

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF P24

DATED THIS

12<sup>th</sup>

DAY OF

March

2008

I, P24, declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence at the Inquiry I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. The Inquiry has disclosed a number of documents to me. Where I make specific reference to a document in my statement I have given the number of the relevant page.
2. I have been a Detective Constable with the PSNI since 4<sup>th</sup> November 2001, when the PSNI came into existence. Prior to that I was a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), having joined the RUC as a regular constable on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1976. Before that I was a part-time reserve officer from September 1971.
3. During these years I received a lot of training. Initially, as a reserve constable, I received force training for 2 or 3 hours every fortnight. When I became a regular constable, I went to the Training Centre in Enniskillen for 14 weeks and then undertook other courses following my initial training. I was then posted to Armagh RUC station as a uniformed constable on the beat and patrol. On 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> May 1980, I joined the CID as an apprentice detective or 'CID aide' and commenced with an aide's course. Having completed my probationary period I then attended the junior initial course, which lasted about 8 weeks. I completed a refresher course some years later. Over the years I have completed many other courses, such as: taking finger prints; swabbing for DNA and interview techniques.

4. I have not taken any courses at all in the HOLMES system. Prior to HOLMES being introduced, I attended a basic course in the previous system, MIRIAM. Rather than being computer based, it worked on a chart index system. It was just a basic course to let us know how the system operated so that, when we were doing our various tasks on an inquiry, we would understand what was required from us by the people who were still in the office working with the MIRIAM system.
5. I have been asked whether I know Reserve Constable Atkinson. I have known him for many years. When I was a part-time reserve officer, Reserve Constable Atkinson was stationed in Tandragee as a full time reserve constable.
6. In 1997 I was a detective constable stationed in the Regional Crime Squad (RCS) at Gough Barracks in Armagh. There is now produced and shown to me a typed copy of my notebook containing pages **53662** – **53675**. The entry at page **53662** shows that I first became involved in the Robert Hamill murder inquiry on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 1997. DCI [REDACTED] was the RCS's Detective Chief Inspector, who had detailed us to go to the CID in Portadown to get involved in the Hamill murder investigation. My role was that of a detective constable carrying out inquiries: interviewing witnesses, and so on. Going by what is recorded in my notebook, because it is nine years ago and I have been involved in many, many murder investigations and other serious offence since then, I was accompanied by DC McCrumlish. The first senior officer that we came into contact with was DI Michael Irwin, who briefed us as to the details of the inquiry and what was required of us.
7. I honestly cannot recall what the strategy was in respect of the arrest of the suspects or the early identification of the suspects.
8. We normally received regular briefings each day about the investigation. To start with, when there was a murder involved we would have briefings at 9.00 am or thereabouts; then another briefing at lunchtime sometime between 1.00pm and 2.00pm; then a further briefing in the evening which could vary in time from

5.00pm to 7.00pm, depending on what was being done at the time and who was available to take the brief. After a period time, it is possible that the number of briefings may have reduced down to two per day.

9. I was responsible for interviewing a number of people during the investigations. My notebook shows that I interviewed Maureen McCoy on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 1997 (page **53662**); Colin Hull on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 1997 (page **53667**); Leanne Hobson on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 1997 (page **53668**) and Tracey McAlpine on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 1997 (page **53669**). Inquiries were also made of Ambulance Control and Ian Mahood on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1997 (page **53669**). Apart from the first one, I do not remember doing any of these interviews at all. I assume that this was the interview with Maureen McCoy, but I would not have remembered her name without my notebook. I remember going to do an inquiry at the lady's home with DC [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I think he may have recorded a statement but I am not sure. I do not remember whether the standard questionnaire form was used, or whether they were detailed statement interviews.
10. The usual practice before an interview is that we would have been given briefing or directions by senior officers that there were certain things we needed to ask. We could have been given statements to read and take notes from, or verbally directed, or a combination of both. The standard procedure after interviewing individuals is to write up an action sheet, attach any documentation that had been recorded and put it into the receiver's tray for that person to collect. The receiver is the person who accepts the action sheets when the work tasks are done. We would normally but not necessarily wait for the next conference to discuss what had taken place during the interview with one of the senior investigation officers. All matters would or should be covered at the next conference. Whether we wait until the next conference to pass on the information or report back sooner depends upon the urgency of the information.

