Copyright in this document is reserved to the Crown in right of the State of Western Australia. Reproduction of this document (or part thereof, in any format) except with the prior written consent of the Commissioner of the Corruption and Crime Commission Act is prohibited.

CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ACTING COMMISSIONER SCOTT ELLIS]

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT PERTH ON TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2020, AT 2.12 PM

COUNSEL:

MS NADIA PANTANO

WITNESS: PAUL LEDINGHAM

```
1
    THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Please be seated.
2
3
    LEDINGHAM, PAUL CALLED AT 02.12 PM:
 4
5
    THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: There's no need for another round
 6
    of introductions.
7
8
    PANTANO, MS:
                 Thank you.
9
10
    Would you please state your full name?---Paul Daniel
11
    Ledingham.
12
13
    And are you currently employed?---Yes.
14
15
    In what capacity?---The assistant secretary of the WA Prison
16
    Officers' Union.
17
18
    And how long have you held that role for?---Approximately
    two-and-a-half years. And just a brief description of what
19
    that role entails?---Under our rules, I assist the secretary
20
21
    with the execution of his duties. I deputise for the
    secretary for periods of leave, and practically I'm also an
22
23
    industrial officer for the union.
24
25
    Thank you. And as an industrial officer for the union, what
26
    does that entail, what duties?---Representing the interests
27
    of our members.
2.8
29
            And how long have you held that role for as an
30
    industrial officer?---I've been with the union coming up to
31
    six years total, so the last two-and-a-half years as the
32
    assistant secretary.
33
34
    Okay, and the previous years as an industrial officer?---
35
    That's correct.
36
37
    And do you still act on occasion as an industrial officer in
38
    your assistant secretarial role? --- It is part of the role.
39
40
          And prior to the commencement of your role at the
41
    union, what did you do before that? --- Previous two positions
42
    were with other public sector unions.
43
44
    Other public sector unions?---Yes.
45
46
          In what role?---I was an organiser and a community
47
    campaign organiser for the CPSU/CSA, and following that for
48
    a brief period I was an organiser for the HSUWA, doing - on
49
    a fixed-term basis.
50
```

17/11/20 Epiq Now, at the West Australian Prison Officers' Union, are you governed by any Code of Conduct or rules or procedures?--- We have two sets of rules. We have state and federal rules - all unions or registered training - sorry, registered organisations need to have a set of rules.

Okay. And what do those rules govern, just generally?---The governance of the union, ensuring elected officials, such as myself, do the right thing with our members' money and do the right thing by members.

And what's your understanding of what a conflict of interest is?---It's - it's a very broad term, but yeah, it's when - - -

As it pertains to your role at the union?---I suppose I would not be dealing with - with members who I have a relationship with, or - you know, outside of the - the union official/member relationship, being aware of where perception of conflict might exist, and excusing myself from decision making or representing members where - where that might exist.

What about in instances where you've got - you may be representing members or - sorry, more than one member, on the one incident where they may have conflicting versions of events?---I would only see that there's a conflict if they are on opposite sides of that issue. We have a process in place where that occurs. If - each of our members, by virtue of the fact that they pay union dues, are entitled to representation from the union, so if we had two members on the opposite side of an issue, they would each get assigned their own industrial officer, and those industrial officers would not talk in relation - about that matter - to each other while he matter while the matter was being dealt with.

And why would it be important that those industrial officers don't talk amongst themselves?---Because each member is entitled to representation on that issue. Just being clear though, that is when the member - it's a member - the member - issue. We don't have the resources to - if a number of members are involved in the same incident or issue, that doesn't necessarily represent a conflict of interest where assisting and representing members through that issue.

Okay?---It's only when it is member, the member, that there would be a conflict in that case.

What about confidentiality. What's your understanding of what obligations, if any, you have in relation to confidentiality?---I would have an obligation to the member

who is seeking assistance with representation, maintain their call in confidence. I'd have an obligation to that member not to disclose issues pertaining to their situation, or their workplace matter, to others unless I'm authorised to do so.

Okay. And where would you get that authority from?---From the member.

 Mr Ledingham, the Commission over the last couple of days has heard evidence that the union, particularly the West Australian Prison Officer's Union, does not tolerate criminality in any way. Does that accord with your understanding of what the union does stand for?---That does accord with my understanding; one of the any things the union stands for, yes.

Okay. And does that accord with your own values of what the union should stand - or should stand for, rather?---Without a doubt.

Okay. And what do you do in your daily role to demonstrate that criminality will not be tolerated?---I uphold the law myself, I like to think I do. I have a strong set of values and principles. I like to think I exhibit those in my dealings with others. I like to think I act honestly and with integrity in all of my dealings.

And what about in relation to how you advise members? What do you do in how you advise members that criminality will not be tolerated?---Look, it's not my role to pass judgment on the actions of members. It's my role to represent them and assist them through processes that they're engaged in, and ensure that they are provided with due process. I'm not the judge, juror and executioner, I'm an advocate and representative, and I provide advice to members who seek it.

Okay. What about in advising members to tell the truth? Would that be advice that you give?---Regularly, yes.

 Would there ever be an occasion where you would say no to - to a member to not be forthcoming?---I cannot think of an instance where that would be appropriate advice to give to a member.

In your experience, what does the union do, as a whole, to demonstrate that it doesn't tolerate criminality?---We - I think there's an expectation from certain quarters of our membership that we provide legal representation, for things like unfair dismissal, in every instance. We would only provide legal representation or assistance for those things

at the end of a disciplinary matter if we believed there's been a miscarriage of justice, if a member has admitted guilt on a serious criminal matter. They can apply for legal representation, but we would not give that for those instances along those lines. It's - we - outside of ensuring a member is afforded due process, we don't support criminal behaviour.

