

Witness Name: HAYLEY DAWN WILLIAMS

Statement No: WITN0417002

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2026

## THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

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### SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF HAYLEY DAWN WILLIAMS

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I, HAYLEY DAWN WILLIAMS, will say as follows: -

1. This second witness statement is made to assist the Nottingham Inquiry (the “**Inquiry**”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request number 2 dated 27 March 2026 (the “**Second Request**”).
2. I have been asked if Leigh Sanders referred the issue of media leaks to the Professional Standards Department.
3. My response is that throughout the duration of Operation Hendrix, Leigh Sanders never directly referred any concerns about media leaks to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) and certainly never spoke to me about any such concerns. The first time I heard that VC’s parents had raised concerns that information shared with police officers about VC’s nationality had been leaked to the press was when I heard Leigh Sanders’ evidence to the Inquiry.

4. I would have expected Leigh to raise such a sensitive matter with me directly but he did not. I have also now reviewed the digital policy log [NGPF0005635] of DI Gareth Harding who was the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) for Operation Glint, the investigation into suspected media links. There is no mention in DI Harding's log of any referral from Major Crime in relation to the concerns raised by VC's family and therefore I do not believe these matters have ever formed part of the Operation Glint Strategy.
5. I have been asked who commenced Operation Glint, to explain its scope and my involvement in Operation Glint.
6. Operation Glint was actually triggered when the Corporate Communications Team in Nottinghamshire Police realised that information was in the possession of the media on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023 that had not been formally released to them by Nottinghamshire Police. I was informed of this issue by (then) DCC Steve Cooper who was my direct line manager, and who was also the line manager of Lyn Heath who was Head of Corporate Communications.
7. As a result of receiving this information from DCC Cooper I asked my Detective Inspector on PSD, DI Gareth Harding, to be SIO on an investigation (subsequently named Operation Glint) into who had accessed the leaked material from Niche.
8. PSD investigations only tend to specifically have SIOs when the conduct under investigation triggers the threshold for possible criminality in addition to misconduct.
9. The normal procedure when assessing new referrals into PSD was that my Deputy (then DCI Andy Reynolds) would act as the initial Appropriate Authority (AA) to severity assess whether there was enough readily available information to suggest that an individual may have committed misconduct or gross misconduct.
10. DCI Reynolds would then write up his decision and appoint an investigator.

11. The nominated DC or Police Staff Investigator would then agree the terms of reference for the complaint/conduct referral with the AA and carry out an investigation.
12. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigating officer's (IO) report, which would contain a summary of the evidence and their recommendation as to whether the officer/staff member had carried out behaviour that could amount to misconduct or gross misconduct, would be sent to me as the post investigation AA and I would make a determination as to whether there was a case to answer and, if so, whether formal misconduct procedures should take place.
13. As the determining AA, I have to remain entirely independent of the investigation and therefore I have no involvement in the strategy or the investigation itself. Instead, the IO is normally supported by their line manager.
14. As Operation Glint was set up in relation to a potential leak of sensitive police information to media outlets which could result in criminal proceedings, rather than just relying on the investigator's Sergeant to support them, I also appointed DI Gareth Harding (CCU lead) as SIO in order to set the strategy for the investigation, provide policy decisions and supervise the investigation.
15. As a result of providing evidence for the Inquiry I have been provided with a copy of DI Harding's digital strategy log (NGPF0005635) which comprehensively sets out the scope of the inquiry.
16. Policy decision 16 of this log sets out the scope of the investigation as determined by DI Harding (SIO) as follows:

*I have directed the Op Glint investigation team to focus on certain information (listed below) and how the media came to be in possession of it. I have done so in order to maintain the focus of the investigation. This does not exclude us from examining other concerns as they arise.*

*Having had time to assess the various potential leaks and the likely sources of these it has become clear that in an investigation of such size it must be recognised that a large number of officers and partners have access to information. It must also be recognised that an incident of the magnitude of Op Hendrix also resulted in a large number of witnesses amongst the general populace. Many of these will have made themselves known to the investigation team but others may not. Some of these witnesses will have seen, some in detail, aspects of the events that make up Op Hendrix. We cannot control whether they have shared that with others. Indeed, we should not be critical if they have. Many will have witnessed some graphic and traumatic events and part of their healing process will be to discuss/share this.*

*I have decided that these four pieces of information are those which are less likely to have originated from outside of policing and for this reason will be the focus of Op Glint.*

- The suspect's name and/or aliases*
- The suspect refusing to answer questions in interview*
- The fact that the suspect was wanted for an FTA from September 2022*
- The suspect's attendance at Thames House, Millbank (MIS) in 2021.*

17. Having appointed DI Harding as SIO for the investigation, I was able to step back and carry out the role of AA independently. I was not involved in any direct briefings or strategy meetings about Operation Glint from that point.

