

NOTICE OF FILING

Details of Filing

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Registry: VICTORIA REGISTRY - FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA



Sia Lagos

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Important Information

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Form 59
Rule 29.02(1)

Affidavit of Susannah Oddi

VID 1023 of 2023

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: General

MOIRA DEEMING

Applicant

JOHN PESUTTO

Respondent

Affidavit of: **Susannah Oddi**
Address: [REDACTED]
Occupation: Consultant researcher and writer
Date: 29 May 2024

I, Susannah Oddi, of [REDACTED], say on oath:

1. I am a consultant researcher and writer, focusing on online industries and human resources. I hold a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Letters in writing. My postgraduate, practice-led, research examined digital writing and public audience engagement, contrasting Victorian era press with contemporary social media. It discussed how social communities engaged with narratives, and how writing choices and media formats may provide non-fiction with the illusion of authenticity.

Exhibit SO-1

2. Exhibited to this affidavit is a paginated bundle of documents marked 'Exhibit SO-1'.

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Moira Deeming, Applicant
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Patrick George, Solicitor
Law firm (if applicable)	Giles George
Tel 1300 163 662	Fax
Email	patrick.george@gilesgeorge.com.au jeremy.marel@gilesgeorge.com.au petar.strkali@gilesgeorge.com.au
Address for service (include state and postcode)	Level 7, 135 King Street Sydney NSW 2000

[Version 3 form approved 02/05/2019]

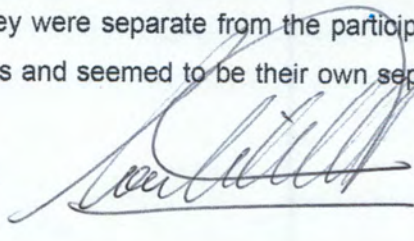
Susannah Oddi
Patrick George

Background

3. Between 2012 and 2015, I held various roles at Swinburne Online. I worked as a lecturer, unit coordinator and discipline lead across media, communications and public relations. I was also engaged as a trainer and learning designer.
4. Prior to that, for a period of approximately 10 years, I worked in agency recruitment and executive search. I worked across industries, with a focus on media communications, marketing and sales, information management, and professional services.

The Let Women Speak Rally

5. On 18 March 2023, I attended the Let Women Speak Rally (**LWS Rally**) in Melbourne. I do not recall noticing the National Socialist Network (**NSN**) in front of Parliament House. I did not even know they were near Parliament House until I returned home and saw them on the news.
6. At about 12.15pm on 18 March 2023, I parked my car at the top of Spring Street, near Victoria Parade Pay station, and walked toward the gate to Parliament Gardens, then down Spring Street to the end of the garden's fence.
7. There was a crowd spanning Spring Street, to the north of Parliament House, which was cordoned off by a police line. The crowd was several people deep. They were very loud and some carried red flags.
8. I approached the police line and asked a male police officer if I could go through. He refused. I said that I wanted to go to the LWS Rally. He told me that I was in the wrong place for the LWS Rally and that the entrance for it was on Bourke Street.
9. I walked back down Spring Street to Little Bourke Street. I turned left at Liverpool Street then walked up Bourke Street towards a police line opposite Parliament House. I observed that counter protesters had gathered in front of the police line but they were, at this time, calm and peaceful. I asked a female police officer if I could cross through to the LWS Rally, and she allowed me to pass.
10. As I approached Bourke Street and Parliament House, I took a video recording. A copy of that video recording is accessible at page 1 of **Exhibit SO-1**. A copy of a still image from that video (at approximately 12.24pm on 18 March 2023) is at page 2 of **Exhibit SO-1**. I recall, and it is evident from that still image, that police officers were at that time standing on the steps of Parliament House, to the left of the traffic light and light pillar. In front of them was a group of about a dozen protesters who, to the best of my recollection, kept to themselves and did not interact with the LWS Rally. I do not know what they were protesting but they were separate from the participants of the LWS Rally and from the counter-protestors and seemed to be their own separate group. I observed (during the

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course of the day) that this group of protesters were predominantly older men who did not pay attention to any of the speakers at the LWS Rally and generally kept a physical distance from the LWS Rally. I observed that a few of them would briefly wander to the edge of the LWS Rally but would quickly return to their own protest.