And you demonstrate that by not providing representation where someone has admitted to criminal conduct? Is that correct?---As I say, aside from assuring that that member is afforded appropriate process, we - we wouldn't go beyond that, and in some instances we - we might suggest to the member that, at certain points of that process, that a resignation would be the best outcome.

What about in instances where the individual member themselves haven't acknowledged or admitted to criminal conduct, but other members have indicated or advised you that another member may have engaged in criminal conduct, how would you deal with it in that instance?——We're not an oversight agency, we represent members. I don't receive — it's not part of our role to receive reports of criminal behaviour from our members or anyone. I wouldn't accept them, I'd be referring them to the appropriate oversight agencies.

But in an example, and I appreciate I'm speaking in hypotheticals here, but in an instance where you've got an incident that may have occurred at a prison, and you have members who come to you and advise you that a fellow employee, a fellow prison officer, may have been involved in conduct that may amount to criminal conduct, and you're advising those members, how do you deal with that situation?——Again, I'm not sure that's ever occurred, but if it was to occur, we would point the concerned member to the appropriate channels. We are not the police, we not the PSC, we are not the CCC, we are the WA Prison Officers' Union.

 Who would you refer them to in that instance?---I think there's references in the Code of Conduct to the Department about the obligations of employees of the Department on reporting of misconduct. I'd be referring them to that, and to follow that. It falls outside of my role.

Have you ever had a need to advise a member that they needed to report any suspected criminal conduct, or breach of the Code of Conduct?---I cannot think of a circumstance where I've been asked to do such, no.

Not where you've been asked, but where you've advised a member that, based on information they've told you, you've advised that member to then go and report that suspected breach of the Code?---Look, I have assisted members in the past lodge misconduct reports to the PSC. I've assisted a member in the past lodge a misconduct report to this Commission where I think those actions were appropriate, but as I say, in terms of internal, I can't think of an instance where I've - it's not the sort of thing a member would usually call us with.

Mm hmm?---They call us for assistance and advice, not to report misconduct. That's not our role.

What do you consider the union's role to be with the Department? Where do you see the interplay between the two?---I think we're a stakeholder. Obviously, we represent north of 90 per cent of VSOs, prison officers, senior officers and principal officers who work for the Department of Justice. That's a fairly loud voice. It's a fairly - it's a large responsibility for one organisation to - to carry the voice for such a large group of workers, but historically the Department are aware that that's what we do, we advocate for for prison officers, and they've engaged with accordingly. We have lots of structures in place in terms of regular meetings, consultation forums. The Department write to us, generally, when they want to change their ways of doing things that might have an impact on our members, so it's our role to consult. I'm sure that our members' interests are at the forefront.

And just on that, just to reiterate, you said it's in the interests of your members to consult with the Department? Is that correct?---It's also in the interests of the Department. I would - I would put to you that they should consult with - with their union who represents a very sizeable chunk of their workforce.

**THE ACTING COMMISSIONER:** Are there obligations to consult relevant industrial instruments?---Yes.

And that's about, what, industrial changes, in broad terms?—
--Yeah, changes that have a significant impact on - the work life of our members.

PANTANO, MS: And when you say there are regular meetings with the Department, who are those regular meetings with?——The obvious one is the peak consultative committee. Historically, it used to be the Commissioner of Corrective Services who would chair that, and bring who they saw fit to attend. In more recent times, or under the — in the post—

17/11/20 Epiq LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination)

MOG world, it's usually an assortment of deputy commissioners and others that the Department sends to meet with representatives of the union, chiefly includes myself, the secretary, president, vice president and other members of our executive team.

Okay. And how often are those meetings?---They should be monthly.

10 Do they occur? Do they still occur, to your knowledge?--11 Yes.

And what's the purpose of those meetings?---To work through issues that haven't been able to be resolved at a local level, or work through issues at a peak level. There is - you know, it's a standard meeting. There's an agenda, minutes, action items, outstanding action items, standing agenda items.

Are PSD involved in those meetings?---Not recently, no. At different times there have been - has been involvement. As I say, it's up to the Department who they bring to the table, but I can't recall the last time there was anyone from PSD attending those meetings.

And are there - so we've spoken about the relationship broadly with the Department, what about with PSD, the relationship between the union and PSD?---Our industrial officers maintain a professional, cordial relationship with the staff within PSD who helps us to perform our role when we're representing members facing disciplinary matters. I think it's fair to say that in - the relationship has probably changed with the merging of DOTAG and DCS to become DOJ. We're still trying to get our head around structure of DOJ and reporting arrangements. PSD seems to sit outside of Corrections entirely.

 Mm hmm?---We - yeah, so it's - the relationship has changed, but we obviously have - it assists myself and the other - our industrial officers to do best by the members if we maintain a professional relationship.

 And how do you go about maintaining that professional relationship?---Just cordial in our exchanges. It's - I think the Director of Professional Standards invited the industrial team to a morning tea, probably about 12 months ago. We attended.

49 Do you have regular meetings like you do with the 50 Department?---No. We used to, but that hasn't occurred for 51 quite some time.

17/11/20 Epiq LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination)

1 2 And why is that?---I'm not sure.

So when you say it used to occur, who used to attend those meetings?---I remember - and I'm not even sure if they're still with the Department, but I remember meeting with Peter Murdoch - surname Norris, whose first name escapes me.

Mm hmm?---We would meet semi-regularly, probably every one to two months, to go through active disciplinary matters, just get progress updates, get an understanding of where the Department's sitting, or, you know, what their thinking is, but yeah, those meetings - well, I don't think they have occurred since the Department changed to Department of Justice and changed their structure.

Right, okay. So since Machinery of Government changes, these meetings haven't occurred?---That's correct.