18. I did however give my line manager, DCC Cooper, a high level briefing, provided to me by the IO DC Lee Keeling, in order for him to consider whether to suspend PC Matthew Gell following an audit which showed him to have accessed material concerning VC unlawfully, and to have shared an extremely distasteful text from a shift WhatsApp Group with people outside of the organisation.

19. Once DC Cooper had made the decision to suspend PC Gell while under investigation, DC Keeling provided me with a monthly update in writing which I shared with DCC Cooper in order for him to consider whether ongoing suspension was still appropriate.

20. The day to day supervision of Operation Glint remained with DI Harding; however, there was an incident that I will describe below which caused me to speak to the IO, DC Keeling in DI Harding's presence.
21. I have been asked how and when I was told about the involvement of Eliot Meynell in the WhatsApp Group named 'Section;' whether I had any discussions with other officers about PC Meynell's involvement and whether I had any concerns about this.
22. My response is that, although I can no longer recall precise dates as I no longer have access to my laptop or my day books I distinctly recall that in the early stages of Operation Glint and certainly well before I completed my AA determination in September 2023, I was called into CC Kate Meynell's office. No one else was present.
23. CC Meynell told me that her son, PC Eliot Meynell, was part of the WhatsApp Group that contained the inappropriate message authored by PC Ash Small and subsequently shared by PC Matt Gell. This was a surprise to me as I hadn't been made aware of Eliot Meynell's involvement by the IO DC Keeling who was working directly to DI Harding on the investigation.
24. CC Meynell told me that she expected Eliot to be treated the same as any other officer on the WhatsApp Group and not to be treated any differently just because he was her son. I specifically remember her saying words to the effect of 'If Eliot has got anything to come then so be it.' I assured her that he would not receive special treatment.
25. I went straight back to the Counter Corruption Office and informed DC Keeling, in the presence of DI Harding, that Eliot was on the WhatsApp group. There may have been other witnesses to this conversation as I remember speaking to DC Keeling at his desk rather than taking him into a side office but I cannot remember who was present other than DC Keeling and DI Harding.

26. To my surprise, DC Keeling told me that he already knew about Eliot but stated that Eliot had been on a skiing holiday abroad at the time of the incident and the first sign of him interacting with the WhatsApp Group was some days later after the message had disappeared due to the settings on the group.
27. DC Keeling told me that he didn't believe Eliot had seen the offensive message or interacted with the group while abroad as his first message some days later was to ask the group whether anyone had been arrested in relation to the attacks on June 13<sup>th</sup>.
28. I can remember being surprised that DC Keeling or DI Harding had not told me previously about Eliot's presence on the WhatsApp Group. I felt professionally embarrassed that I had had to find out about it from the Chief Constable. In hindsight though, DC Keeling and DI Harding were acting correctly under the Police Regulations and keeping me out of the investigation.
29. Nevertheless, I reiterated to them that when they spoke to Eliot, the fact that he was CC Meynell's son should not make them treat him any differently to anyone else on the group.
30. I did feel however that this was significant information and I shared it with DCC Cooper verbally at one of our regular catch ups. He checked with me that CC Meynell was not expecting any preferential treatment for Eliot and I confirmed that was the case and that she had not tried to influence me but instead had been transparent with me when she became aware of Eliot's involvement.
31. The only other person outside of the Counter Corruption Unit I ever had a conversation with about Eliot and the WhatsApp was ACC Griffin. I can't remember the date but it was after I left PSD as it took place in my Operation Perth office so it will have been after October 2023.
32. ACC Griffin and I were the only people in the room and he said words to the effect of,

*“This is not ACC Griffin to Detective Superintendent Williams, this is a Rob to Hayley conversation. When did Kate know that Eliot was part of the WhatsApp Group?”*

