



**QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE  
STATEMENT OF WITNESS**



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

Statement no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: **15/07/2022**

Statement of

Name of witness: **MOYNIHAN Anthony**

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

Police officer taking statement

Name: **MOYNIHAN Anthony Charles**

Rank: **Senior Sergeant** Reg. no.: **13977**

Region/Command/Division: **Far Northern** Station: **Thursday Island**

Statement:

Anthony Moynihan States:

**Career Experience**

1. I am currently the Officer in Charge of Thursday Island Station. I have been in that role for approximately 6 weeks.
2. I have been in the QLD Police Service for approximately 22 years, having been sworn in in 2001.
3. In that time, I have worked all throughout Queensland. From Toowoomba and Ipswich and then up into North Queensland, along with some time in Mt Isa. I have worked in every Cape Station at certain times.
4. For the last 15 years I have been a Detective, attaining the rank of Detective Sergeant. Until my recent promotion I was the Officer in Charge of Thursday Island CIB for 3 years.
5. Thursday Island Station is comprised of:
  - a) 21 General Duties officers;
  - b) 4 x CIB officers;
  - c) 4 x CPIU officers;
  - d) 5 x Water Police officers;



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- e) 1 x Prosecutor officers;
  - f) 1 x Scenes of Crime officer;
  - g) 2 x PLOs; and
  - h) 1 Inspector.
6. Ranks vary from 1 Inspector, 1 x Senior Sergeant, 2 x Detective Sergeants, 5 x Sergeants and rest are Senior Constable and Constable.
  7. Over time there has been periods where the staff at Thursday Island have potentially been younger in service. However, for the most part these junior staff are assisted by more senior persons in higher ranks.
  8. There is also a station at Horn Island consisting of 1 Sergeant and 1 Senior Constable.

**Domestic and Family Violence (DFV)**

9. DFV occurrences are the highest call for service in the Torres Strait. Complaints predominately come from aggrieved at or about the time of the incident. Very few DFV complaints are received over the counter at the Police Station.
10. Coercive control is prevalent in DFV complaints from within the Torres Strait. Female victims are usually left without access to money, made to always stay at home and have traditional roles such as home duties and raising children. Respondents can be very jealous anytime the aggrieved ventures out or socialises. They are barred from having phones at time or forever made to share phones with there partners and share social media accounts.
11. An intelligence assessment of DFV police response and investigation in the Torres Strait Patrol Group was undertaken in 2021 with a follow-up assessment due in late 2022. This intelligence assessment was undertaken in response to DFV being the highest call for service in the patrol group and two DFV incidents which would have been homicides if not for the intervention of a third party. In response to the findings of this assessment, the Patrol Group implemented a number of initiatives to improve police relationships with the community in relation to DFV matters. Those initiatives were:



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- a) DV follow-ups by TSIPLD with high risk aggrieved spouses and respondents
  - b) A new briefing sheet for officers to DFV Order Authorising Officers
  - c) A new risk management sheet for shift supervisors
  - d) Additional training for first response and investigators on DFV related OPMS etc
  - e) Performance benchmarks set for community agencies engaged in DFV crime prevention in return for funding.
12. The follow-up assessment in 2022 will measure the effectiveness of those initiatives.
13. The follow-up assessment in 2022 will also review those stations in the patrol group which were identified as having issues in the quality of police response and investigation. Mount Isa District was also undertaking a similar DFV intelligence assessment during 2022 with its follow-up assessment to be undertaken in 2023.

**Policing in The Torres Strait**

14. The Policing relationship with the First Nations communities in the Torres Strait is generally in a whole very good. Police work hard to build relationships and partnerships with members of the community for this reason. It is island life. Its life in a fishbowl for most Police so it's imperative they keep relationships strong and professional. Things like traffic tickets and other marine infringements can sometimes strain relationships, so warnings are usually provided first and if not adhered to fines issued. Despite that approach, there is a zero tolerance to DFV offending.
15. Initiatives such as Blue Light Discos, Blue Edge Program, participation in local touch football and sporting events all improve relationships between Police and community.
16. Police officers in the Torres Strait Patrol Group also are involved in the community in a private capacity volunteering in rural fire brigade, animal rescue, marine rescue, sporting clubs, and community events. Participation in the community in this way is just as important in improving police relationships in the community as



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are official engagements. All staff are heavily encouraged to partake in community activities whether is they are rostered or not.