Has there been any attempt on PSD's side, to your knowledge, for these - for meetings to occur?---I think - again around 12 months ago, I seem to recall that there was an offer, but the - I think the offer was dismissed because the - the - it wasn't - I'm going from memory here, so you'll have to excuse me, but I think it was not to have meetings as they were held previously. I think the idea was to have them more formalised, and we weren't sure if that was appropriate, given the - you know, the dealing with public sector management at disciplinary processes. We didn't see the need for a formal meeting. We didn't see that that would assist in the management of disciplinary matters.

How did you - so when you say your understanding was they were to be more formal meetings, how were they, to your understanding, going to be more formal than, say, the meetings that you - the PCC meetings that you have, which are minuted, there are agendas, how would those - how were those meetings with PSD going to be more formal than the PCC meetings?---No, I think you've misunderstood my response. I was saying that the intention was for the PSD meetings to be more formal than they had been - - -

Yes?--- - - previously, not more formal than the PCC.

Yes, so - - -?---I think the intention was to hold them like a PCC, have a formal agenda, formal standing orders, if you like, or terms of reference, whereas previously our meetings with investigations or PSD were informal, no - no minutes, no note-taking.

Right. So, yes, that's - I did understand that's what you meant but so what I'm interested in is you - the union, from what you've said, still attends these PCC meetings which are formalised?---Yep.

So I'm just curious as to why the difference or why the reluctance of the union to meet with PSD in this, in a similar formalised manner as they did with the PCC?---I'm not sure if there's anything to be gained from a union perspective on behalf of our members to agree to such meetings. We - we already have formal processes. The disciplinary process is clearly outlined in the Public Sector Management Act, so there's nothing to be gained by having a formal meeting to discuss a formal process from the perspective of our members.

What about relationship building between yourself and PSD, would that be a benefit?---Potentially? Yeah, I - I - I don't know is - is the answer. As I say - - -

What's your opinion?---My opinion?

Do you think there would be a benefit in relationship building between the union and PSD?---Potentially? I - I wouldn't know for sure. As I say, myself and the other industrial officers have a - a cordial professional relationship with senior representatives and senior officials within PSD and many of their investigators. I don't know if that can be enhanced or improved, but it is a professional relationship.

Does the union advise its members - I understand it advises its members on industrial issues but does it also advise members on disciplinary issues?---We assist members through that process. Our industrial officers are well versed in the Public Sector Management Act disciplinary process and they will assist members who are going through that process and help them navigate that process.

Okay. And PSD, am I correct in saying that they're the body who deal with the disciplinary process from the Department's side?---Yes.

The Commission has heard evidence of an old way versus a new way of dealing with disciplinary issues. Do you have a view about which way was preferrable?---I'm largely only familiar with the disciplinary process through the Public Sector Management Act.

Okay?---I - I don't have a view because I don't have knowledge or experience with the previous disciplinary process.

3 4 5

6

7

8

1

Right. Have you had discussions with anybody about the old versus the new way?---Not to any level that would lead me to form a view or a preference. As I say, I'm well versed and dealing pretty much exclusively with the Public Sector Management Act disciplinary process.

9 10 11

12 13

1415

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

And in your opinion, do you think the way that the disciplinary process is being dealt with from where you sit is being dealt with in an effective way?---On the whole, yes. I - I think I've raised concerns in relation to a couple of - with PSD directly in relation to their - them using the disciplinary process for matters that I would consider fall well outside of the disciplinary process; grievance-type matters, interpersonal conflict workplace. There have been occasions where PSD have - have sort of gone straight to formal disciplinary where there is - the Department has processes to deal with interpersonal conflict or grievance matters in the workplace so I've raised concerns with PSD in relation to that directly. But on the whole, they would be the exception rather than rule. On the whole, I think the process is one that we - we don't have an issue with.

262728

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

Again, the Commission's heard evidence over the last few days that the old way, and I appreciate you - your evidence is that you weren't around for that but the old way was there appeared to be much more of a consultative sort of process between the union and, I guess, the old PSD before the MOG, and that consultative approach appeared to work quite well and that that's been one of the criticisms of the new way is that there isn't this consultative approach as much between PSD and the union. So just to go on further from what you've said earlier that you don't see that there's much to be gained from having regular meetings with PSD, do you think now in hearing what I've mentioned to you and I understand I'm putting you on the spot with this but do you see that there could be something to be gained from having a more consultative approach with

consultative approach with

PSD?---Look, I'm open to the idea. Obviously it wouldn't be
my decision, it would be a decision for the secretary or the
executive but definitely open to the idea. As I say, given
the nature of the work that I do and who I'm answerable to
there would need to be a benefit in it for our members. And
if - if I could see or be convinced that there would be a
benefit for WAPOU members, then I wouldn't be opposed to the

50 51 idea.

Can you see any immediate detriment to your members by having open lines of communication with PSD?---No.

Just while we're on the topics of relationships, what's your understanding of the relationship between the union and the Commissioner or current Commissioner of Corrective Services?---Professional.

 Anything else?---No. I think there's - there's mutual respect there. I think the Commissioner, given his background and experience, has a - an understanding of the role of the union. We have an understanding of his role. But there's - there's a level of mutual respect and we share a professional relationship.

I want to take you to - shift focus a little bit now and I've asked you some general questions about confidentiality and conflicts of interest. Does the process which you've described, does that change once the union become aware that the CCC are involved in a matter?---If you asked me this question in the first half of this year I would have said I don't know. Thankfully, the CCC don't get involved too much in matters that involve our members. I came back from a period of personal leave in - in mid-August and I had a crash course in the union's role when the CCC get involved in matters.

Yes? And what was that crash course?---That members who are summonsed to appear before this body cannot talk to anyone but their legal representative, for fear of prosecution under the Act.