11. I stood to the right of the light pillar, referred to in the preceding paragraph, at street level, and watched and listened to the speakers at the LWS Rally.
12. I took a photograph of the LWS Rally at approximately 12.31pm. A copy of that photograph is at page 3 of **Exhibit SO-1**. The speaker is just out of view to the left. Katherine Deves is standing in front of the woman in a Greens t-shirt. Moira Deeming is standing to Ms Deves's left, wearing black clothes and white sneakers. Mrs Deeming is slightly cut off in the image.
13. At approximately 12.39pm, I took photos standing near Kellie-Jay Keen at the front of the LWS Rally. A copy of these photographs are at pages 4 to 7 of **Exhibit SO-1**. I was at street level or standing on the lower steps. I do not recall observing that anyone at the LWS Rally was aware of or engaging with the actions of alternate groups elsewhere. Rather, I observed that they were looking towards and listening to the speakers who were speaking through a microphone amplified with a loudspeaker. There was a lot of noise from protesters held behind the police lines across the whole area.
14. As far as I can recall, the speakers at the LWS Rally were all women. I moved further up the steps and sat down. I overheard a conversation between two women who were attending the LWS Rally, in which one of them stated that we could not stand on the upper steps or flat level above the steps because the LWS Rally had been directed by police that they did not have a permit for the steps, which was why the speakers were at ground level. I observed that the noisiest group near the LWS Rally, and the most threatening, were the counter protests who had gathered on Bourke Street. I had observed that these protesters had swelled in numbers and there were many red flags in the crowd towards the end of the LWS Rally. I do not recall if the protesters (referred to in paragraph 10 above) were making their own noise in response.
15. I recall that at one stage, at about 1.00pm, some of the attendees at the LWS Rally turned and looked towards Bourke Street due to the rising noise at the police line and the addition of police horses. I then videoed police rushing down Spring Street (from the direction of Parliament Gardens) to reinforce the police line at Bourke Street. It was the only time that day that I looked over to the right of the LWS Rally (being towards the north end of Spring Street).

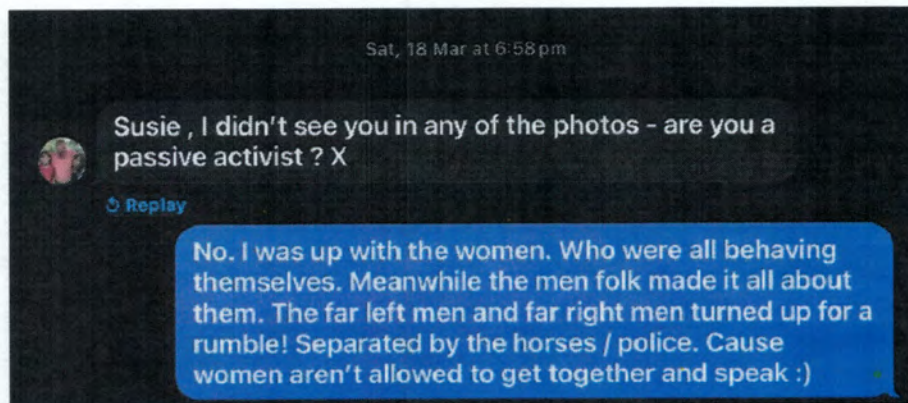
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16. At 1.09pm, I sent a text to my family via a group chat attaching a photograph of the police line and protesters saying: *'The angry men wanna bust through the line! Because "women are speaking". More horses and cops'*.



17. Later that day, there was media reporting that there had been 'fighting' and 'punch-ups' at the LWS Rally outside Parliament House. My father texted me at 6.58pm to say he had not seen me in any of the photos in the media. I replied to his text and said *'I was up with the women. Who were all behaving themselves. Meanwhile the men folk made it all about them. The far left men and far right men turned up for a rumble! Separated by the horses/police. Cause women aren't allowed to get together and speak :)'*.

