



## QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE STATEMENT OF WITNESS



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

Statement no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: **15/07/2022****Statement of**Name of witness: **NONA Elsie**

Date of birth: [REDACTED]

Age: [REDACTED]

Occupation: **Torres Strait  
Island Police  
Liaison Officer****Police officer taking statement**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Reg. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Station: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement:**

Elsie NONA states:

**Current Role, Background and Previous Service History with the Queensland Police Service**

1. I am currently a Torres Strait Island Police Liaison Officer with the Queensland Police Service.
2. I was born in Brisbane where I completed my schooling and a year of tertiary studies in Community Development before moving to the Torres Strait. I speak English and Creole and have some understanding of fluent Kalaw Lagaw Ya, which is how I am able to communicate effectively to whomever I come into contact with.
3. I am a Mabuiag descendant from the Wagadagum tribe.
4. I have been employed by the Queensland Police Service since August 2009, Where I first was employed as a QATSIP (Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Police) which was then amalgamated to TSIPSO (Torres Strait Island Police Support Officer) to now TSIPLO (Torres Strait Island Police Liaison Officer).
5. I have an enormous amount of Torres Strait cultural knowledge which has been passed down to me by my parents and Elders, living on the Islands which has allowed me to practice cultural protocol daily.
6. I have worked on Badu Island in each of those capacities.
7. Badu Island is a small island in the Torres Strait group of islands and is a considerable distance from mainland Australia. There are approximately 700 - 800 permanent residents on the Island. There are approximately 300 high school aged children that attend boarding school back on the mainland and return only for school holidays. When they return, there are approximately 1100 people on the Island.
8. The nearest centre to Badu Island is Thursday Island Police Station and the closest major city is Cairns. The only way to travel to and from Badu Island

(Witness's signature)

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

## CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: NONA, Elsie

is light aircraft or boat. Most community members travel in the Torres Strait via dinghy. It is at least a two-hour boat ride from Badu Island to Horn Island, this also depends on weather (which is where the commercial airstrip is).

**Observations and experiences as a Police Liaison Officer**  
*Training Experience in my role*

9. When I commenced as a QATSIP officer, I undertook a two-week PLO training course at Oxley Academy in Brisbane 2009.
10. This course was designed for other PLO officers. That is, the course did not take into account the different role that QATSIP officers had in the Queensland Police Service. QATSIP officers had some powers that they could exercise. This information was not delivered during that course.
11. I was trained by State police officers Whilst under the direction of our OIC – Horn Island Station, in things such as QPrime and domestic and family violence (DFV) matters.
12. I have not been offered formal training since the amalgamation of the QATSIP role to a TSIPLO role.
13. I have undertaken my own training and reading independent of the Queensland Police Service.
14. I used to undertake training that was issued to us via IGNITE; however, no such training has been offered since the role was amalgamated.

**Role of a Torres Strait Police Liaison Officer**  
*Attending call outs*

15. As Badu Island is a remote Island in the Torres Strait, if an incident of any kind occurs on the Island, my role is to attend as a first response. I do not have any powers and I do not have any QPS issued accoutrements.
16. I attend those jobs either on my own or with my other colleagues.
17. We will immediately try to talk to those people involved in the incident and ensure that everyone involved is safe. That is our first and main priority.
18. If, for example, the offender wants to run and hide before the state police attend, we will not try and locate them as we have no powers to do anything with the offender afterwards.
19. When we used to have powers at QATSIP officers, we were able to at least issue tickets for minor offences and serve documents, including domestic violence applications on QPRIME.

*Involvement in Domestic and Family Violence matters*

20. I recall a specific incident where myself and another Staff member were called to attend a DFV matter on the Island.
21. Upon attendance at the house, we could hear screaming, so we decided we needed to immediately enter the house.
22. I approached a room in the house and when I entered, I saw a young woman and her infant child in the room. They appeared to be very scared and so I determined that I needed to get them out of the house.



(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations' signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **NONA, Elsie**


23. I told my partner Kearney at the time to ensure that we were able to leave the residence safely and we all went back to the police station on the island.
24. I had to lock the whole station to ensure that the offender could not enter the station.
25. Sometime later, he attended and was still screaming and calling us out of the station. We did not go.
26. State police did not attend for some hours – because of the time it takes to travel from Thursday Island to Badu Island.
27. There was nothing we could do once we were inside the police station.

***Rostering***

28. There are currently three TSIPLO based on Badu Island.
29. However, one of the three is currently working between St Paul's and Kuben communities as they currently do not have a permanent TSIPLO.
30. We are designated our shifts from the CCLO on Thursday Island.
31. I used to assist in the rosters but I no longer do.
32. We do Shift work.
33. As the Island is very small, everyone knows where I live, and I have lots of family and friends on the Island. If there is an incident, or the community needs my help, people will regularly call me on my personal mobile telephone, or they will attend at my house at all hours of the day and night. It is in my nature to help whenever I can so I will attend to those issues even if I am not on shift.

**Challenges you experience in your role**

34. I find that since the amalgamation with QATSIP officers and PLOs, and the reduction of the work that we do, there is little incentive in the role.
35. There is no real training offered, Although I along with other TSIPLO's have in the past travelled whether to Thursday Island, Cairns for Conferences, I recently attended a Conference in Brisbane.
36. Other TSIPLOs are not staying interested in the work so many are leaving.
37. This means that the communities do not have TSIPLOs on the Islands and help for the state police is difficult in situations where something is happening and there is no one on the Islands.
38. Many TSIPLOs do not feel like they are being developed in their roles and they are leaving because of that, also taking into consideration that most TSIPLO's are family to most of the community members and residents, so therefore this can be an emotional roller-coaster and effect TSIPLO's mentally.
39. I have been made aware that Thursday Island State Police Officers and Administration staff are given free family flights to Cairns and Brisbane once a year, And yearly Bonus's, but there are no incentives like that offered to TSIPLOs.

 **What assistance could improve police relationships with the community?**

(Witness's signature)

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

## CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: NONA, Elsie

40. As someone who is well respected in my community, I think that there should be more interaction with the TSIPLOs when those new officers start in the Torres Strait.
41. This is to encourage the young officers particularly, to understand our culture.
42. There are some young officers who do not know how to speak to members of my community and sometimes they appear to be rude to my community as they do not understand our protocols.
43. I always try to ensure that both officers and members of my community understand each other and that they get along and work with each other.
44. I know that the state police are very busy; however, I believe that they should make more of an effort to attend Badu Island for social reasons, just not official police business. What I mean is, if the school is having a carnival, state police should try and attend and interact with the community without having to attend to jobs. This would allow officers and the community to understand and work with each other better.
45. The police station on Badu Island is well equipped so officers could spend overnight here and talk to people freely.

*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 15/07/2022 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 4 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signed at Badu Island. this 15 day of July, 2022  
(place) (day) (month) (year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Witness's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
 Commissioner for Declarations' signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of police officer  
 preparing statement)