Okay. So what's your understanding if a member comes to you and says that they've been summonsed by the CCC and that they need representation? Is it your understanding - what's your understanding, sorry, about whether - who else you can disclose that fact to? So the fact that the member has been summonsed by the CCC, who do you think you can disclose that to, if anybody?---I might reframe your question to help me answer, answer it, because members shouldn't be disclosing to me that they've been summonsed by the CCC because that would be a breach of section 99. WAPOU members join their the understanding that there may be representation for workplace matters so they are programmed, if you like, to contact their union if they need a lawyer. I fielded, upon my return from personal leave, a number of phone calls from distressed members who said I need legal representation but I can't tell you why. That was my crash course. I soon learned that the members who I represent, if I was to ask them why potentially I would be getting them in more trouble than they may already be in. So I developed a

bit of a script in answering those calls to try and ascertain whether it was a CCC involvement, without discussing the matter, without mentioning summonses, in order to say I understand, I think I know what this is. I will put you in touch with a lawyer who can assist. Do not speak to me about the matter, only speak to your lawyer.

Okay. So then in those cases where a member or members have 9 disclosed the fact that they had been served with a summons, albeit for the purpose of obtaining legal advice, I'm not 10 11 suggesting that there was anything untoward in disclosing that fact to you but what's your understanding 13 then of what use you could make of that information?---Again the way that - my recollection of the conversations, they 14 15 were handled in such a way that the member was not disclosing 16 that they'd received a summons. And I'll talk you through 17 how that happened because I received in quick succession a number of phone calls from members, some of them very 18 19 distressed who said, "I need a lawyer but I can't tell you 20 why". So I developed pretty much three questions. Have you 21 received a visit? Have you been given a bit of paper? Are 22 you required to attend a premises in Northbridge in the near 23 Now, if their answers were in the affirmative to 24 all those questions I said, "I think I understand this, do 25 I'll ensure you get legal discuss it with me. 26 representation. You should hear from a lawyer within 27 24 hours." So that's how I navigated that.

28 29

30

31

32

4

6

7 8

12

Right?---So there was no disclosure as such, there was no discussion around summonses. But obviously if I'm going to go to that level in discussing it with the - the member at the centre of it or who had received the summons, I'm not then discussing it with others.

33 34 35

36

37

And why not? That may seem like an obvious question but I'm still asking you the question. Why? Wouldn't you then discuss that fact with others?---Because it's potentially in breach of section 99 of the CCM Act.

38 39 40

41

42 43

And would you discuss with other members that you were aware that other members may have been contacted by the CCC? Not that they've received a summons but that they had been contacted by the CCC?---I wouldn't be raising that with them myself, no.

44 45

And why, why wouldn't you?---Again for fear of - for fearing 46 47 of prosecution personally and for fear of getting a member 48 in further hot water.

49

50 And further to that, what about issues around confidentiality of information that that member has provided to you?---That 51

member hasn't provided me personally with - with information, they've only given me the answers to the questions that I need answered to - to refer them on to legal representation.

Yes. But if they've - if they've given you enough information for you to make an assessment that they may have been contacted by the CCC, do you also think that you have an obligation to keep that information

9 confidential?---Yes, it's not something that I would be 10 disclosing to others. I would be - it's very difficult in 11 a - in a small office when it becomes obvious that a lot of 12 your members have been embroiled in - in something that the 13 CCC have got involved in but all efforts were made to keep 14 a lid on that from - from my perspective, yeah.

Yes. So is it the case then it wouldn't be appropriate to advise another member that other members may have also been contacted by the CCC?---Thinking back to the conversations I had, I think there was one member who contacted me and advised me of that.

Right?---But it's not something that I recall disclosing.

Yes?---I think I provided advice to a member to go home and stop avoiding the fact that you're likely to be receiving a summons. That - I recall providing advice to that nature but it's not - that wasn't me initiating contact and it wasn't me telling him that the CCC are involved.

Yes?---That was him contacting me and telling me such.

Right. And I think what we're getting at and I know we're talking around in circles here, Mr Ledingham, but it all I guess culminates in an incident that happened in November 2018 of an alleged assault and then alleged subsequent coverup of that assault and involvement of a particular prison officer and several of those officers were stood down in August of this year which is what you were referring to, stood down by the Department, and then contacted the union for advice prior to any awareness of any CCC involvement and then obviously subsequent to that the CCC then did serve summonses as you have alluded to. I just want to - that - so that's the context in which now I want to ask you some additional questions and show you some exhibits.

Can I have 0235-3, please?

You'll see a document come up on the screen in front of you and you'll also hear some audio.

51 0235-3^

17/11/20 Epiq LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination)

```
1
 2
    START TELEPHONE INTERCEPT:
 3
 4
    Part conversation from 11:14:39 to 11:15:18
 5
 6
    LEDINGHAM: Hello,
 7
 8
             : Hey Paul, how are ya mate?
 9
    LEDINGHAM: Good good. Have you had a visit since we last
10
11
    spoke?
12
13
          : No, not at all.
14
15
    LEDINGHAM: Okay. You may get a visit. Uhm so at this stage
16
    you know, we we can speak uhm
17
18
          : Yep.
19
20
    LEDINGHAM: but the, my understanding is the ah the triple C
    have visited at least three of the six officers involved uhm
21
22
    so we're expecting them to do the rounds and get to all of
23
    them.
24
25
    : Yep.
26
27
    LEDINGHAM: What they'll do is uhm put the fear of God into
28
    you and tell you that you can't speak to anyone about the
29
    matter
30
31
    : Yes.
32
33
    LEDINGHAM: other than a lawyer
34
35
    : Yes.
36
37
    LEDINGHAM: and they'll say you can't even speak to your
38
    union.
39
40
    END TELEPHONE INTERCEPT.
41
42
    PANTANO, MS:
                And then can I have - it's a follow on from
43
    this call - 0235-4, please?
44
45
    We've broken the call up into sort of smaller - smaller
46
    parts.
47
48
    0235-4^
49
50
    START TELEPHONE INTERCEPT:
51
```

17/11/20 LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination) Part conversation from 11:30:56 to 11:31:14

LEDINGHAM: Who knows, who knows. But I'd, you know I think it, I'm guessing it's only a matter of time, in fact since we've been talking uhm one of the other members has contacted me looking for a lawyer and is not allowed to discuss it, so she's obviously had a knock on the door as well.

