December 2001. I practiced as a legal practitioner for 17 years before applying to the QPS in February of 2021.

Domestic & Family Violence (DFV) Training

Police Academy

5. Whilst at the Police Academy, I received training in DFV. That training included On-line learning Products (OLPs), understanding relevant legislation (for example the DFV Protection Act), recognising and responding to DFV in the home and in the workplace, identifying and dealing with the various types of coercive control utilised by offenders. Of particular interest was the Power and Control Wheel which usefully summarised the tell-tale indicia of DFV. This was further expanded

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upon in an OLP which included a documentary from the US from the author of that Wheel.

6. A significant part of our Phase 3 training whilst at the Academy was dedicated to DFV training. Specifically, 114 pages of the Phase 3 manual set out the legislation, the actions required of a Police Officer attending an alleged DFV incident and the subsequent documentation. The DFV legislation and necessary documentation were part of our Phase 3 open-book examination and the final, closed-book examination.

7. In relation to DFV I was required to complete a written online workbook to test our understanding of DFV issues.

8. There was also classroom learning and workshops over a number of days to expand upon, enhance and test our understanding of DFV issues. The DFV training sessions were the largest single part of our training. These training sessions were led by a number of different Sergeants, who each brought their own experience and insight to the issues. The instruction from the Sergeants helped me to understand DFV by providing valuable, targeted information and made the theoretical training more real. I felt confident that I could ask for clarification and support, and regularly asked questions in the classroom environment.

9. I also undertook scenario based training with experienced Sergeants. Each squad was broken down into groups of about 8 recruits, with one Sergeant. Over the course of two days, we would each take it in turn to be the investigating officer, the corroborating officer, the aggrieved and respondent. At the conclusion of each scenario, each recruit's role was examined and their actions discussed in the group, led by the Sergeant. Our notebooks, Police Protection Notices and Applications were discussed in the group so that we could all learn from mistakes that were made, and the comments provided by the training Sergeant.

10. Training also included scenario based assessments of various DFV situations which will be commonly encountered by General Duties Police Officers.

11. During the Academy training, the DFV component was stressed as being incredibly important and something that we had to get right as it would give us the skills to be able to deal professionally with the DFV incidents once we were out on the road. It was stressed as being particularly important because of the horrendous consequences to victims if we get it wrong.

12. What I learnt whilst at the Academy was the need to deal with DFV incidents in a manner that ensured each and every victim, on each occasion, is provided with compassion, respect and afforded safety.

13. I am confidant that the training has prepared me for General Duties policing and I feel able to make this statement based upon my previous experiences of responding to and investigating DFV during my time in the UK Police.

14. During my previous service, I attended many DFV incidents, some of which were memorable to me.

15. In particular, I recall attending a report of assault stemming from a DFV (there was no specific offences associated with DFV at that time; the victim either made an allegation of assault, or the offender would often by arrested for a Breach of the Peace and taken to the cells). My partner and I attended a house full of screaming

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children and the complainant had significant facial injuries (for which she declined medical attention).

16. The offender was the husband and had decamped prior to police arrival. We spent significant time obtaining a detailed complaint from the complainant. As we were leaving the house, the offender was walking up the garden path. We knew from our checks that he had significant history for violence and assault police. Myself and my colleague ended up brawling (there's no better way to describe it) with the offender in the front garden of the house. While we were doing that, the complainant ran out of the house armed with a broom and started to scream obscenities at me and my colleague whilst vigorously beating us with the broom. In the time that passed since that occurrence, I have recalled it with wry amusement.

17. While undertaking my DFV training with QPS I had a lightbulb moment that has caused me to recast that memory in particular, and others of a similar type. It is only now, and because of my training, that I understand her actions towards me were merely an effort to protect herself and her children from the repercussions that she feared she would be subject to once her husband was released from custody.

18. In my previous years of Police service, I was often frustrated at taking 2-3 hours out of a busy shift to take a detailed statement from a complainant and then hand it to the next shift only to discover that the complainant had attended the Police Station the following day to withdraw the complaint. I now know, because of the training I have received from QPS, that the complainant was trying to protect herself from the offender either continuing with or escalating the DFV.

Post Academy Training

19. As I have only just left the Academy I am unable to comment on DFV training received since leaving. However, I am aware that further DFV training is scheduled to be given by my Divisional Education Training Officer in the week of 11 July 2022.

20. As a consequence of my training to date, I feel confident that I am sufficiently prepared from a theoretical and practical perspective to be able to effectively respond to a DFV event and provide competent and effective support to those in need.

Other DFV Training

21. I haven't taken on any formal additional training in DFV.

Training Improvement Opportunities

22. Until I have an opportunity to put my theoretical knowledge into practice, I cannot comment as to where there are gaps, or need for further training at the Academy stage of policing. However, based upon my previous experience, I consider the training is excellent with a suitable mix of legislation training, practical requirements and real-world examples of DFV impacts on victims and responses by Police.

Nature of the Training

23. Given my recent graduation from the Police Academy, I am yet to receive on-the-job training.

[redacted] (Witness's signature) | (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature) | (Signature of police officer preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **SINCLAIR-FORD, Andrew**

Interaction with the Domestic Family Violence & Vulnerable Persons Unit (DFVVPU)

24. I have not had any dealings with DFVVPU. I anticipate that I would have dealt with the DFVPU while on station duty rotation. However, I did not undertake station duty due to personal reasons. Nonetheless, I am aware of what the DFVVPU is and how and when to contact them.

Challenges in responding to and investigating DFV

25. I am yet to attend a DFV incident as a QPS Constable.

26. From previous service experience, the most frustrating part of responding to and investigating DFV was feeling like I was wasting my time, based upon complainants withdrawing complaints. While I expect that scenario is still likely to occur, I feel better prepared to deal with those issues.

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Andrew Sinclair-Ford

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 06/07/2022 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 5 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.

.....[redacted].....Signature

Signed at Brisbane this 7th day of July 2022.

(Witness's signature)	(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature)	(Signature of police officer preparing statement)