



*Established 2004*

**Professor Alexis Jay OBE**  
**IICSA**

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**Request for this letter to be accepted as part of the organised networks strand of the Inquiry and adduced in evidence.**

Observation concerning opening statements made on behalf of Jon Wedger and Maggie Oliver

**Dear Professor Jay,**

**21 September 2020**

1. I am the founder of the Independent Police Support Group (IPSG) which was formed in 2004 to support police whistleblowers and reduce police suicide. The website is [www.ipsg.co.uk](http://www.ipsg.co.uk)
2. I have listened today to the opening submissions made by Mr Jacobs on behalf of Jon Wedger and Maggie Oliver.
3. The Chair has been misled in a very important aspect concerning the legal protection afforded to police whistleblowers. The Chair will need to determine who actually misled the Inquiry.
4. Police Officers do in fact have protection in Employment Law and we encourage police officers to make use of it. I have raised this with both Jon Wedger and Maggie Oliver previously.
5. The primary reason that we give this advice is that this is the quickest route to have a whistleblowing case heard at a public hearing and allegations can be publicly made against any corrupt officers. This is likely to prompt further action in a case such as this in accordance with the IOPC Statutory Guidance.
6. Any review or investigation of child sexual exploitation matters may have been expedited rather than the lengthy delay that there has been especially; with regards to the matters concerning Maggie Oliver and grooming gangs.
7. Counsel was also incorrect with regards to the status of Police Officers who are not Crown Servants; they are classified as holders of an office.
8. Police Officers as holders of an office have specific protection for whistleblowing in Employment Law under the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

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9. Police officers also have additional responsibilities such as complying with the Standards of Professional Behaviour for Police Officers and the Police Code of Ethics. This includes challenging and reporting improper conduct as well as reporting allegations of crime. It is not acceptable for police officers to turn a blind eye at the time.
10. The public and victims don't want to hear about officers failing to take positive action in accordance with their oath because of bullying or not wanting to lose their job. The police are usually the last port of call for vulnerable children and their parents in CSA /CSE matters. Officers are expected to have the moral fibre and courage to deal with issues at the time. There is no “me” in whistleblowing and no half measures.
11. Mr Wedger's promoter who dealt with his social media informed me that he would name names in a book at a later stage. This is of no use to victims / survivors or those who have yet to be exploited when; those officers involved in wrongdoing are promoted or retire when they could have been dealt with at the time and any potential further offences having been prevented.

### **The Public Interest Disclosure Act (Protection for Police Officers)**

12. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended) protects police officers from being subjected to a detriment and/or losing their job if they report suspected wrongdoing by their force or colleagues or a third party. This is known as “making a disclosure in the public interest” known as “whistleblowing”.
13. To be protected, officers need to reasonably believe that wrongdoing is happening, has happened or will happen and it is in the public interest that the wrongdoing is exposed. They also need to make the disclosure in the right way to the right person.
14. If an officer has gone down this route and there has been no improvement or a cover up; an officer can go to the press and still be protected by the Act.
15. Even now having left the police, if either Maggie Oliver or Jon Wedger suffer a detriment as a result of previously having made disclosures they would be able to take their respective police force to an Employment Tribunal for post employment detriment.

### **Conclusion**

16. We do not consider Mr Wedger to be a genuine police whistleblower, we have dealt with Mr Wedger personally in 2016 and offered to help him in reviewing his case and helping with an employment tribunal claim if he was unable to secure representation via the Police Federation. Mr Wedger was being represented at the time by a police federation representative who would know what action Mr Wedger could take if he was being victimised for whistleblowing.
17. We were originally deceived and supported Mr Wedger wasting a lot of time, as a whistleblowing organisation we would pursue any disclosures that he made including seeking information from the Metropolitan Police.

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18. Mr Wedger's Counsel referred to the London Borough of Haringey and issues in 2006 and not the London Borough of Tower Hamlets which; was one of the reasons Mr Wedger appears to have been permitted to give evidence as a core participant as Tower Hamlets was a geographical area the Inquiry were focussing on.
19. Mr Wedger appears to have kept quiet for at least 10 years and to this day has never named anyone publicly who was involved in the issues he complained of. The reason he gave for this was that he did not wish to compromise a personal injury claim that he was making against the Metropolitan Police Service.
20. At the end of 2018 we felt it necessary to publish a blog post on our website with our concerns and we raised concerns surrounding the differing accounts given as to how Maggie Oliver left Greater Manchester Police. <https://www.ipsg.co.uk/the-whistleblowing-bandwagon>
21. In these two short clips Mr Wedger in interviews discusses his conversations with Maggie Oliver as to how she left the force, in the first clip Mr Wedger was still a serving officer <https://youtu.be/FDJ5k2oxbU> and <https://youtu.be/w7zN0hwQT7s>
22. Recently we have again been in contact with Maggie Oliver who attempted to distance herself from Mr Wedger stating in a message *“The fact that he is represented by the same firm of solicitors Howe and Co is again nothing to do with me, and I had no part or any say in this. I was approached by Howe and Co and asked to participate, and they represent me and that’s the only common factor.”*
23. There was still no resolution as to who was telling the truth as to the circumstances as to how Maggie Oliver left Greater Manchester Police. Maggie Oliver states she left so that she could blow the whistle and Mr Wedger says she was dismissed by being required to resign. Mr Wedger goes into much more detail and both former officers would confide in each other.
24. Whilst some of what Mr Wedger says in his video interviews is untruthful or embellished, he has been consistent in his version of how Maggie Oliver left Greater Manchester Police and this would accord with the treatment by police forces against it's own officers who even contemplate blowing the whistle.
25. An example of the steps taken by police forces known as shooting the messenger can be found on our website at <https://www.ipsg.co.uk/shooting-the-messenger>
26. Other areas of concern we identified from the opening statement was the term child prostitution which many survivors and parents find offensive.
27. With regards to Mr Wedger's experience and length of service, it was stated that he had over 25 years experience in the investigation of child abuse and exploitation. This would be very unlikely as he states that he had worked in several different departments including the river police and being off work sick for probably up to 4 years as he says that he was on no pay for 3 years and doing other work.

