

INQUIRY INTO THE RETIREMENT OF THE FORMER COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IN GIBRALTAR

FIFTH WITNESS STATEMENT OF RETIRED SUPERINTENDENT PAUL RICHARDSON

1. I, Paul Richardson, make this fifth statement in response to the Chairman's ruling of 5 February 2025 and the chronology from CTI appended to it. I hope it provides helpful clarification.

Annex para 6 (and 24)

2. It was I, not my solicitor, who selected the relevant WhatsApp messages for the period 14 February 2019 to 9 June 2020. I adopted an end date of 9 June 2020 as that was Mr McGrail's last day with the Royal Gibraltar Police. I provided these messages to my solicitor in a file called *WhatsApp Chats Curated* for onward disclosure to the Inquiry. My solicitor sent them to the Solicitor to the Inquiry (STI) on 15 June 2023. I thought that STI would have disclosed them to the other Core Participants. I expanded the end date to 30th June 2020 in response to a request on 14 November 2024 from STI.

Ruling para 13

3. The second sentence of paragraph 13 of the Chairman's ruling of 5 February 2025 notes:

*It appears that Mr McGrail and Mr Richardson used their personal phones (ending *4000 and *9135 respectively) as the primary means of communication between them on work related matters.*

In fact, the primary means of communication between us was always face to face. At Paragraph 13 of my second statement dated 13 June 2023 I explained:

I briefed Mr McGrail frequently from the outset. Our offices were laid out so as to encourage cross fertilisation and exchange of ideas and his office was only about twenty metres away from mine along a corridor shared with the other superintendents. During the day he passed my office frequently and often used to put his head around the door to talk. These exchanges were not noted. After the arrests of the four suspects in May 2019, Operation Delhi was discussed at weekly meetings attended by officers in the Senior Management Team.

4. The other means of communication between us, in no particular order, were:
 - (i) regular, often lengthy, but not always daily, more formal meetings face to face, including SMT meetings;
 - (ii) internal telephone calls on our office landlines;
 - (iii) e-mail correspondence, in the usual way;

- (iv) WhatsApp messages to and from our work mobile telephones; and
- (v) WhatsApp messages to and from our personal mobile telephones.

5. There were many weeks without exchanges of WhatsApp messages between my personal phone and Mr McGrail's. For instance, looking at the full log of such messages in the first half of 2020 [E264-7], I note that there were no such messages between:-

- 1 January and 17 February
- 19 February and 8 March
- 10 March and 8 April
- 10 April and 29 April
- 1 May and 21 May

Annex para 9

6. I agree that, as previously advised, the message I sent to Mr McGrail on 12 May 2020 informing him that the warrants were about to be executed must have been from my work mobile to his.

My statement dated 3 December 2024 para 7 [E262]

7. May I please correct one word in the final sentence of paragraph 7 of my last statement [E262]? I have been reminded that not 'all' these messages had already been disclosed two weeks earlier. The exchanges in red at Exhibit 1 of my fourth statement dated 3.12.24 could not have been sent previously in November 2024. They were added following STI's letter dated 26 November 2024 requesting a full log of messages for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020. The messages in red on page E264 were initially excluded from the disclosure provided on 15 June 2023 on grounds of relevance. They concern the appointment of an officer to Force Intelligence and arrangements for me to visit my mother. The messages in red on pages E266-7 were initially excluded from the disclosure provided on 15 June 2023 as they fell outside the cutoff point that I had set of 9 June 2020.

Four messages in July 2019

8. I have been back through all the messages on my personal mobile telephone to check, yet again, to ensure that I have not missed anything. I have found four messages in July 2019, in the midst of other messages about a different police operation, which I missed in June 2023, which relate to Operation Delhi and which I now attach to this statement as Exhibit 1.

I believe that the facts set out in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several sharp, angular strokes.

Signed.....

Dated...18 March 2025.....