: Yeah.

LEDINGHAM: So, yep. So it's only a matter of time before they knock on your door and find you at home.

END TELEPHONE INTERCEPT.

PANTANO, MS: So, Mr Ledingham, you'll see there that it was in fact you advising this member that other people had been contacted by the CCC. Why?---As I say, my recollection is that member had contacted me earlier to say that he had - another - another individual who had been summonsed had contacted him. At this stage as I mentioned, I've returned from a period of personal leave and I got a crash course in the - the CCM Act. At this stage I wasn't aware of section 99. I - I'm providing advice to a member that they are likely to be summonsed and once they are summonsed they can't speak to anyone.

And that's - - -?--So that's my understanding of what I was doing. That's my role as I see it.

Providing advice to a member that they may be summonsed by the CCC and that once that happens they're not allowed to talk to anyone about it is one thing, but advising that member that three of the six officers involved have also been visited by the CCC is quite another thing. You're disclosing, are you not, confidential information about - albeit you haven't given names but you're disclosing confidential information about three of your members, aren't you?---I'm not sure in that script if you can - I'm not sure what the confidential information is at this stage. I'm not discussing any - - -

That they've been visited - - -?--- - - details.

That they've been visited by the CCC?---Mm. So we had - as you're aware I'd - I was in possession of five suspension letters. Three of the five had subsequently contacted the union because they had been seeking legal representation. At this stage I'm - as I say I'm not - I'm not overly familiar, other than all of those members have informed me that they're not allowed to speak. They've been told that

they can't speak to anyone other than a lawyer. So in my mind it - it makes sense that if they've visited three of the five that they're likely to be visiting all five, so I'm advising the member to expect a summons.

And again I appreciate that but why did you feel the need to let him know that three of his colleagues had already had a visit by the CCC?---This particular member who I hadn't met prior to August, I think it's fair to say that he's - he was very fearful, very paranoid. So I'm - I'm - I'm doing what I think is my role and advising him of the likely process or the likely next step. I'm - - -

You're advising him of not the next step you're advising him of steps that have already occurred, that being the visit of the CCC - - -?---Well, the next - -

- - - to other members?---Sorry. I'm advising him of what - what to expect for him, yes. On the - on the basis that we've got five suspension letters, we've now got three of the five have been summonsed, I would expect a summons. That is the advice I think I've - that you - I provided him in that phone call.

You've said that the CCC have visited at least three of the six officers involved. Now, is it fair to say, Mr Ledingham, that you knew what this incident was involving to a degree at this point in time?---I knew what was in the suspension letters. The suspension letter referred - cos each of them was very similar to each of the five members, referred to broad - or pending allegations or broad allegations around collusion and a potential assault.

That is the extent of the - my understanding of that incident.

The Commission is aware that prior to this date several of the members involved had already been to the union office and met with some of the union reps, and disclosed a number of details about the incident in November 2018, and that the individual that you're speaking to in this call was at the centre of it. Were you aware of that when you had this conversation with him?---I was aware that a meeting had taken place. As I say, that took place when I was on a period of annual leave - sorry, personal leave.

Mm hmm?---I - I did not discuss with Andy Smith or Ken Brown what occurred in those meetings. I took the matter over because I'm the industrial officer for Hakea Prison. It's fair to say that the process that I follow when members receive a suspension letter is not to meet with them, it's to assist them respond to the suspension letter, and advise

them what to expect as next steps, and that's what I did when I came back from personal leave and took over this matter.

When you don't meet with them, how do you then get details about what it is they're coming to get advice about?---You don't - from my perspective, under the Public Sector Management Act, for responding to a suspension letter, you don't need those details. The allegations are yet to be put. I have always encouraged members in that instance, and I have done previously, if they've been suspended under the Public Sector Management Act, respond to the suspension letter and wait for the allegations before we discuss, because we need to see what the allegations are.

16 I'm finished with that document, thank you. Can I have 0235-  $5^{\circ}$  please.

0235-5^

21 This is another all with the same person but on a different 22 - later in the call.

START TELEPHONE INTERCEPT

Part conversation from 11:35:13 to 11:35:44

LEDINGHAM: Cause it means this fuckwit who this prisoner

: Yes.

LEDINGHAM: who has who has uhm ah made the allegation can't even name the officer.

: Yeah.

LEDINGHAM: Because I've got no doubt if, you know, I've got not doubt if the Department had information about who did the assault it would have said in the letter to that individual it will be alleged that you assaulted the prisoner and it will be alleged that you were part of collusion to cover up that assault.

END TELEPHONE INTERCEPT

**PANTANO, MS:** Then can I have 0235-6^ please. It's just a second part to this call - or rather a fourth part.

0235-6^

START TELEPHONE INTERCEPT

17/11/20 Epiq LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination)

Part conversation from 11:37:03 to 11:37:21

2 3 4

1

LEDINGHAM: Look, ah, I

5 6

: And he's put that in his report

7 8

LEDINGHAM: Yeah as I say, it's an allegation from a prisoner

9 10

: Yep.

11

LEDINGHAM: against six witnesses who are prison officers.

12 13 14

: Yep.

15 16

LEDINGHAM: Uhm, no camera footage. The truth will win out uhm but you've gotta go 8 through the process.

17 18 19

END TELEPHONE INTERCEPT

20 21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28 29

30

31

32 33

34

35

36

37

38

39

PANTANO, MS: The Commission has heard in the last few days, throughout the course of its investigation, Mr Ledingham, that there is a culture within prison officers of covering for each other, and being afraid to call other officers out when they've done the wrong thing for fear of reprisal. Would you agree that, by virtue of the position that a prisoner is in, by virtue of the position that a prison officer - a prison officer is in, that there is an imbalance of power between those two individuals, prison officer and a prisoner generally?--- would disagree, on the basis that the power balance in prisons, as my understanding, is quite tenuous. The - I've often heard it said that prison officers are in control because the prisoners give them consent to be in control. I - I walked through Greenough Prison while it was still smouldering after the riot two years ago. I've seen how that power balance plays out, so I don't necessarily agree with the proposition as put. It is a tenuous and complicated power balance, is my understanding, in a prison between prison officers and prisoners.

40 41 42

43

44 45

46 47

It is, and taking out obviously occurrences of riots and assaults on prison officers by prisoners, taking out those select incidences, would you agree that, generally speaking, a prison officer would hold more power in a prison environment than a prisoner, by virtue of their positions?---Yeah, by virtue of the Prisons Act, they do have powers under the Prisons Act.

48 49 50

Right?---Yes, I would agree.

In this part of the call where you say, "It's an allegation from a prisoner against six witnesses who are prison officers," what are you suggesting about the fact that you have six versus one?---At this stage, as I mentioned, all I've got is the suspension letters. I've also got five of them, and they all refer broadly, from my recollection, to a pending allegation around collusion and a pending allegation around an assault on a prisoner.

Mm hmm?---None of them - bearing in mind they were each addressed to each of the individuals, none of them said that you assaulted the prisoner, so that's what I was suggesting. Someone has made an allegation of assault, a prisoner has made an allegation of assault, by the sound of it, but it's not clear from the suspension letters who is the person who has committed the assault.

Right?---That is what I was referring to. The only materials that I've got are the five suspension letters, and I'm just deducing that from the suspension letters.

Well, what about the information that you had been provided by either individual officers - sorry, individual prison officers, or Mr Brown and Mr Smith, who had also met with all of the members by this point?---I was not provided with additional information. I deliberately did not seek additional information.

You were not told - is it your evidence that you were not told anything about what those members had come in and told Mr Brown and Mr Smith?---That is my evidence, because, as I mentioned earlier, how I as the industrial officer deal with suspension letters is not how, in my absence, the suspension letters were dealt with by Mr Smith and Mr Brown.

Right, but they're handing matters over to you, and they give you any debrief, no information? Is that your evidence?---My evidence is they told me they had met with the officers in groups while I was on leave.

Yes?---And I said I wouldn't have done that. I don't want to know what took place in those meetings. I will take it from here.

So is it your evidence that you - at this point you were unaware that there were any discrepancies between what these members had told the other union officials?---At this point I haven't got allegations to discuss with the members. I wouldn't be having conversations, especially when there's a broad allegation of collusion with groups of members.

Obviously, that's the - I'm guessing that that's the main reason for the suspension in relation to this disciplinary matter, one of the allegations is collusion, you suspend them so that there's no potential for them to collude within the workplace, that makes sense to me industrially, so I 6 don't want to be party to information that I wouldn't have 7 sought.

8 9

10

11

Right, so is it your evidence that Mr Brown and Mr Smith did not tell you any details about their meetings with these members? Is that your evidence?---That is - look, it's my evidence that they met with them.

12 13 14

Yes?---And they said they met with them in groups.

15

16 Yes?---From memory, I've sort of - was a bit aghast at that 17 and said, "Well, I've seen the suspension letter, I wouldn't have done that. Let me take it from here". 18

19 20

Mm hmm?---I didn't want to know what was discussed, because at this stage, as the industrial officer, I'm not even sure what the allegations are.

22 23 24

25

26 27

28

29

30

21

So not wanting to know and being told are two different things; so I just want to be clear with you about what your evidence is. Is it your evidence that Mr Brown and Mr Smith, other than telling you that they met with members and that they met with some of the members in groups, is it your evidence that they told you nothing more than that?---It is my evidence that I specifically asked them not to tell me any more than that.

31 32 33

Yes, but what - that is also - - -

34 35

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: And did they comply - - -?---Yes.

36 37

38

-- with what you asked them?---Yes. Sorry, if I wasn't being clear, yes. Yeah.

39 40

PANTANO, MS: They told you nothing more than what I've just outlined? --- No. That's correct.

41 42 43

44

45

46

Okay. Sorry, you just said that you were told that they met - and in Mr Brown and Mr Smith met the members in groups. What do you mean by groups?---I believe there was - I don't know, I wasn't there, and I didn't unpack this or explore it, but as opposed to individually.

47 48 49

So more than one at one at one time?---Exactly, and I think that was the evidence they gave yesterday.

Just one moment. Sorry about that.

2

If I can just have that clip back up, just the transcript, 0235-6^?

4 5 6

7

8

9

10

11

12 13

14

15

16

17

18 19

20

21

22

Mr Ledingham, what was your point in saying - pointing out footage?---It's purely there was no camera disciplinary process. Many prisons have CCTV footage, Public Sector Management Act disciplinary process is decided on balance of probabilities. Quite often, the - when the allegation letters are sent, the Department or PSD will indicate that they have footage supporting the allegations. If that's the case, I usually make a time to meet with the industrial officer and the member to view that footage. is my understanding, given the age of Hakea, that there wouldn't be - wouldn't have been camera footage at that particular prison, so it was purely in reference to the process and around evidence, so evidence in prisons where there is a lot of CCTV available, it's usually presented as part of the disciplinary process. I was just suggesting that, in this instance, that the Department won't have that evidence, so it will be statements and the truth will win out, which is self-evident, I would have thought.

