



**Royal Commission**  
into Family Violence

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF STEVEN SCHULTZE**

I, Steven Schultze, Senior Partner of Protective Group, Melbourne, in the State of Victoria, say as follows:

1. I make this statement on the basis of my own knowledge, save where otherwise stated. Where I make statements based on information provided by others, I believe such information to be true.

**Current role**

2. I am the Senior Partner at Protective Group and Executive Director (Operations) of Protective Services Pty Ltd (**Protective Services**). Protective Services is a private risk management and investigation company specialising in community safety and family violence.
3. Over the past two years I have operated within the family violence sector alongside family violence services and State and Federal Government Departments. My duties involve dealing directly with these services and their high risk clients in areas such as risk, safety and lethality assessments, and implementation of safety recommendations.
4. I also consult to Government and senior members of Victoria Police in relation to various aspects of family violence, Safe at Home strategies and specific case management.

**Background and qualifications**

5. I hold Advanced Diplomas of Integrated Risk Management, Work Place Health and Safety, and Business from Churchill Education. I hold a Diploma in Security from Churchill Education. I hold a range of security certificates, including a Certificate IV in Security Risk Management and in Correctional Practices.
6. In June 1985, I joined the Victoria Police as a police officer and at the completion of my training, I was stationed at Sunshine Police Station. In 1989, I was

recruited to the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence as a Detective Constable – Surveillance/Covert Operative. I progressed to Detective Senior Constable at the St Kilda Criminal Investigation Branch, before being stationed at the Armed Robbery Squad and the Homicide Squad, in turn. I am a recipient of the Police Integrity Medal.

7. In November 2000, I resigned from the Victoria Police as a Detective Senior Constable within the Homicide Squad and moved into the private sector and into the security industry in particular. I have since occupied a number of management positions and directorships at private companies, where my responsibilities have included the implementation and management of security compliance systems.
8. I have provided project management and consultancy services to the private security and commercial investigation industries. I am a safety consultant and provide an emergency response for high risk clients of the Mary Anderson Family Violence Service, within the Salvation Army. I am also a project consultant to the Safe Futures Foundation Victoria (**Safe Futures**) and to Domestic Violence Victoria (**DV Vic**) in relation to establishment of the State-wide "Safety in the Home" Project.
9. I am a Director and Partner of International Student Care Consultancy Group Pty Ltd (**International Student Care**), and I have provided risk and safety assessments relating to existing and potential international students. I am also a Director and Partner of Protective Services.
10. In March 2014, I attended and completed Advanced Domestic Violence Training conducted by the International Family Justice Alliance in the United States of America. This training included attainment of competency in:
  - 10.1. Intimate Partner Homicide Investigation;
  - 10.2. Lethality and Perpetrator Assessing;
  - 10.3. Advanced Strangulation Investigation;
  - 10.4. Child and Adult Sexual Abuse;
  - 10.5. Human Trafficking;
  - 10.6. Elder Abuse;
  - 10.7. Cultural Impact and Diversity relating to Family Violence;
  - 10.8. Victimology and Victim Impact relating to Family Violence; and

## 10.9. Stalking.

### **Protective Group**

11. Protective Group is a private group of three companies: Safeguard Security Solutions, International Student Care and Protective Services, that specialise in security and safety risk management within the family violence sector and international student sectors.
12. Attached to this statement and marked "SS-1" is a copy of Protective Group's 2015 Annual Report.

### **Protective Services**

13. Protective Services are specialists in risk management in the family violence sector. We work in partnership with Government, the not-for-profit sector, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Victoria Police to implement strategies to keep women and children safe in their own homes.
14. We have been very successful in this field and trials resulted in a State Government project that will see, with Protective Services' assistance, 200 high risk family violence survivors provided with Close Circuit Television (CCTV) and SafeTCard personal duress alarms.
15. We are currently developing new technology that looks into perpetrator tracking and has the ability to connect to our existing personal duress devices worn by the victims/survivors. We are determined to wrap a safety net around family violence victims and their families, and understand that while many societal changes are needed to put an end to this insidious issue, in the interim we must protect those that suffer at the hands of present and former intimate partners.
16. Protective Services has also consulted to family violence services and actively participated in training workers in areas such as conflict resolution, hostile environment training and the use of safety devices.
17. We have conducted risk assessments and recommendations in relation to premises including offices, refuges, transitional housing, safe housing and longer term accommodation.