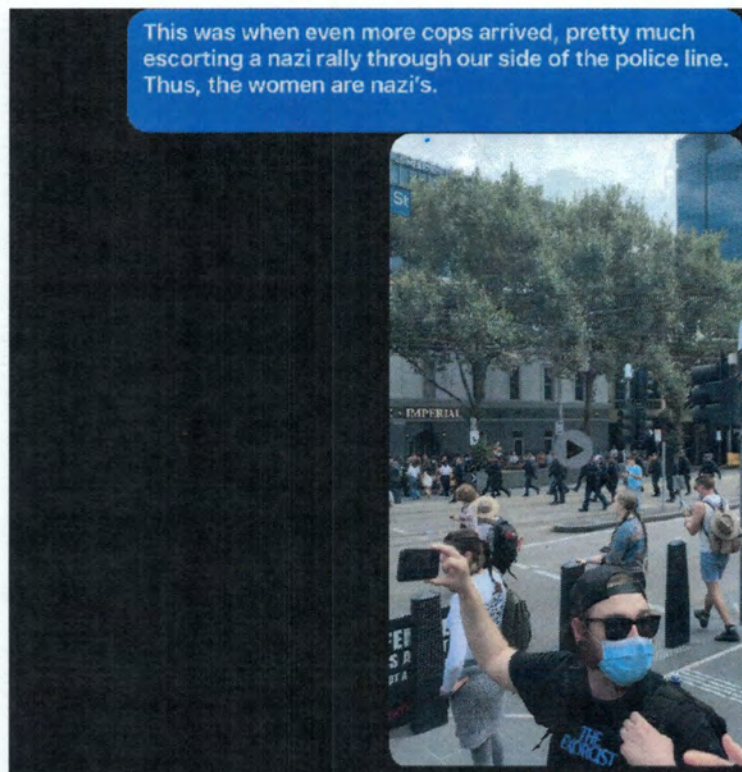


18. I had taken a number of photos and videos of the day from 12.24pm to 1.07pm. A copy of a selection of these photographs (in chronological order) are at pages 2 to 7 of **Exhibit SO-1**.
19. That evening, I became aware of media photos which showed black clothed men reported to be neo-Nazis standing on the steps of Parliament House holding a banner which read: 'Destroy Paedo Freaks!' (**NSN Banner**). I did not see the NSN or the NSN Banner and the photos and videos which I took of the LWS Rally did not show them.

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20. At the time of the LWS Rally, I did not see any men in black clothes grouped together or see them stand on the steps of Parliament House or hold a banner. When this occurred, it appears I was positioned on the other side of the pillar to where they stood and they were out of my view. Based on my observations at the time, I also think that the NSN were likely too far away from the LWS Rally for the participants of the LWS Rally to see or notice them at the time.
21. That night at approximately 6.58pm, as a result of the media reporting, I sent some video recordings which I had taken (at approximately 1.09pm on 18 March 2023) of the scene to my family and said: *'This was when even more cops arrived, pretty much escorting a nazi rally through our side of the police line. Thus, the women are nazi's'*.



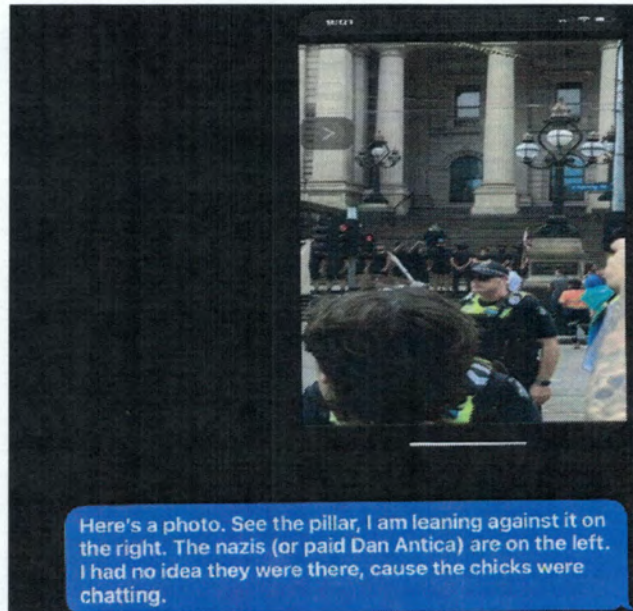
22. I made no mention of the NSN prior to this as I had no idea that they were there until I came home and viewed the media reports. The video I attached to the text message was taken at approximately 1.08pm during the course of the LWS Rally; it was the first time during the event that I looked to my right, away from the LWS Rally. I turned to look because other attendees at the LWS Rally were looking in that direction. I observed that police were reinforcing the police line on Bourke Street with additional officers on foot and on horseback and that the protesters on Bourke Street had grown in number and were growing louder. I do not recall observing the NSN being escorted out of the area by police but understood from media reports that this had occurred earlier than the time of this video.