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28. A further embellishment appears to be the claim from Mr Jacobs that Mr Wedger has over a million followers on social media. It is a fairly easy exercise to tot up the number of followers on youtube, facebook and twitter.
29. Also mentioned in the opening statement was the “phenomenon” of abusers targeting and grooming children in care and that care home managers were powerless to prevent children in their care from being taken away. Children being absent from care homes is a problem around the UK and is one of the regular functions of the police in returning them, the children are not prisoners and this is an area where improvements could be put in place to monitor the safety of children and place more emphasis on the responsibility of care home staff.
30. Sometimes what is not mentioned is as important as what is mentioned in that there was no mention of Mr Wedger having set up his own “Jon Wedger Foundation” which is not formally registered and donations are paid into Mr Wedger's personal bank account where he has published a photograph of his bank card.
31. More concerning is vulnerable victims / survivors who are exploited without any after care having been interviewed on livestream by Mr Wedger. Survivors and those providing donations have been verbally abused and insulted publicly for asking questions about donations or the legal status of the foundation.
32. The following video from a terminally ill survivor has been published and raises serious concerns regarding Mr. Wedger and his foundation including his conduct to those who question him. <https://www.facebook.com/miketarraga/videos/3372720679479497>
33. A further incident was published on a video from Trafalgar Square where Mr Wedger's security team intervened to prevent the member of public asking questions, the following day Mr Wedger gave veiled threats in a youtube video describing how his security team were “handy”.
34. The incident at Trafalgar Square can be found at the following link <https://www.facebook.com/dave.rudd.545/videos/695478504654806> , Mr Wedger's comments the following day concerning his “handy” team can be found at the 16 minute marker at the following link <https://www.facebook.com/dave.rudd.545/videos/695478504654806>
35. Mr Wedger's foundation seems to have moved towards vigilantism and irresponsible videos have been published identifying locations including a website which; could also result in paedophiles seeking out children.
36. A video made by Mr Wedger appears to be targeting the American market. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uBcdiphEPc>
37. Due diligence should be conducted by the Inquiry if they are to hear evidence from Mr Wedger and that includes verifying with the Metropolitan police the extent of any involvement in the matters that he refers to whilst he was serving in the Metropolitan police.

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38. As an organisation, one of our concerns is that any future police whistleblowers are likely to be discredited and may also assume that money can be made from whistleblowing.
39. We respect any former officers who are seeking to improve the situation regarding protecting children however; this should not be done on the back of purporting to be a police whistleblower whilst; relying on the the lack of knowledge of the public concerning police procedures and what police officers should be doing if they are to be considered genuine police whistleblowers.

## **Conclusion**

40. This strand of the Inquiry concerns how authorities including the police respond to organised networks, unless the police are provided at the time with disclosures from officers made to the right person in the right way it is unlikely the police will be able to respond appropriately.
41. As far as we are concerned as an organisation, there are unanswered questions, no documentary evidence has been provided to validate either core participants claims as to having made protected and qualifying disclosures at the time.
42. If an officer resigns, as part of the process they would take part in an exit interview and this would also have been an opportunity to highlight why an officer has decided to leave the force.
43. It is not clear who provided the information to the Inquiry concerning the innacurate information concerning Employment Law and the asserted lack of protection for police officers.
44. At the top of page 259 of Maggie Oliver's book "Survivors" she states "*I also warned that I was seeking legal advice to make a protected disclosure in the public interest as I was left with no alternative but to believe there was a deliberate attempt to conceal the truth and silence me personally. In other words I was getting ready to blow the whistle?*" Maggie Oliver was getting ready to blow the whistle and we have seen no evidence that she did in fact blow the whistle.
45. There is conflicting information between both core participants despite having supported each other for many years and appearing on alternative media. Both cannot be right as to the circumstances as to how Maggie Oliver left Greater Manchester Police.
46. Until this issue surrounding credibility and/or evidence is produced surrounding what action the former officers took at the time they refer to the wrongdoing they now refer to, we are unable to consider either as genuine police whistleblowers.

Yours sincerely

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