

IN THE UNDERCOVER POLICING INQUIRY

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WITNESS STATEMENT OF TAMSIN ALLEN

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I, Tamsin Allen, of Bindmans LLP 275 Grays Inn Road WILL SAY

1. I am a senior member/partner of Bindmans LLP and I am one of the Recognised Legal Representatives in the Undercover Policing Inquiry. I co-ordinate the group of lawyers acting for non police/state core participants (NPSCPs). I make this statement on behalf of the group in response to a request from the Chair. Its contents are from my own knowledge except where I indicate otherwise.
2. I attended the hearing of the police restriction order applications on 20 and 21 November 2017 on behalf of the RLR group in my co-ordinator capacity. The group instructed Ruth Brander and Phillippa Kaufmann QC to advance the NPSCP arguments at the hearing.
3. During day 2 of the hearing, I was told by Eveline Lubbers who is a researcher working with the Undercover Research Group, that HN297, whose cover name Rick Gibson was released by the Inquiry over the summer, had in fact had relationships while undercover. Her understanding was that there were up to four relationships, although she was sure that there were two. She indicated that she had been in touch with people who knew about

these relationships as a matter of fact. I passed this information to counsel who was on her feet at the time. Neither she nor I knew of this information previously.

4. Following this, on 21 November during day 2 of the hearing Ms Kaufmann and the chair had the following exchange (at page 144 of day 2 of the transcript)

*MS KAUFMANN: This is another officer who is deceased. His  
6 cover identity is known, Rick Gibson. The risk  
7 assessment in relation to interference with family life  
8 rights is low. Could be managed without significant  
9 assistance. That is on page 16, tab 62.*

*10 Our understanding is that this officer did in fact  
11 engage in at least two intimate relationships, which  
12 obviously puts a very different complexion on matters.*

*13 THE CHAIR: Indeed it does.*

*14 Is that because the cover name already known from  
15 sources other than the Inquiry has produced this  
16 information?*

*17 MS KAUFMANN: I assume that is the case.*

*18 Yes, it is the case.*

*19 So that puts a very different complexion on matters.*

*20 THE CHAIR: I agree it does*

There was then the following exchange [ pages 145-7 of day 2 of the transcript]

*THE CHAIR: Can I ask whether the two individuals to whom  
9 you have, by inference, referred are willing to supply  
10 the Inquiry with short statements setting out what they*

11 know before I reach a final decision?

12 MS KAUFMANN: On this?

13 THE CHAIR: On this.

14 MS KAUFMANN: I would have to take some instructions on  
15 that.

16 We would need to take some instructions on that.

17 THE CHAIR: Is that something you would be able to do

18 overnight, as in the other cases?

19 MS KAUFMANN: I will find out.

20 THE CHAIR: Yes. No hurry, just do it calmly and  
21 systematically.

5. At the hearing, I asked Ms Lubbers if we would be able to obtain evidence from the women concerned overnight and she said that would not be possible at this point in time and I relayed that information to counsel who confirmed to the Chair that we would need more time to take instructions.
6. The Chair then confirmed that if he received plausible statements from the two people referred to by Ms Kauffman, then the weight to be afforded to openness would be much greater in the case of HN297, and it was likely that the women and possibly the wider world would be told of the real identity. The Chair also said that if we were not able to provide these statements immediately then he may have to wait to make a final decision until he had heard from one or both of the people concerned [16-20 p147 day 2]. He indicated that if he were not to be provided with a statement he would not take it amiss but would welcome an explanation [4-6 p 148 day 2].
7. The purpose of this statement is to provide the explanation requested as to why we have not been able to obtain a statement from the women concerned at this stage, but to confirm the evidence we are aware of that

Rick Gibson was involved in sexual relationships with targets while undercover.