## Family Violence Risk Management

18. Since the middle of 2013, Protective Services has worked closely with a number of agencies, including the Salvation Army, Safe Futures, WISHIN Foundation and the Uniting Church, to develop strategies to reduce the risk of violence posed to family violence victims by their partners.
19. In a nutshell, a risk assessment is conducted on the victim, the perpetrator and the property, and strategies are put into place to wrap the victim in a safety net.
20. We have worked with The Crossroads Family Violence Service, at the Salvation Army, to provide 28 primary interventions and 66 secondary consultations. A primary intervention involves active participation in risk assessment and ongoing case management. Secondary consultations include services such as:
  - 20.1. a review of risk assessment and any safety plan;
  - 20.2. issuing and training the woman with the personal duress alarm, including training in hostile environment awareness, conflict resolution, cyber awareness and security training; and
  - 20.3. a review of the case file and any police investigation.
21. We have similarly provided in excess of 60 primary and secondary support consultations to women engaged with Safe Futures.
22. We have worked with and for approximately 200 victims of family violence.
23. Our focus is on the protection of people and not the protection of property. The purpose of CCTV cameras, as well as the other technology detailed below, is always safety first: it is about protecting people. Safety is the primary purpose, rather than deterrence.
24. You can implement the most robust and effective safety measures on a client's property, however this still cannot always guarantee their safety. Protecting the individual/s at risk is what is imperative. There is a range of measures that we can implement to improve women's safety. Some of these measures can also assist in evidence gathering for those cases where a woman has not been able to prove breaches of an intervention order occurring at a property because no concrete evidence existed to utilise in a court hearing: it was only her word against his.

25. I can state that no women or women with children that we have worked with have been physically assaulted or harmed when having implemented our unique safety measures.
26. Intervention order (IVO) breaches involving my clients have been significantly reduced, with only three instances of breaches being reported since the end of 2013. On these occasions, either the woman's verified personal duress alarm was activated and police attended, or evidence was gathered by CCTV cameras and utilised to remand the perpetrator.

### ***Risk Assessment***

27. If we are referred a client from a family violence service, we will firstly gather, by phone or by email, as much information as possible about the woman, her children and the perpetrator.
28. We request the family violence service provide their intake assessment, risk assessment, details of any IVOs, past statements, and police information. We ask that they send as much information as the client will consent to; ensuring that we can gather information relating to the past actions of the perpetrator. We try to understand the ways that the perpetrator is likely to behave and then create protection mechanisms based on that understanding. It is not just a question of how vulnerable the client may be, but also how the perpetrator operates.
29. We will meet with the client at the family violence service or, if they believe a Safe at Home program may be available to them, we may meet at the property to conduct a physical risk assessment. We talk with the client's worker, usually at length, and ask imperative questions in the most sensitive way possible. We may ask, "What have the police told you? Do we need to speak to the police on your behalf? Is there any more that we are not being told?" We may ask the police, "What is your assessment of the victim's risk? What can you tell me about this man?" The questions we will ask are subject to the level of detail already obtained from the documentation provided. Where possible, we try to minimise the number of times women are required to re-tell or re-visit their family violence experiences, avoiding any possible re-traumatisation or distress for the victim.
30. We will then provide a realistic appraisal of what we think the situation reflects.

31. We have worked with Safe Futures to develop a risk assessment tool, and that is what we utilise. We also have an additional lethality assessment, which draws upon the training from the United States, set out above.

### ***Interaction with Victoria Police***

32. The frustration, from our perspective, is that when we deal with these women, and their support agencies, they say to us they have fallen through the cracks with the Victoria Police. The Police cannot be expected to respond to the 67,000 response call outs that they receive. However, the reality is that women and children's violent experiences are not being validated, being left unseen, unheard and unprotected because of system failures, and in some cases, the failure to conduct proper criminal investigation of family violence matters.
33. Where Police are required to attend because of a reported breach of an IVO, good practice is to conduct a forensic examination of the scene and a proper investigation of what occurred, and gather evidence. If they did so, not only would they be able to charge perpetrators for being there in breach of the order, they may find from the evidence (for example, evidence of attempted strangulation shown in bruises or marks) that they have an attempted murder, or an unlawful imprisonment: a serious crime may well have been committed and the perpetrator should be charged accordingly. I have seen cases where the response from Victoria Police has been completely inappropriate given the victim's circumstances. In saying that, I appreciate that first responders often face considerable difficulty with victims being reluctant to fully disclose details of the family violence incident. It is my experience that, in these cases, the abuse has been ongoing for years and for a number of reasons victims will minimise or be unable to fully disclose the extent of the abuse.
34. Additional challenges are faced when police respond to incidents where women are not only victims of family violence but also perpetrators of crime, or have a history of crime. I have worked with clients where they have been subjected to serious abuse by their partner and, during their relationship, the client has, for a number of reasons, also committed a crime. For instance, I have clients who by their own admission are or have been drug users. This however does not negate the fact that they have been subjected to serious abuse by their intimate partner and require extensive outreach assistance. However in some instances, it has affected the way

that they have been treated by police. It is my experience that developing rapport, trust and keeping an open mind is the key to any investigation.