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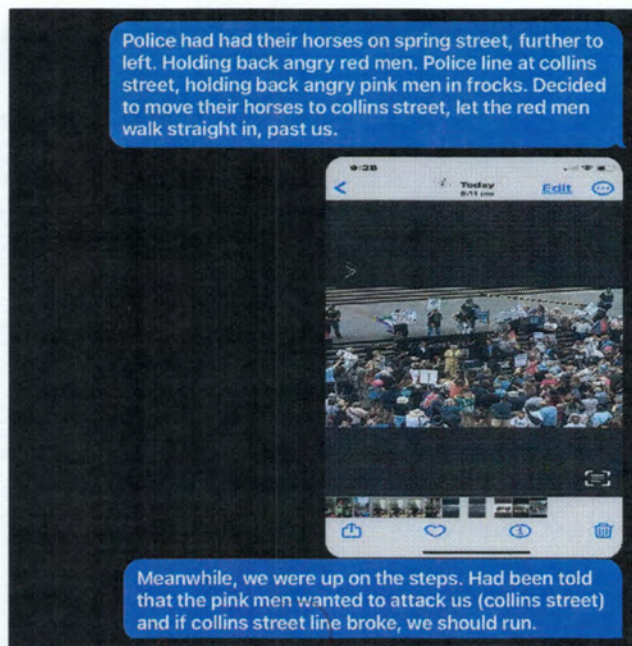
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My reference to the police escorting nazis through our side of the police line is a reference to those media reports but I did not witness it.