8. After the hearing I made some further enquiries. I spoke to Ms Lubbers and I now understand that the information Ms Lubbers told me about came largely from Richard Chessum who has recently been awarded Core Participant status. Ms Lubbers said that she knew that Mr Chessum had in the past spoken to three women, and he had read the goodbye letter written by Rick Gibson (after he had been confronted and disappeared) to a fourth woman with whom he had been in a relationship. [I now understand that in fact Mr Chessum spoke to two of the women about their relationships with Rick Gibson and was aware of the fact of a relationship between Mr Gibson and a third woman because it was common knowledge at the time.](#)
9. Ms Lubbers has indicated that the situation is obviously very sensitive and, although URG has names or partial names for two of the women who had relationships with 'Rick Gibson' while he was undercover in the Troops Out Movement, she has not yet established any way to make contact with them and she is not aware of the name of the fourth woman, the one to whom Rick Gibson wrote a letter after he was confronted.
10. Ms Lubbers has explained to me that she is aware of the identity of one woman who was involved in Big Flame and had a relationship with Rick Gibson and she has been in contact with that woman through an intermediary. Prior to the hearing, this woman had indicated to Ms Lubbers through the intermediary that she did not want to be directly involved in assisting in any investigation into Rick Gibson and asked not to be contacted. Through the intermediary, she was asked after the hearing if she would give a short statement to the Inquiry but has not responded

11. Despite the fact that we have not yet been able to obtain direct evidence of the relationships, as the Inquiry is aware, there is evidence available from Richard Chessum who has recently been awarded Core Participant status. I have now spoken to Mr Chessum as well as to Ms Lubbers.
12. I am told by Mr Chessum that in the early 1970's he was a student at Goldsmiths with 2 women, 'Jane' and 'Mary' (I am aware of the names of these women but am asked to use pseudonyms to protect these women's privacy), who were also members of the South East London branch of the Troops Out Movement. He knew that they had both had brief relationships with Rick Gibson - he knew them quite well at the time. When he was told by people in Big Flame that they had uncovered Rick Gibson as an undercover operative, possibly a policeman, Mr Chessum went to see these two women in the flat they then shared. They confirmed to him that they had both had sexual relationships with Rick Gibson and they said that they had discussed him and speculated about whether he could be undercover as he never stayed with either of them until the morning, and was never around at weekends. Jane said that she had once been to his flat and was struck by how unliveable it appeared to be.
13. Mr Chessum has not seen either Jane or Mary since the 1970s and is not in touch with either of them any more, but he could. ~~He can~~ remember Mary's surname, and Eveline Lubbers has tried to find her and ~~has written~~ asked Mr Chessum to write a letter to an address of someone with the same name, ~~but he has heard nothing back to date~~. He has not been able to remember Jane's surname.
14. Mr Chessum is also aware of a third relationship between Rick Gibson and 'Susan' (also a pseudonym) who lived in West London and was involved in Big Flame. It was very common knowledge that she was in a relationship with Rick Gibson. This is the person who has said she does not want to be contacted and has not responded to the request for a statement.

15. When Mr Chessum was first told about the group's suspicions about Rick Gibson, he was invited to come and look at a file which contained all the evidence suggesting that Rick Gibson was an undercover officer. He read the file and it included a letter from Rick Gibson sent to woman whose name he cannot remember. He is sure that the letter was not sent to Jane, Mary or Susan as he knew those people and would have recognised and remembered their names. This was someone he didn't know. He was told that the letter had been given or sent to a woman with whom Rick had been in a sexual relationship and the content of the letter was consistent with that; it was a goodbye letter claiming that he was not really a police officer but had once committed a serious crime and was on the run from the police.
16. Mr Chessum was told that the people in Big Flame were very nervous about repercussions having uncovered information suggesting that an undercover police officer had infiltrated their group and put it all into sealed envelopes to be opened only if something serious happened to anyone in the movement. Mr Chessum has tried to contact the person who created this file via facebook, but he has not responded to messages.
17. If the Inquiry would like Mr Chessum to make a statement to confirm this information, he will be happy to do so.

I believe the contents of this witness statement are true.

[the Inquiry holds a signed copy]

TAMSIN ALLEN

18 DECEMBER 2017

[Amended 23 January 2018](#)