35. Where a victim alleges or the evidence suggests serious injury it should be investigated accordingly. You cannot consent to a serious injury. However when you have got inexperienced police officers providing the first response to family violence, they can pigeon hole people or form an opinion/perception based on the victim's demeanour, for instance, at the scene, or perhaps even based on their knowledge of the women prior to attending. There are issues around how first responders interact with victims of family violence; how victims of family violence disclose their abuse, and then the first responders' impression.
36. Those inexperienced officers may fill in the L17 form at the scene or they may not. You need to have a senior member of the police at the station educating and training officers that they are attending a crime scene. If the police do not evidence gather right away, that evidence may be lost. For a young detective confronted with an assault or a rape, I cannot understand why the approach would be different depending on whether or not it occurred domestically or it happened on the street.

### ***Information sharing***

37. I have experienced occasions where family violence services and the police have not worked together: I have witnessed an 'us and them' mentality. We try to educate family violence workers on how to better interact with police officers. We will provide a number of tools to assist workers, including questions for the workers to ask police, and advice on any procedural questions the service or the client may have. I have also had the opportunity to discuss specific case management strategies with attending police.
38. If we could get the family violence service, DHHS, the police, medical services; all of the relevant agencies talking together, sharing information and generally working together, then we could put measures in place to improve women's safety much faster. We are all working together towards the same end, however in reality for various reasons this does not happen.
39. A lot of the work we do at Protective Services is filling the gaps between the family violence service and the police. We will often be asked by the client, "Can you tell us how this part of the police process works?"

### ***Risk Management***

40. After we have conducted the risk assessment, and discussed with the client and her support worker what we consider the risk to be, and why, we will make recommendations to improve her safety.
41. My recommendation to the service will usually commence with "further liaison with the police is required/ ongoing risk assessment and safety planning is required". I will discuss with the client and the service provider whether more outreach support would be of assistance, and then we will discuss physical treatments, which may include CCTV, shutters, and so on. We try to give the client general advice as well, for instance, about letterbox security, and training around cyber safety. We have electronic equipment and we can sweep for bugs, if necessary.
42. I will say to the client "by sitting here with us, you are actually in control of the situation, you decide what goes on", and sometimes you can immediately see the effect that has on a client, when they start to feel empowered.
43. Our recommendations in relation to risk and safety are also provided to the client in report form. Attached to this statement and marked "SS-2" is a de-identified report provided to a Protective Services client.

### ***Court processes***

44. I have attended the Magistrates' Court, Children's Court and Family Court with clients and family violence workers as a part of our risk management service. My role has included support, security of the client and to assist Counsel in relation to particular aspects of the case. My clients have included family violence services staff, DHHS, the victims themselves and solicitors representing the parties to the case. I have personally observed the exposure of clients in this environment and the terror experienced when seeing the perpetrator in these surroundings. Often this is the first time the victim has physically seen or been in the presence of the perpetrator since the violence.
45. On one occasion at the Family Court I watched the Respondent maintain surveillance on the "secure entry and exit door". I was able to liaise with the police officers in attendance and we were able to formulate a strategy to allow the client and her small child to leave the court unseen. Other court hearings have allowed associates of the Respondent to attend the hearing in numbers and display what I



will describe as nothing short of intimidating behaviour toward the victim. As a general comment, there is an obvious lack of risk assessing and subsequent safety planning for clients attending court.

### ***Improving Safety in the Home Project***

46. The Improving Safety in the Home response is an early intervention initiative between Protective Services and Safe Futures to enhance the safety of women who have separated from their abusive partners, yet are still at risk of further abuse. The primary aim is to support women and their children to stay in their own homes when safe and appropriate.
47. The key components of our Improving Safety in the Home program are set out in the Protective Services document entitled "Capability Statement and Executive Summary June 2015", which is attached to this statement and marked "**SS-3**".
48. In some instances, to make a woman feel safer, we focus on particular rooms in her house, for instance, the bathroom. If a perpetrator was to force his way into the house, we have a room, which looks outwardly normal, which he will not be able to get into. That allows us to buy some time, during which the woman can use her SafeTCard or mobile phone to call the police.
49. There are circumstances where the perpetrator is going to present at the property and breach no matter what we do to improve the safety of the home – and where the Improving Safety in the Home program is not going to be appropriate. I have observed that this is in the minority of instances.