11. As page **53663** of my notebook shows, DCS McBurney, DCI **P39** and DI Irwin were involved in a conference on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May 1997. At the beginning of the inquiry all senior officers who were available would attend the conferences, providing that there were no prior arrangements.
12. DC McCrumlish and I interviewed Allister Hanvey later that day. Allister Hanvey had already been interviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1997. I cannot remember why he was re-interviewed. The transcript of the second interview is produced and shown to me, and is found at page numbers **10018** to **10096**. **[REDACTED]** Allister's solicitor, was also in the interview room. DC McCrumlish and I may very well have both been asking questions, but I could not tell you who was taking the lead. I really cannot recall what Allister Hanvey's attitude or manner was like during that interview. Of course quite often suspects exercise their legal right not to answer questions, but Allister was answering our questions. But having read a few pages of the transcript, it would appear that he was denying everything.
13. Page **53663** of my notebook shows that I was detailed to interview Allister Hanvey. The content of this briefing is not specified. This is more or less a standard notebook entry that I would make in relation to a conference and being briefed in relation to an interview. I cannot recall the content of the briefing for this interview, or who briefed me. It could have been Mr McBurney, DCI **P39** or DI Irwin. If we had been told before the interview to go down a certain avenue that is the avenue we would have gone down. But I cannot recall whether we were or were not given such directions. Nor can I recall whether I took any initiative of my own as to how I would ask the questions, or if there was a particular strategy we decided to adopt in respect of this interview.
14. I have been asked whether I was aware of a statement by 'witness A' when I interviewed Allister on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1997. I do not remember 'witness A' being mentioned before now. I cannot recall what intelligence formed the basis of the second interview with Allister. Whatever prior information, or whatever particulars

we might have been given at the time would have been covered throughout the interview.

15. My attention has been drawn to a sequence of questions that we asked Allister, which is recorded at pages **10083** to **10085**. We started off asking him about whether there could be a forensic connection between his clothes and Hamill and Allister said, "none whatsoever". We asked him about whether he had spoken to anyone other than his family, his parents and his uncle and he said that he had not. And when we asked him about whether he had received advice from any person other than his solicitor in relation to that night or his actions that night, he said, "no". Then our next question was, "any civilian or otherwise?" That last question there would indicate that possibly we had some prior knowledge, but I cannot remember. I cannot remember what it would have been. We then went on to ask, "have you been speaking to any police about your actions that night?" This is a specific question. Asking it would indicate, in my opinion now, that we must have had some knowledge, but I cannot remember what that knowledge was. Or it may have just been a question of two nosy detectives; that has been known to happen in the past. I have no knowledge of what we knew before we went into that interview, if we knew anything or if we knew nothing. I cannot explain that question.
16. I have been asked whether, by this sensitive line of questioning, we could have essentially tipped off Allister Hanvey that we had information he had been speaking to a police officer about this assault. I would hope not. I would certainly not have meant to tip him off in relation to anything, if we did have some information.
17. I am now told that, by the time we interviewed Allister Hanvey, further information that RC Atkinson was at the scene would have come through from 'witness A'. I cannot remember knowing that RC Atkinson attended a tae-kwon-do club at the same time that Allister Hanvey was a champion and a member. I do not know whether, at the time of interview, I was or was not aware that Allister Hanvey and RC Atkinson knew each other. Obviously Allister Hanvey was telling a lie at that

stage when he said that the only police officer he knew at the scene was Jim Murphy. I cannot recall whether I knew he was lying at the time of his interview. It would not appear that we raised a challenge in respect of his answer or pursued this avenue further. But I most definitely would have challenged him about it if I had known. I cannot recall what information I had at this stage.

18. After this interview, I cannot recall whether we were given any further directions or instructions by our superior officers to pursue any other lines of questioning. At pages **53663** and **53664** my notebook refers to a briefing given by DI **P28**, but exactly what was said in that briefing is not specified. I go on to clarify that fingerprints and buccal swabs were taken from Allister Hanvey, and then there was no further contact with him. If I had attended any further conferences that evening, I would have recorded this in my notebook. It was a Saturday evening. I terminated duty at 9.00pm and the next morning there was conference at 9.00am on 11<sup>th</sup> May. Either there was no conference on the Saturday evening, or I was not there to attend it. This interview took place in Lurgan and DI **P28** has certainly been stationed in Lurgan. Whether he was there or not, I do not know. But if there was anything of significance said in the interview that McCrumlish and I felt we should have passed on straight away, we would have visited the CID office and spoken to DI **P28** there and then. Again, if we had done this I would have recorded it in my notebook.
19. On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 1997, my notebook shows at page **53664** that I was briefed by DCS McBurney and DCI **P39** before going to interview Thomas Mervin Hanvey at his home and carry out a search. My notebook records that I was accompanied by DC McCrumlish. My notebook says that McCrumlish actually carried out most of the search, while I recorded the witness statement from Thomas Hanvey at pages **9193** to **9194**. Referring to Form 29 at page **49885**, my role in the search was log keeper. I would have had the original form 29 and would have completed the relevant parts: our names; our arrival times; the address of the premises and those present etc. The search yielded a negative result.