232425

26

2728

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46 47

48

49

50

51

The Commission again has heard evidence, not only over the last couple of days, or been privy to information throughout its investigation, that there was advice - allegedly, advice provided to many of these member by the union and others that, providing all of the officers stick with what's in their reports, which allegedly wasn't an accurate description of what actually occurred in November 2018, but if everyone stuck to that version, that no one would get in trouble and that the real truth wouldn't come out. I want to put a proposition to you which I'll put to you respond to, where you suggesting here, Mr Ledingham, that, because you've got an allegation from a prisoner who, in the earlier part of the call you referred to as "a fuckwit," against six witnesses who are prison officers, with no camera footage, that the real events of November 2018 won't come out?---Not I think the clue here is the last word. I haven't at all. - I didn't seek information from any of the five members in relation to the incident, and I wouldn't seek that information until such time as they've got allegations to As I mentioned earlier, was, I think, was answer. - he struck me as someone who was very nervous and very fearful, and he called a lot. What I'm trying to encourage him to do is wait for the allegations, wait for the - you're engaged in a process now. I see it as my role to ensure that our members who are facing disciplinary matters are afforded due process and natural justice, so I deliberately wasn't engaging as much as I could on the issue of what

occurred or what didn't occur, until such time as I'd seen the allegations that were being put to, in this case,

3 4

2

I'm finished with that document, thank you.

5 6 7

8 9

10 11 Again, the Commission is aware of numerous information from various members that their take-away message from the union was that they should stick with their reports, and by sticking with their reports, no one would find out the truth. Are you aware of that advice being provided to them?---Only from what I saw yesterday. That advice did not come from

13 14 15

12

But are you aware of that advice coming from elsewhere within the union?---Only from what I saw yesterday.

16 17 18

19

And when you talk about yesterday, you mean the evidence that was put forward before the Commission, or by the 20 Commission, rather?---Yeah.

21 22

23

Mr Ledingham, are you aware of a toxic culture amongst prison officers?---No.

24 25

Have you heard it discussed at all? --- Only in relation to Fremantle and bygone eras.

26 27 28

29

30

31

Do you think the union have any role to play in the culture of prison officers?---Not at my level, no. I get paid to assist members. I don't - that doesn't go the other way. don't have an influence in my role in the culture of prisons and workplaces.

32 33 34

35

36

Why do you say - why don't you think you have a role in the advice that you give and the flow-on effect on the culture within the prison system?---I'm not sure I understand the question.

37 38 39

40

41

42

43

44 45

46 47

48

49

50

51

I'll rephrase it. Would you agree with the proposition that, based on advice that you may give to a member or members, that that could have a flow-on effect on the culture within the Department?---I think it's a long bow. I provide advice to members going through all sorts of workplace matters. I assist them through processes, I make them aware of their rights. I ensure that due process is followed. sure how that feeds back into culture within a prison. don't tell them what to say or how to act. I'm not judge, jury or executioner in my role, so I can't see that assisting an employee with a workplace matter and making them aware of their rights and obligations when they're engaged in processes feeds back into culture.

3

4

On that view, no, but what about if the union was giving advice to members to be distrustful of the disciplinary processes that are currently in place. Could you see how that could feed into a culture of distrust amongst prison officers?---It's a hypothetical question, I - - -

6 7 8

9

10

It is?---And it's not advice I'd give. I've never told anyone to be distrustful of the process. I've told them that you're engaged in a process and it's my job to see you through that process and ensure that due process is followed.

11 12 13

14

But if that advice was being given by others, would you agree that that could have the a flow-on effect?---I'm not sure if I can comment on - - -

15 16 17

18

19

Just an opinion, I'm just asking for your opinion?---I'm not aware of that advice being given, and it's not advice I would give, so I don't want to be drawn into a hypothetical that I don't think would occur, if you know what I mean.

202122

23

24

25

26

2728

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39 40

41

42

43

So the Commission has information indicating that advice may have been given by union officials to tell, basically, members to lie, to not come clean about what actually The Commission has happened in relation to an incident. various, numerous, pieces of information which all points to that conclusion. So based on that, is it your - and I'm not suggesting it has necessarily come from you, but from the So based on that, is it your opinion - sorry, would you agree that the flow-on effect could be - have an impact on the culture within the prison environment?---Potentially, but I think - I think it's worthwhile to make a distinction. There are paid employees of the union, such as myself, who are paid to give industrial advice, that's our job as industrial officers, and then there are elected representatives, who are not paid for their role, they are paid to be prison officers, and quite often they give advice, and they give advice in good faith, but it's not always consistent with the advice that would come from the paid employees of the union who are paid to give that advice. there - there is a distinction there. I think it's a really important one. I can only speak for myself and the industrial team at the Prison Officers' Union. It's not advice we would give.

44 45 46

Are you aware of delegates giving contradictory advice to what you've just described?---I became aware yesterday, yes.

47 48 49

50

51

And how would the union, in your experience, deal with that?--We do provide delegate training at our regular State Council meetings. I think I'm on the record as making very

clear that in - in instances especially involving disciplinary matters we see it as the delegate's role to refer the member directly to the union, and it's not their role to assist or provide industrial advice in relation to disciplinary matters. These are members who pay my wage. I don't have - you know, I can provide advice and I can tell them what I think should occur but they - they will do what they see fit, I don't have any authority over them in that regard. So I - I can't control the advice that unpaid elected representatives at the workplace level are giving to members.

