

Harry Nowicki



Director Legal Services

Victoria Police Centre

637 Flinders Street

DOCKLANDS VIC 3008

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE; FOI Request- AWU Victoria Branch 1995/1996 – Ref no. 43934/12

I refer to your letter dated 9 October 2012 enclosing documents pursuant to my FOI request.

#### Background

1. Bruce Wilson was the AWU WA Branch Secretary from about May 1991 until February 1993.

He then became the AWU Victorian Branch Secretary from February 1993 until 17 August 1995. His conduct is at the heart of this Vic Police FOI.

2. Ralph Blewitt became the AWU WA branch secretary from February 1993 until 17 August 1995

3. The Victoria Police Fraud Squad appear to have commenced investigations on about 11 September 1995 following a possible reference from the National Crime Authority and concluded their investigations on or about 30 May 1996.

4. The WA Fraud Squad commenced their investigations into Bruce Wilson on the 9 September 1996 and concluded their investigations in about 12 August 1998

5. In the course of the WA Fraud investigation they sought the co-operation of Victorian Fraud Squad officers as they discovered activities of Bruce Wilson using funds from WA to purchase and sell a property through Ralph Blewitt an associate of Bruce Wilson.

6. On the 19 September 1996 Ian Cambridge the joint National Secretary of the AWU filed an affidavit and 57 exhibits setting out the results of his investigations of the activities of Bruce Wilson and Ralph Blewitt. The 57 exhibits include primary documents which Ian Cambridge obtained as a result of an internal investigation by the AWU.

The attached document by John Lourans an accountant dated October 2012 summarises the Ian Cambridge affidavit and exhibits.

This document sets out the allegations of fraud concerning Wilson and Blewitt using unauthorised bank accounts throughout Australia to misappropriate union funds.

Your Letter 9 October 2012.

The letter does not set out the documents in the possession of the Victoria Police.

This is in contrast to the letter I received from the WA police which sets out all the documents that they have on their file.

I request that you now set out the documents that you have on the Victorian Fraud Squad file.

#### Documents Disclosed on Your File

11 September 1995 – available documents perused to familiarisation with file . Could you please forward these documents to me.

10 October 1995 – briefing paper prepared by Gully – could you please supply a copy of the paper.

23 October 1995 – received documents from D/C Robinson- collected from Redfern office – perusal of same.

3 November 1995 – received copies of exhibits 45- 68 from affidavit – omitted from the documents collected 27 October 1995.

I infer that you obtained an affidavit and 68 exhibits from a court proceeding related to your investigation. Could you please forward a copy of the affidavit and exhibits. They are on the public record.

You refer to Appendices A through to J . Could you please describe what are in these appendices and forward documents.

You refer to a number of inaccurate media reports and the absence of any printed retractions despite written explanations provided by companies. Could you please provide copies of these media reports and any written explanations provided to you from companies.

#### Documents denied in Full

You refer to a letter sent to Thiess contractors and 6 Statements. You do not describe the topics these statements address. Assuming that most if not all these statements are by companies you do not set out any basis upon which these cannot be disclosed ( apart from protecting the actual name of the author).How could these statements be the subject of exclusion based on personal privacy – the companies do not need to protect their privacy.

In his briefing paper dated the 30 May 1996 Det/Sgt Turnley states that the companies who made payments fully accounted for these payments in the course of their business dealings with the AWU. Accordingly there should be no basis for withholding any statements from these companies who paid monies to the AWU as part of their normal business.

#### Primary Documents

You have not provided one primary document you obtained in your investigations.

These should include all documents forwarded by the AWU or any related entity to companies requesting payment for membership fees or any other services rendered by the AWU or its officials

You have not provided any copies of cheques made payable to the AWU.

You have not provided copies of any bank statements into which AWU monies were paid .

You have not provided copies of any documents concerning the opening of accounts or who was authorised to operate these accounts .

You have not provided copies of any cheques paid out of these accounts.

The WA fraud squad discovered 7 invoices sent from the AWU Workplace Reform Association Inc to Thiess Contractors between July 1993 and October 1994 for consultancy work performed by the association for a Melbourne Water project. You have not disclosed these invoices nor any statement from Thiess Contractors explaining these invoices.

Ralph Blewitt

I have interviewed Ralph Blewitt .He has confirmed that he was interviewed in Perth by two police officers from Victoria probably on 1 February 1996. He states that the police officers asked questions about his ownership of a property located at 85 Kerr st. Fitzroy.

You have not provided any documents regarding the purchase/ ownership of this property. Slater & Gordon conducted the the conveyancing for the purchase of this property and loaned Blewitt \$ 150,000 to complete this purchase. The equity to fund this purchase came out of an unauthorised bank account using monies payable to the AWU. The AWU never authorised the purchase of this property using union funds.

Public Interest

I submit that there is an overwhelming public interest that further documents be disclosed.

You say that as at 30 May 1995 there were unfounded allegations made against Wilson by his political enemies

Since that time considerable new material has emerged which casts serious doubt on your assertion that all allegations against Wilson were simply some wild accusations by political enemies of Wilson. None of the current allegations against Wilson are unreasonable or misleading based on the Ian Cambridge affidavit and exhibits and the WA fraud squad investigations.

I submit that the release of further information would certainly lead to greater accountability in the affairs of trade unions

There is no likelihood that the release of further information would cause any stress , anxiety or embarrassment to Wilson.

I request an internal review of this file and that you address the above named issues.

I await your reply .

Yours faithfully

Harry Nowicki

Email – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]