*Challenges*

17. The greatest challenged faced by Police on Thursday Island is distance and the travel to attend to investigations and jobs. Travel is by boat, plane or helicopter. Planes can't land at night. If Rescue 700 can't be used, then boats are the only way to attend to a matter. Some Islands are up to 6 hours away and weather can be poor.
18. Due to logistics and distance, Police face difficulties with crime scene preservation. We are addressing this risk by educating our TSIPLOs in crime scene preservation.
19. Another Policing challenge is the ability to take detailed statements as to what has occurred, at the time when something has occurred. Sometimes you are speaking to an aggrieved party over a mobile phone with poor reception. Other times you are attending and arresting a perpetrator and you only have a small window to investigate the matter fully because of time constraints of helicopters and, sometimes, tides. You gather what you can and try to build a case and/or brief from what you have obtained from that interaction. This can lead to briefs of evidence being of a poorer standard and without the proper due diligence they would receive in a main stream setting.
20. A major challenge to DFV investigations which is unique to the Torres Strait relates to assisting an aggrieved who is reluctant to continue a DFV complaint. We don't see the incidents of reluctance from an aggrieved Bamaga Police Division where communities are mixed Torres Strait Islander / Aboriginal couples or Aboriginal couples. A reluctant aggrieved originates because often the aggrieved has relocated from his/her family island to his/her respondent's island. This creates a power imbalance in the relationship because the aggrieved has no immediate place of safety or support group on the island and will endure violence than if otherwise would be the case. When police attend a DFV incident on an island community where this dynamic is at play, the aggrieved will become reluctant to continue with a complaint to police for self-preservation. For her to cooperate with police and then be left at the home or elsewhere on the island heightens the risk

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towards her personal safety when police leave. It is far better for her to not engage with police, because when police depart, the risk of further violence to her is less.

21. There is very low acceptance of referrals by Torres Strait Islanders. We have a 95% to 100% offer of referral but a 99% rejection of offer. I'm not sure of the reasons why Islanders do not take up the referral service. Anecdotally I have heard it is because of fear of gossip or other family groups working with the support services and they are embarrassed to provide information. But I have no evidence of this been the case. In my experience, the services on Thursday Island do a wonderful job for the area they have to assist.

**Police Liaison Officers & Torres Strait Island Police Liaison Officers in the Torres Strait (PLO; TSIPLO)**

22. The roles of the PLOs and TSIPLOs differ in some ways and are similar in others. PLOs are utilised as an engagement and consultation option including identifying crime trends, community issues, liaison with elders and businesses and acting as a conduit for the passing of information between community and police. TSIPLOs, on the other hand, perform these functions to a degree, in addition to being utilised as a tactical intelligence gathering mechanism for incidents which are occurring in their respective communities. They can be commanded distally and are not under constant supervision of sworn police. TSIPLOs also identify offences in their communities and report the same back to sworn police and then assist with locating offenders when investigations are commenced.
23. There are 5 PLOs in the Torres Strait patrol group (3 on Thursday Island, 1 on Horn Island, 1 at Bamaga) and currently 31 TSIPLO positions are available to be operational.
24. Regular dedicated shifts for PLOs/TSIPLOs are only available on 3 islands (Badu, Boigu and Saibai) and this is because of intelligence based calls for service from these locations. There are occasions when other islands will work a later shift or a weekend shift, however that it rare. There is not always a PLO/TSIPLO on roster, they do not have 24hr coverage and do not get on call allowances.

  
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25. Policing in the Torres Strait could not be done without PLOs and TSIPLOs. It would be impossible to identify outer island offences and perform adequate follow ups in a timely manner to identify persons involved in incidents with them. PLOs and TSIPLOs are extremely effective, to a degree.

26. PLOs and TSIPLOs are hamstrung legislatively and operationally which can, at times, place them in a compromised position. Supervision and support for PLOs and TSIPLOs is at times also lacking. This can create a divide with sworn police. However, in saying this, PLOs and TSIPLOs appear appreciative of the support and guidance when it is provided and engaged enthusiastically when the opportunity arises. PLOs and TSIPLOs are paramount in the policing of the Torres Strait.



Anthony Moynihan

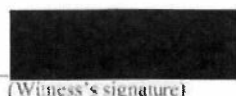
***Justices Act 1886***

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

- (1) This written statement by me dated and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 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 Thursday 1st day this 15th day of July 2022



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