### ***CCTV***

50. CCTV cameras are one strategy we deploy that can protect women in the home, because the perpetrator knows, with that camera present, he cannot go there without there being evidence of his presence.
51. We connect our CCTV cameras to a static internet address, rather than having ongoing monitoring of the video. We can give the woman an application on their phone, so that they can check the cameras before they go outside or before they arrive home. We can also retrieve the footage for use as evidence in Family Court and criminal proceedings, which we have done on a few occasions.

52. The other side of the coin is that our clients feel safer knowing that they have cameras at their property. SafeTCard offers another layer of protection, as do doors, locks and screen windows. Rather than replacing anything, or relying on one thing in particular, these services all complement each other, and that feeling of safety. It is as important for women to *feel* safe as it is to actually *be* safe.

### **SafeTCard**

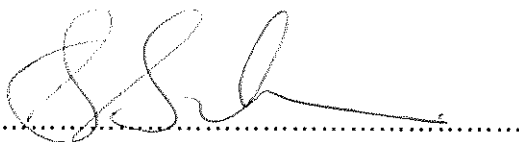
53. It is widely accepted that the use of a mobile phone in a situation where there is a threat of abuse or attack is not only difficult but the movement of trying to locate the phone can often inflame the situation.
54. The SafeTCard is disguised as an ID card holder. It provides discrete dual verification in a dedicated purpose unit, allowing users to alert an operator, and the operator to then assess the situation and take appropriate and proportionate action. The operator is located at a 24/7, A1 accredited, monitoring station. The monitoring station has an Alpha status with 000, meaning that, prima facie, if that monitoring station contacts 000, and says "I have a verified alarm, voice confirmed, we need the police at this address, family violence situation", the police will be sent. It fast tracks the process. The operator also has the client's history in front of them which they can provide to the police as appropriate. The SafeTCard is designed to complement rather than replace the police response. It helps provide the police with the evidence they need for each particular case, and support workers as well, to give them the tools that they need to support their clients. Attached to this statement and marked "SS-4" is a Protective Services document entitled "SafeTCard – Functions (Summary)".
55. The device can also be used as a chaperone service. A woman can activate the SafeTCard and say "I am at Doncaster Shopping Centre, I am just returning to my car, I am parked near Myer, there is a suspicious vehicle, I am a bit worried", and the monitoring station will listen to that. She can request that the monitoring station call her on the phone, and they will do so, and speak with them as they walk to their car. She may then say "everything is OK" and then they can go through the process of deactivating it.
56. The SafeTCard is an excellent tool in the fight against domestic violence and provides peace of mind to survivors. It gives women and children the confidence that if they activate the SafeTCard, they have the knowledge and the ability to say "I

need police now, there is an intervention order". That is empowering to women and children, and we provide training about how to use the device, should that become necessary.

57. We do not give a SafeTCard to every client, but of the 100 or so that we have issued, we have not had a serious assault or death yet, and in fact we have had some considerably improved results. When the device has had to be activated, the police have responded in a timely fashion.

### **3G Safety Watch**

58. 3G Safety Watch is a 24/7 monitored alarm that can be worn discreetly by the victim and when in danger the red alert function can be activated. This will automatically activate GPS and opens a line of communication to the monitoring centre. The monitoring centre is able to hear what is happening at the scene and can record the information for up to 2 hours. As with SafeTCard, that recording can be used later as evidence in either the Family Court or in criminal courts in relation to IVO breaches. The monitoring centre can then call 000, as described above, as appropriate.
59. One advantage of the 3G Safety Watch, compared to the SafeTCard, is that instead of reaching for a button on the latter device and holding it, with the watch the woman just needs to touch her wrist, and then she can have her two hands free, and speak to the monitoring centre. The watch is also connected to a phone application, and an alarm sends the user's GPS location as a notification to that application. The woman is able to determine who can see that notification, including friends and support workers. Those people can then direct call the woman on her 3G Safety Watch, through that application. The woman can also call 000 directly from the 3G Safety Watch.



**Steven Schultze**

Dated: 22 July 2015