33. I repeated to him exactly what I had told DCC Cooper and I remember he looked concerned and asked me if I was sure and I said that I was.
34. I remember thinking what a strange conversation it was but I also felt that I was not supposed to question it and would not have been told why he had raised it even if I had asked. Of course, now I wish I had at least asked.
35. I do not remember making any notes of this conversation but I believe I may have told a colleague about what ACC Griffin said to me some time after as it was bothering me. To this day I don't know what ACC Griffin's motivation for asking the question of me was.
36. I have been asked what my view of the adequacy of the investigation report into PC Matthew Gell was; whether I had concerns about the thoroughness of the investigation; whether I had concerns about the findings of the investigations and, if I did have concerns, what I did to act on them.
37. My response is that there were two parallel investigations into PC Gell. I had no involvement in the criminal investigation which was led by DI Gareth Harding from CCU as the SIO and who was line managed by the Deputy Head of PSD at the time, DCI Andy Reynolds. I am sure they would have made me aware in broad terms of when the criminal investigation ended due to no evidence being found that PC Gell had shared information with the media.
38. The terms of reference for the misconduct inquiry, which began at the same time as the criminal investigation but continued after the criminal investigation had concluded, were agreed between the investigating officer DC Lee Keeling and the initial AA DCI Reynolds and are contained in DC Keeling's report. From reviewing the Investigator's Report [NGPF0005530] for the purposes of the Inquiry I can state that the allegation under investigation was as follows:

**Allegation 1:** *“It is alleged that PC Matthew Gell between the 13/06/2023 and 16/06/2023 within England, while acting as a public officer namely a Police Constable with Nottinghamshire Police, wilfully and without excuse misconducted himself in way which amounted to an abuse of the public’s trust in the office holder by accessing data and other material held on police systems relating to the primary subject of Operation HENDRIX namely Valdo Calocane having no legitimate reason for doing so.*

*It is further alleged you have further shared that information with other third parties for an unlawful purpose.*

*Operation HENDRIX being the high-profile murders of Barnaby Webber, Grace O’Malley-Kumar, Ian Coates, and the Attempted Murders of three other individuals on the 13/06/2023.”*

*Contrary to Common Law and the Standards of Professional Behaviour as set out in Schedule 2 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020.*

39. In terms of the adequacy of the investigation report and what I did about any concerns I had, I say the following.

40. I believe the evidence in the inquiry to date has conflated two matters, namely the WhatsApp group with the extremely distasteful message sent by PC Ash Small, and the media leak about VC’s visit to Thames House, the date of the FTA warrant, the fact that VC was wanted on FTA warrant since Sept 2022, and his various aliases which were subject to investigation under Operation Glint as described previously at paragraph 16.

41. The WhatsApp message sent by PC Small, unchallenged by any member of the ‘Section’ WhatsApp Group and shared outside of the organisation by PC Gell, was discovered when PC Gell’s phone was seized under criminal powers under Operation Glint but ultimately did not prove that PC Gell had shared intelligence with the media.

42. I understand that DI Harding chose to deal with the WhatsApp group with words of advice to PC Small because, distasteful and offensive as the message was, it did not contain official operational information and did not attract criminal powers. DI Harding was therefore not in a position to seize PC Small's phone or that of anyone in the WhatsApp Group. I do not know if DI Harding's words of advice extended to other members of the WhatsApp Group but I would be extremely disappointed if he had not spoken to them with their supervisor.
43. In hindsight, I believe this is why there is no mention of the members of the WhatsApp group on DC Keeling's final investigation report as Operation Glint was about the media leak regarding VC's attendance at Thames House, the fact that VC had aliases and was wanted on warrant since September 2022 and the fact that he had replied 'no comment' in interview, not the WhatsApp Group which had essentially already been previously informally resolved by DI Harding with the exception of the external sharing of the message by PC Gell.
44. I do remember though first having concerns that the IO, DC Keeling, and I were on different pages when it came to the seriousness of PC Gell's behaviour, when he suggested in one of the monthly suspension reviews that PC Gell should be allowed to come back to work while the investigation continued. I remember overruling this as entirely inappropriate given the serious nature of the allegation and instead I recommended to DCC Cooper that PC Gell remain suspended. I recall that DCC Cooper agreed with me and extended PC Gell's suspension.
45. The next issue arose when I was 'chasing' the completion of the investigation report and asked DC Keeling how he was getting on. I remember him telling me that he was almost complete and that he would be recommending that PC Gell be referred to the Reflective Practice Review Process (RPRP) as an outcome.