20. I cannot recall what was said at the 9.00am briefing before the search. It is very possible that I would have been briefed about what Allister was wearing on the night in question. I have no doubt that during our briefing that morning at 9.00am gave us details of what we were doing the search for. They have to brief you. You just cannot go willy-nilly into a search without some detail. In some cases the briefing would involve us being given statements or evidence. On other occasions it would have simply been on the say-so of a senior officer from the rank of Sergeant upwards. On Form 29 at page **49882** there is a cross-reference to what we were looking for when it says "Warrant, yes". There would have been some sort of record on the warrant. Looking at my statement dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 1997 at page **9309**, we were searching for gentleman's clothing belonging to Allister Hanvey. I cannot remember specifically, but the HOLMES document A669 of my interview with DCI **K** states at page **4582** that I was also briefed to look for any evidence of anything having been burnt recently. This document does not jog my memory any further. Having read over these documents, we must have been instructed at the 9.00am conference to go along to Thomas Hanvey's home and to carry out a search there looking for clothing.
21. My notebook shows at page **53665** that the search commenced at 12.30pm and ended at 12.37pm. This is not a short period of time since Thomas Hanvey lives in a small, 'pensioner's' bungalow. I could not give you details of the exact accommodation but there would only have been a living room, a kitchen, possibly one bedroom and a bathroom. We were looking for clothing, so it is not as if we had to carry out a minute search. If we had had to do that, we would have called in certain personnel to look for smaller items. It would have been quite easy to see clothing.
22. Sometime after lunch, we attended the home of Allister Hanvey to interview his parents Kenneth George Hanvey and Elizabeth Florence Hanvey. A record of this interview is on a HOLMES record action print at page **4602**. I cannot really recall the manner or the attitude of Allister's parents. However, from the content of my

notebook at page **53666**, it would appear that they certainly assisted. They appear to have answered the questions that we put to them, but they declined to make a witness statement. My notebook also shows that, during this visit, some reference was made to what Allister was wearing on the night of 26<sup>th</sup> April 1997. He was wearing blue jeans, a t-shirt – I'm not sure of the colour – and a black bomber jacket with a CAT logo.

23. At page **53666** my notebook appears to indicate that Mr and Mrs Hanvey said that Allister had told them about a policeman at the scene asking Allister to assist in keeping the crowd back, and that he did so. But Mr Hanvey refused to give details of this policeman. I found this unusual. I cannot exactly recall asking why they refused to give us the identity of this police officer, but obviously this comment is there in my note and I am sure that we would not have dropped it. We would have had some discussion about it, but I could not outline exactly how much.
24. I do not personally remember if I asked Mr and Mrs Hanvey about whether or not they had received a telephone call on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1997. I have been referred to my statement dated 30<sup>th</sup> September 2002 at page **20217**. This reads, “[f]urther to my statement dated 10 November 2000 re interviewing Kenneth George Hanvey and Elizabeth Florence Hanvey at their home, I can state that no reference was made to Mr and Mrs Hanvey regarding receiving a telephone call on the morning of the 27th in respect of the incident in the town the previous night.”
25. According to my notebook at page **53667** we left the Hanveys' home at approximately 3.40pm. It appears that I made some notes while we were there. But following our conversation with Mr and Mrs Hanvey, I do remember distinctly that the notebook entry was made a very short time after we left the Hanveys' home. The Hanveys live out in the country. We drove down the road a short distance then pulled onto a wide grass verge. We filled in our notebooks there and then because we wanted to get the detail down before we could forget something.

26. There is no record of me informing my superiors about the findings from these interviews in my notebook at page **53667**. There is no particular reason for this. After leaving the Hanveys, my notebook refers to my undertaking "general office duties". This might have been me writing up the action sheet for that inquiry or finishing the Form 29. After seeing the Hanveys, I finished at 5.00pm so I did not attend a conference until the following morning. I do not know whether there was or was not a conference that evening at 7.00pm and I do not know what time McCrumlish finished that evening. If he had been working on that night, he may have attended the 7.00pm conference and then he would have outlined what had taken place during our inquiries that day. If not, then it would have been reported back the next morning.

SIGNED: ..... *P. 24.* .....

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DATED: ..... *12<sup>th</sup> March 2008* .....