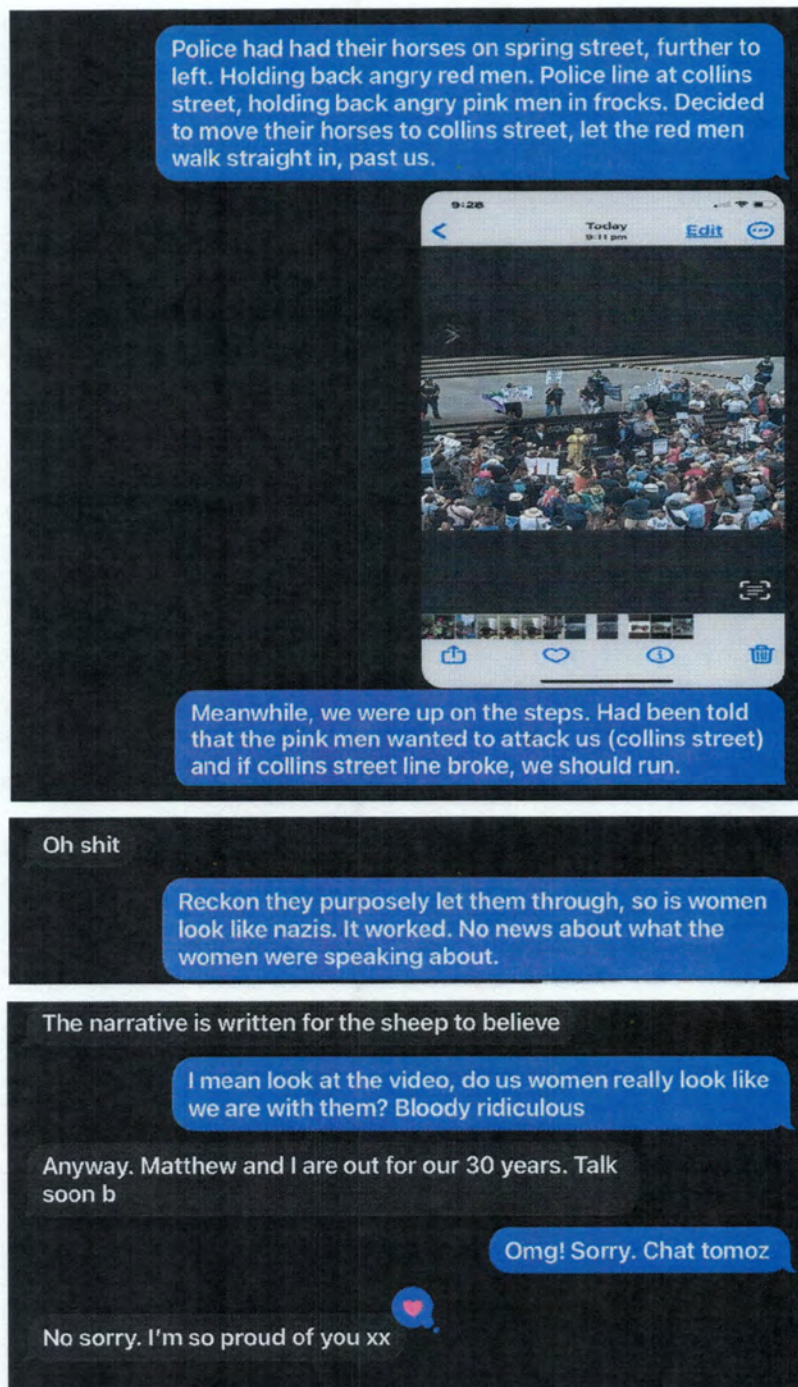
23. At approximately 7.53pm, I sent my sister a photo accompanied by a text which stated: *'Here's a photo. See the pillar, I am leaning against it on the right. The nazis (or paid Dan Antica [sic]) are on the left. I had no idea they were there, cause the chicks were chatting'*.



24. Although I had said in my text that I was the person leaning against the pillar on the right, and thought that at the time I sent my text, I am now not sure if that was me.
25. I also exchanged the following texts with my sister describing the event:



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26. Other than the references to 'Collins Street' which should be 'Bourke Street', what I said in the above texts reflects my recollection of the day.
27. The images of black clad men I saw that night concerned me. They were not at Parliament House to support the LWS Rally which I attended and I did not see them participate in any way in the LWS Rally.
28. I had previously read online materials that documented that previous LWS events had been gate crashed by counterprotests, including black-clad men. A selection of these

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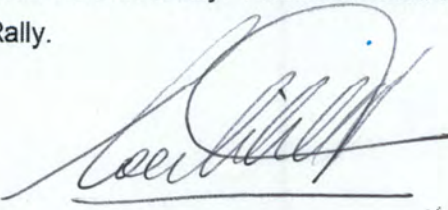
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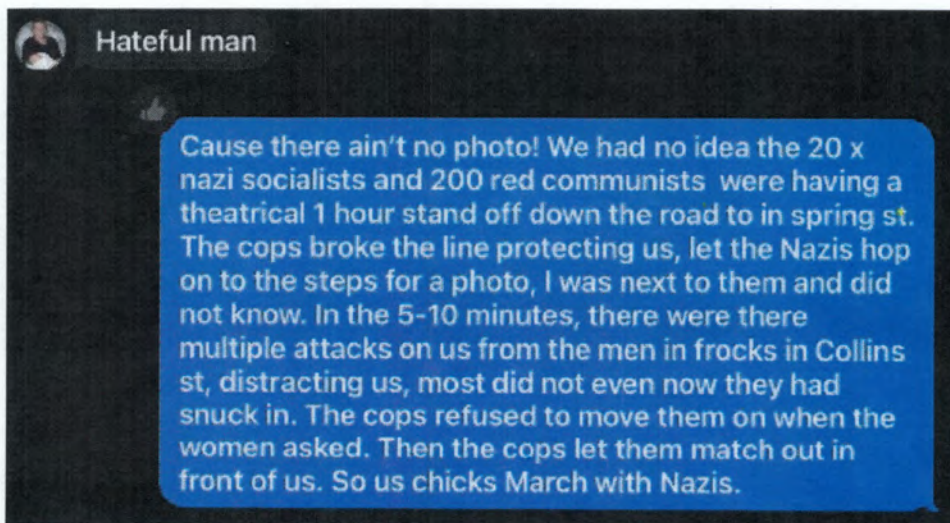
materials are at pages 8 to 40 of **Exhibit SO-1**. On account of these materials, I was aware of the history of black clad men attending other LWS events in the UK and elsewhere throughout 2022. Protests opposing LWS events have been organised by Antifa groups, antifascists and anarchists. Many wear back clothes, masks, hats or balaclavas to limit identification. They have been violent, yelled at attendees and some have been arrested.