46. I remember being absolutely astounded at this. RPRP is essentially a non disciplinary process which involves the officer and their supervisor reflecting on what they had done in order to ensure they learn from it and don't do it again. It is not considered to be a disciplinary sanction. I had instead expected DC Keeling to recommend a fast track (accelerated) hearing for gross misconduct in front of the Chief Constable as from what I knew of the case, there appeared to be enough evidence to suggest that on the balance of probabilities the conduct of the officer concerned constituted gross misconduct, and it was in the public interest for the officer concerned to cease to be a police officer without delay.
47. I was now conflicted, as I remembered that I am not allowed as AA to influence the IO's findings prior to submission to me, albeit after receiving the report, as the AA I can overrule the findings. This would clearly have potential to undermine the case and any diligent Police Federation representative would point the Chair of any Misconduct panel to the IO's original findings and argue that the AA was being too harsh.
48. As my view and that of the IO were at opposite ends of the misconduct spectrum, I decided that the most ethical and transparent thing to do would be to seek legal advice prior to the IO submitting his final report to me.
49. I therefore asked David Ring, force solicitor, to review the IO report and any associated relevant material and provide DC Keeling and I with formal legal advice as to whether PC Gell's behaviour amounted to Gross Misconduct, Misconduct or an alternative disposal.
50. I was extremely careful in my interactions with David Ring not to imply that I wanted him to suggest the harsher sanction. Given the difference in my view and that of the IO I genuinely wanted an independent legal opinion.
51. David Ring returned his legal advice and said that the evidence in the report meant that a misconduct panel would be able to find that PC Gell's actions

- amounted to Gross Misconduct. I therefore asked DC Keeling to take the legal advice into account before submitting his final report with his findings.
52. I was therefore astounded when DC Keeling chose to ignore the legal advice and instead stated in his report that PC Gell's behaviour was misconduct only. Even though I subsequently overruled his finding under Regulation 23 and, reverting to the legal advice, determined that a panel could find that PC Gell's behaviour amounted to Gross Misconduct, we were unable to deal with the matter as an accelerated hearing as the Police (Conduct) Regulations state that such a course of action must be recommended by the IO.
53. This meant that instead of appearing in front of CC Meynell within 28 days, PC Gell was referred to a misconduct panel with an independent Chair some 4 months later where he was found to have committed Gross Misconduct and received a final written warning for 2 years.
54. Despite the fact that Op Glint had been set up to investigate a potential media leak, the fact that PC Gell had shared the offensive text message still formed part of the misconduct proceedings.
55. Another inadequacy I found in the report is that the IO had not sought the views of the bereaved families and survivors on the WhatsApp message and the systems breach. Distasteful as it may be to some, in hindsight I believe for completeness, we should have also made VC, or his family as his representatives, aware of the data breach too.
56. I mentioned in my first statement that it would potentially be seen as an abuse of process to get evidential statements from interested parties after I had already concluded that there was enough evidence to reach the threshold for a gross misconduct hearing, however I made it clear to the IO and to DI Harding that I was disappointed that this had not been considered by them.
57. This is one of the reasons, in the form of words I put together with the Op Hendrix FLA [NGPF0009729], that I suggested that the bereaved family

members and survivors may be able to, with the permission of the panel chair, provide statements as to how they had been affected by PC Gell's behaviour should he be found to have breached the standards of professional behaviour to the level of Gross Misconduct. The chair could have taken those statements into consideration when deciding upon sanction, along with the character references for PC Gell provided by the Police Federation. It was my way of trying to ensure that the families and survivors had a voice in the misconduct proceedings.

58. At this stage I wish to clarify a point I make in the same email to DCI Gould when I state that the hearing is likely to be held in private as it is before the criminal trial.

59. I have no power to decide whether misconduct hearings are in public or private. That decision is solely down to the Chair of the panel. The only reason I was suggesting that it may be in private is because whenever there are misconduct hearings linked to ongoing criminal proceedings we always use an abundance of caution to ensure that nothing that is reported in the misconduct hearing could undermine the ongoing criminal proceedings in any way. As it is, the Chair decided that the hearing would be held in public.

60. I have covered in my first statement my disappointment that the families and survivors were not informed of PC Gell's hearing and their right to provide statements and attend as had been agreed by myself, DCI Gould and the Gold Commander ACC Griffin. There were 4 months between the form of words and delivery being signed off by Gold and PC Gell's hearing. The excuse proffered that it was 'never the right time' is frankly woeful and I would be embarrassed to expect the families and survivors to accept that as a genuine reason for them not being told about the misconduct and their rights as interested parties.

61. I wish to reinforce that this was, in my opinion, the wrong decision by the SIO Leigh Sanders and also re-iterate the fact that I should have been told about his decision. I have heard his evidence when he tries to put the responsibility

for the families and survivors not being passed the agreed form of words back on to PSD and in relation to that I say the following.

62. In my email to DCI Gould dated 15 September 2023 [NGPF0010695], I mention Operation Magpie and say that this should not happen again. This relates to a PSD Operation that T/DSU Leigh Sanders, then operating at his substantive rank of DCI, led before I joined the PSD department. There were many aspects to Op Magpie but probably the most shocking was that Nottinghamshire Police officers in a WhatsApp group wrote distasteful comments about two black children who were murdered in separate incidents in Nottingham and London. T/DSU Sanders led the PSD investigation and a number of officers were disciplined with at least one being sacked. In that case T/DSU Sanders had decided not to tell the families of the murdered children about the comments and did not tell them about the hearing.
63. A considerable time later one of the murdered children's mothers wrote, through a third party, to CC Meynell and asked for an explanation as to why she had not been told about this matter and had had to hear about it from a member of the public who had attended the hearing.
64. CC Meynell forwarded the email to me because by coincidence, I had been the SIO on this child's murder some years earlier when I was on EMSOU. She asked me to explain to the child's mother why she had not been informed about the comments about her child and subsequent misconduct hearing.
65. I wrote back to CC Meynell, and I believe I copied T/DSU Sanders in. I explained that the misconduct had taken place several years after the murder and it had in fact been T/DSU Sanders decision to withhold the information from the child's family. I advocated that he should explain himself to the child's mother himself but I did suggest that he take the family liaison officer, DC Raj Johal, who had an excellent professional relationship with the mother, with him in order that the mother be as supported as possible when she heard what would no doubt be distressing information.

66. CC Meynell agreed and essentially ordered T/DSU Sanders to explain his decision making to the child's mother. He replied that he couldn't remember why he made that decision and would have to get access to his policy books in PSD to understand it before making contact. Arrangements were made for him to do this. To date, I am not aware that he carried out CC Meynell's instruction to contact the family.
67. It is exactly because both DCI Claire Gould (who was working on PSD with T/DSU Sanders at the time of Operation Magpie) and I knew of T/DSU Sanders previous decision not to keep interested parties informed in sensitive cases that could cause reputational damage, that we both refer to it not being allowed to happen again in our email chain in which we agree the form of words for the family in relation to the PC Gell Misconduct. There is absolutely no reason or excuse in my opinion for T/DSU Sanders to ignore the instruction of the Gold Commander and not tell the bereaved families and survivors or at least to have informed me that he did not want to tell them so we could have had that discussion with Gold and I could have offered to work with the FLOs separately or to use PSD staff to pass the information.
68. I did not follow this up, because I was moved to another department within weeks of completing my determination on PC Gell and agreeing the form of words and had no further involvement in any PSD matters from the day I left the department so I did not know that the agreed form of words had not been passed on.
69. In relation to the Special Constable who had viewed body worn footage including that of victims Grace and Barney I say this.
70. I referred PC Skenderaj for a full PSD investigation after he emailed me directly to say that he had viewed some footage out of curiosity. Due to the fact that I had made the referral I could not act as independent AA in this matter and, in any case, the matter was referred to an accelerated misconduct hearing in which the Deputy Chief Constable acts as AA. At the time I made DCI Gould (FLA) aware of this case the investigation report was not complete

and had not been sent to the DCC so while I knew it was underway I was unable to provide as much information to DCI Gould at that stage so I can fully understand why notification of that matter to the families and survivors might be delayed until after the formal finding was made. In my opinion, it should still have happened soon after.

71. In relation to the Police Staff member who illegally accessed records relating to the Nottingham attacks and other major inquiries, I believe that investigation was still ongoing when I left PSD in October 2023 so again it was more of a 'heads up' to Claire that unfortunately more bad news was coming for the families but I was not in a position when I wrote to her about PC Gell to agree a final form of words about the Staff Member or about PC Skenderaj. I did, however, copy the Deputy Head of PSD DCI Andy Reynolds in so that he could continue speaking to DCI Gould when these matters were completed. I have not had any contact with DCI Reynolds about what happened after I left and he became temporary Head of PSD.

72. I have been asked if I was aware that no audit of body worn video and CCTV footage had been performed and whether, in my view such an audit should have been carried out.

73. My response is that I am aware that, having received a direct referral from me regarding PC Skenderaj, the CCU team carried out a full audit of his access to the BWV and CCTV relating to the Nottingham attacks.

74. In relation to whether there should be a general audit of BWV and CCTV in relation to the Nottingham attacks I say the following.

75. Nottinghamshire Police's CCU is a relatively small team and at the time of the attacks it contained 3 detectives supported by 2 police staff investigators, an analyst and 2 researchers. With the exception of the analyst, the police staff were retired police officers who had returned to work part time. Unfortunately, the workload for them was consistently extremely high and investigations

involving the dismissal and potential imprisonment of Police Officers and staff are inherently complex, detailed, and resource intensive.

76. On the day of the Nottingham attacks I immediately agreed to release my most experienced CCU detective, DC Fiona McVey, to be the lead FLO for Grace's family. I had worked with DC McVey for years previously on homicide and subsequently on CID, Public Protection and PSD and I knew she had all the qualities and experience to be a FLO on such a high profile investigation.
77. This meant that DC McVey kept her existing workload and worked regular overtime in order to give Grace's family the service that they were fully entitled to expect from their FLO. I also released another PSD detective (outside of the CCU department), DC Gill Cutts to help DC McVey to support Grace's family with whatever they needed.
78. On days when DC Cutts was not available, for example when Grace's family had concerns about property going missing from the university, I sent another of my CCU Detectives, DC Lee Keeling, who was the IO for the PC Gell case, to accompany DC McVey so that she would not be dealing with matters alone.
79. I was unable to give DC McVey any new CCU cases as she simply did not have the capacity and I had a duty of care to her to ensure she was not overworked. That said, DC McVey never complained and in fact wholeheartedly embraced her role as the FLO for Grace's family with pride and compassion while balancing it with her ongoing CCU cases.
80. Even before DC McVey's abstraction, CCU had to adopt a pragmatic and proportionate approach to investigations and was almost predominately intelligence led i.e. if a direct referral is received that an individual has accessed something they should not have (e.g. PC Skenderaj) they will review everything relevant he has looked at, including BWV as this was specifically cited in the referral.

81. In the referral from corporate communications that the information that VC had attended Thames House had been leaked to the media, the audit focused on who had accessed that NICHE record. The audit brought back a list of paycodes which then had to be sent off to another department outside of PSD to establish what name related to each paycode. The investigating officer had to establish what department each person worked in and whether they were likely to have a lawful purpose for accessing that information. For example, I believe DI Harding made a policy decision that he would not investigate any members of the Homicide Unit who had viewed the Niche entry in question, as they are likely to have a lawful purpose. It does not rule out the fact that someone on the Homicide Unit with a legitimate purpose for accessing the material could have been the leak to the press but DI Harding had to put parameters on the search in order to get the numbers down to a manageable level to run the more detailed audits on. It is not ideal but it is what happens to stop CCUs nationally grinding to a halt.

82. Returning to the question of whether a full audit of BWV and CCTV should have been done. I think in an ideal world it would have been the right thing to do. Practically though, there were hundreds and hundreds of pieces of BWV and CCTV footage. Therefore to go through the process I have very basically described above without actually having any direct intelligence that a particular piece of footage had been accessed unlawfully, would require a separate operation to be set up, perhaps with mutual aid from other police forces in the region as there are only a handful of people in each force with the level of security clearance and experience required for such CCU work.

83. I have reflected on whether I should have asked my line manager, DCC Cooper, or the Gold Commander, ACC Griffin, to ask the region for additional resources for this. However I believe their first question would have quite legitimately been 'What makes you think it is necessary?.' In reality, PSD only received one report of an officer unlawfully accessing footage and that officer's activity was thoroughly audited resulting in him being barred from working in any policing environment.

84. It may be useful for the Inquiry to have a view from the NPCC national lead for Counter Corruption on whether such a widespread review is practical as through regional and national meetings we always tried to ensure CCUs were operating within similar parameters. It may be helpful to know if other forces adopt a more robust approach to CCTV/BWV audits in cases of national significance and if that is the preferred approach moving forward then forces may need to increase staffing in CCUs accordingly together with the continual training and reinforcement that all officers and staff get about not accessing material without a true policing purpose.

85. I have been asked if I have any further reflections based on the information given above.

86. In PC Gell's evidence he said he had not received any inputs or training in relation to WhatsApp groups. In DC Keeling's IO report there is reference to a document which lists all the training PC Gell had over a 9 year period in relation to PSD, Data Protection and Handling of Information College of Policing E-Learning. I can confirm that the College of Policing PSD E learning is a national package which specifically references WhatsApp groups and gives examples and case studies.

87. I note that DC Keeling's final IO report into PC Gell does not contain details of the members of the WhatsApp Group other than PC Small and PC Gell. There is no mention anywhere of PC Eliot Meynell. If I had not been told directly by CC Meynell that her son was part of the WhatsApp group then I would not have become aware of this fact from any of the other reports or material sent to me by the investigator.

88. While I have not watched all of the oral evidence to date, I do not remember anyone making reference to a Professionalising Investigations Programme Level 4 (PIP 4) strategic advisor. The college of policing website describes the role of a PIP 4 strategic advisor as providing independent advice, support

and review for high profile, complex, serious and organised or major crime responsibilities. The PIP 4 carries out an entirely different role to the SIO and the Gold Commander and the key responsibilities include:

- a) Providing advice and support for the overall strategic management of investigations to ensure that they are conducted within the level of quality and strategic oversight required by chief officers.
- b) Providing advice and support to the senior investigating officer (SIO), acting as a critical friend to ensure that the SIO can test, check and take advice on their decision making during the investigation.
- c) Identifying, monitoring and escalating risks where the complexity or profile of an investigation may impact upon the resilience of the SIO and/or the force's reputation.
- d) Reviewing operational and strategic aspects of investigations to provide additional capacity and expertise to investigative teams.
- e) Acting as link between the SIO and gold command to ensure that all issues relating to strategic, operational and resource requirements of the investigation are presented to gold command.
- f) Reporting to gold commander on the quality of investigations to enable chief officers to maintain visible oversight on how investigations are being conducted.
- g) Developing and implementing a communications strategy for investigations, acting as a public face of the investigation to support the SIO in achieving the aims of the investigation.
- h) Co-ordinating and managing partners and external stakeholders to support the aims of the investigation.

- i) Developing and sharing best practice with other organisations on investigation techniques and management to enhance practice and assist in the development of policy.
- j) Conducting peer reviews into investigations and analysing trends in resource requirements.

89. I believe the deployment of a PIP 4 strategic advisor was necessary on Operation Hendrix. It would have removed the requirement for CC Meynell to be involved in the communication strategy, particularly after the point she became aware of her son's involvement in the 'section' WhatsApp Group. T/DSU Sanders could have also expected the PIP 4 to manage the liaison with PSD and subsequent dissemination of misconduct information to the families, and also to represent him at Gold Groups and Stakeholder meetings, leaving him, as SIO, more time to focus on the investigation itself.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe the content of this statement to be true. I understand that proceedings 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 of its truth.

Signed:

**GRO-B**

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2026

## Index to Second Witness Statement of Hayley Williams

No.	URN	Document Description
1	NGPF0005635	Digital Policy Document, Re: OP Glint, NGPF
2	NGPF0009729	Email from Robert Griffin [NGPF] to Hayley Williams [NGPF], Claire Gould [NGPF], Stephen O'Connell [NGPF], and others, re: Op Hendrix/Op Glint
3	NGPF0010695	Email from Hayley Williams [NGPF] to Claire Gould [NGPF], Re: PSD - Sensitive