I appreciate that you're not on the ground and paid union employees are not on the ground with the delegates so are not privy, necessarily, to the advice that's been given but what - what role does the union have in ensuring its delegates are passing on or displaying the ethos of the union and the values of the union?---We provide training to our elected representatives. We ask a lot of them, they - they - we ask them to attend meetings. We spoke earlier about the PCC, at every - every prison or "branch" as we refer them to - refer to them as, we have local versions of that where delegates attend and - and meet regularly with management. So we expect a lot of our delegates, we expect them to provide communication back to the union office. Many of our delegates, unfortunately, in my experience, go above and beyond and think that their - their role goes beyond that so we - we provide training, we provide advice at State Council. But as I mentioned earlier, you know, I'm not their Quite often delegates see it as their role to go keeper. above and beyond.

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Are delegates paid while they're attending to union business, under the industrial instruments?---The - there is leave, paid leave to attend union matters. There's the clause in the agreement. But generally delegates are at work. They are workplace delegates, they're getting paid to be on shift and they - they wear two hats in the workplace.

Okay. So it's not like they clock on and clock off, or clock off and then clock on again once they - - -?---No, not at all. Yeah.

Thank you.

PANTANO, MS: Mr Ledingham, what's your awareness of the culture when it comes to prison officers standing by fellow prison officers even when there's been an awareness that corrupt or criminal conduct may have been engaged in?---I'm

not familiar with that culture. In fact, I have not seen it. I've seen the opposite.

Sorry, you have not seen or - - -?---I have not seen what you're portraying. I've - I've actually seen the opposite.

Seen the opposite. The Commission has information indicating that officers feel the threat of being victimised if they stand up and say something, I guess, against the pack or ratting on another officer. What's your awareness of that?--Don't have any awareness of that.

You're not aware of it occurring?---No.

I want to put a number of assertions to you, Mr Ledingham, just out of fairness to you so that you can comment on them. The Commission has information suggesting that relating to this incident union reps have advised members to stick with their reports even when the actual events are different than what has been reported. What do you have to say about that?——It's not advice I would give, not advice I would support. As I say, the — the members have been drawn into a process. It's my job to ensure that they follow that process, that they're aware of that process and when allegations are put to them that they respond in kind.

Further, the Commission has information suggesting that relating to this incident union reps have advised that Professional Standards can't prove anything unless someone rolls or changes their story dramatically. What do you to say about that?---I have no comment to that. I'm not party to those conversations. As I say, they're not the conversations I've had with the individuals. In fact, I've said very little to them because of the involvement of this Commission.

Based on your experience, do you believe there is a culture of officers protecting each other at any cost?---No.

Commissioner, now might be an appropriate time for a 15-minute adjournment.

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Certainly.

We'll adjourn for 15 minutes.

(THE WITNESS WITHDREW)

(Short adjournment)

(TIMESTAMP) / 03.17.04 PM

17/11/20 Epiq LEDINGHAM, P. (Public Examination)

LEDINGHAM, PAUL RECALLED AT 03.27 PM:

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Please be seated.

Yes?

PANTANO, MS: Commissioner, I have no further questions of Mr Ledingham but I also ask that he not be released from his summons.

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

Mr Yin, do you have any questions?

YIN, MR: No. No, I don't, sir. Only in respect of the non-disclosure order in respect of Mr Ledingham, this is a public hearing but he has a notation on his summons and we're perhaps seeking some clarification about who he can discuss what's happened today with, given it's been broadcast live.

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Do you have any submissions?

**PANTANO, MS:** No, sir. But other than to say that obviously his evidence is - it's normally the part that is - or the main part that's not able to be discussed, particularly in a private hearing, between a witness and others but given that that evidence has been - -

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Yes.

PANTANO, MS: --- streamed and already out in the public, I see no reason why he can't discuss that with others.

THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: I might point - there is already an order that witnesses are not to discuss their evidence with any other witness until that witness has completed giving his or her evidence.

Mr Brown and Mr Smith, although they gave some evidence yesterday, have not yet been released so from the Commission's point of view they haven't yet completed their evidence. So that direction stands. You are not to discuss your evidence with any other witnesses until they complete their evidence and that includes Mr Brown and Mr Smith.

In terms of the evidence that you have given today, the public material, what you've said you may discuss with other people except them. What happened in public I won't put - I won't say "it stays in public" but it is in the public so what you've said today you may discuss with people who weren't witnesses.

1	
2	Is that sufficiently clear, or is that sufficiently unclear?
3	
4	YIN, MR: Yes, it is and I take it it includes the witnesses
5	that are listed on the - on the website to be called this
6	week? Yes.
7	
8	THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: Yes. Thank you for that.
9	
10	So, Mr Ledingham, you're not finally released from your
11	summons either. You are to attend again at the Commission
12	at a time and place to be determined if required to do so.
13	Today your examination is over. You're free to go. Thank
14	you for your evidence.
15	
16	(THE WITNESS WITHDREW)
17	
18	THE ACTING COMMISSIONER: We'll adjourn.
19	
20	AT 3.30 PM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY

## Certificate Made Under Section 50A of the Evidence Act 1906

The transcript of Paul Ledingham heard on Tuesday, 17 November 2020

was made in good faith and, subject to any qualification referred to below, is correct, accurate and complete transcription of the contents of the recording;

was produced from recordings that were suitable for making an accurate and complete transcript except where otherwise stated in the body of the transcript. Any "indistinct" or "inaudible" or other notations indicating difficulty with the transcription contained within the transcript refers to those parts of the proceedings that could not be accurately transcribed due to speech clarity, recording quality or other factors impacting word intelligibility.

Certified on this 18th day of November 2020 by: Glenda Judge, Sheila Robbshaw, Joshua Stevenson

Full Name: Glenda Judge

Sheila Robbshaw Joshua Stevenson

Occupation: Transcriber and officer of the Commission under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003 ss 182, 3 who has taken an oath before the Commissioner.

Signature: (Glenda Judge) (Sheila Robbshaw) (Joshua Stevenson)

Epiq Australia Level 1, Kings New Office Tower 533 Hay Street Perth WA 6000