29. In my text at paragraph 23 above, I erroneously refer to 'Antica' to my family; I intended to say 'Antifa'. At that time, I was unsure if the men in black had been confirmed as being neo-Nazis, or if they were another militant group similar to those disrupting previous LWS rallies. Prior to the LWS Australian tour, they had appeared at LWS events in, amongst others, Bristol, Manchester, Brighton which were the most publicised.
30. I have observed that many women have been too frightened to attend LWS rallies due to the violence of militant groups that gatecrash the rallies. I understand from my interactions with other women who attended the LWS Rally that many women had decided to meet up with other each other before attending the rally to avoid travelling to the event alone (out of fear of being harassed or attacked by counter protesters) and asked other women to speak on their behalf (due to similar apprehensions). Despite the serious danger, Kellie-Jay Keen chooses to mock and make fun of these protesters, rather than be intimidated. Attendees at LWS attempt to ignore them.
31. I had previously reviewed articles that reported on attempts to violently disrupt LWS events in the United States. A copy of two such articles are at pages 41 to 51 of **Exhibit SO-1**. These articles reported on one particular antifascist who was fundraising to procure weapons to disrupt the LWS rally in Portland US, many others online were inciting physical attacks. The LWS rally was cancelled due to such potential threats. I understand that a small number of women decided to rally anyway and they were assaulted by counterprotests.

Daniel Andrews tweet

32. On Sunday 19 March 2023, Premier Daniel Andrews tweeted about the LWS Rally. A copy of that tweet is at page 52 of **Exhibit SO-1**.
33. In that tweet, Mr Andrews said he did not want to share the photo of the 'anti-trans activists' because they did not deserve the attention but said that '*some of them performed a Nazi salute*' on the steps of Parliament House.
34. I texted my family saying Andrews did not want to share the photo because there weren't any Nazis that joined the LWS Rally. I also reiterated that I did not notice the NSN at any point during the Rally.

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35. Later that Sunday evening, I became aware through media reports that the Leader of the Opposition, John Pesutto, had announced that he was seeking to expel Moira Deeming for organising the LWS Rally. I understood from these media reports that Pesutto was calling Deeming a Nazi or an associate of Nazis.

Emails to John Pesutto and Peter Dutton

36. On 21 March 2023, at approximately 10.58am, I sent an email to Mr Pesutto and Georgie Crozier, copying in Mrs Deeming, objecting to Mr Pesutto's treatment of Moira Deeming. A copy of that email is at pages 53 to 56 of **Exhibit SO-1**.

37. On 21 March 2023, at approximately 8.06pm, in the absence of a response from Mr Pesutto or Ms Crozier, I forwarded my earlier email (to Mr Pesutto and Ms Crozier) to Peter Dutton, the Leader of the Federal Liberal Party. A copy of that email is at pages 57 to 63 of **Exhibit SO-1**.

Sworn by the deponent
at Melbourne
in Victoria
on 27 May 2024
Before me:

Signature of witness

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)
)
Signature of deponent

29 MAY 2024

Name and qualification

Grant COULTMAN-SMITH OAM, VA
MEmergMgt. BSocSc DipBus FBIA FAIES

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE