

Witness Name: **A194**

Statement No. 1

Exhibits: **A194, 1-2**

Dated: .....

**THE ROSEMARY NELSON INQUIRY**

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**Witness statement of **A194****

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1. **A194** will say as follows:

1. My date of birth is [REDACTED]. I am originally from Chatham in County Kent. At the age of 18, I started work as an apprentice for an electrical company, before joining the Royal Irish Regiment ("RIR") part-time. I later transferred to working full-time for the RIR before leaving the RIR altogether in about late 1999 to return to doing electrical work. I am currently employed as an electrician.
2. Between 1991 and 1999, I was a Private in F Company in the RIR, working as an infantry soldier. My primary role involved patrolling the streets and undertaking whatever other jobs were given to us, such as "stop and search" tasks. This included setting up vehicle check points ("VCPs").
3. Stop and search tasks were carried out fairly regularly. They were partly to show a presence and give confidence to the community, but they also allowed us to search cars, patrol areas around incidents and track the movement of people and the possible transportation of weapons. We tried to gather as much information as possible from the community through this mechanism.

### Vehicle Check Points

4. Lurgan was a highly active Republican area. We therefore regularly undertook VCPs in that area. When we did, we were quite often looking out for information on terrorist threats.
5. There would usually be two teams of soldiers at a VCP, stopping oncoming traffic from both directions. We would usually be accompanied by a member of the RUC, or at least be able to contact one of them quickly in the event we needed their presence, for example, to make an arrest. For selected vehicles we stopped at a VCP we would take details of the car, its occupants and any additional information we gleaned. We usually took personal details of the car occupants, such as their name, address, where they came from and any further information they volunteered. We would then proceed with the search, which usually took around 5 minutes, and then let them continue on their way. We passed our notes on to our commanding officers, who forwarded them on to the intelligence people to deal with the information in their usual fashion.
6. We could not stop everyone at a VCP due to the volume of traffic. We therefore used to undertake random searches of vehicles and individuals. If we had an idea of someone we were looking for in connection with a particular incident, then of course we would stop them. Likewise, if the vehicle looked suspicious (for example, if the car was overweight at the back, this could mean that the occupants were carrying weapons or a bomb in the back of the car causing the suspension to be lowered), we would stop it. We would also stop a vehicle if the occupant's behaviour was suspicious.
7. Ordinarily we were either looking for certain people in connection with a particular offence or incident, or were simply tracking the movements of "known" people around the area. Whilst we did not carry a physical list of names with us, we were briefed on whom to look out for, based on intelligence that was fed into our commanding officers as to who was likely to carry out, or was planning to carry out, an attack or some other terrorist activity.

As we did not know where the "faces" would be at any given time, we would look for these people, see where they were going and what they were up to and note this information.

8. Whilst we usually checked the movements of convicted or suspected terrorists, occasionally we would stop people we didn't know and ask for their details, since it was very useful to build up a picture and gather intelligence on who was moving where, why and what they were doing. If we had good reason to stop them, we could also proceed to search them.
9. If we knew that the person in the vehicle was a solicitor, then we could not stop and search them without good reason. We could not, for example, open or read their legal documents or files of papers unless there was very good reason. Even then, it was very difficult because of the solicitor / client privilege issue.
10. I cannot recall ever having stopped Rosemary Nelson or having made any particular note of her car or her presence. As far as I can recall, Ms Nelson was not on any list of ours and we were not, therefore, looking for her specifically or tracking her movements. I was not given any information about her. I did not know her or ever meet her. I only knew of her from what I saw on the television, for example, I knew that she had an office in the Lurgan area. Similarly, I was not given information on any other solicitors, such as whom they represented, or was asked to look out for them.

#### **Stop and search of Christine McCauley**

11. I have been referred to a Message Form dated 7 October 1997 **RNI 215.059-060** [redacted]. From that document, I can see that a call sign from my battalion was involved in setting up a VCP and that a patrol stopped a Christine McCauley. I do not have any very detailed recollection of the incident. I don't think I had ever heard of Ms McCauley before. I have been asked whether Miss McCauley was on a "list", and as far as I know she was not. I am not sure why we would have stopped her. It may be because we simply didn't know her and wanted to find out who she was. I think we must have stopped

her as part of a routine search. By routine search, I mean that I do not think we were necessarily trying to get any specific details from her or were looking for anything particular in the vehicle.

12. This incident took place off Portadown Road, in a Republican area. I think Corporal Roberts, who had instigated the search, must have decided to check the engine area of the car and so asked Ms McCauley to open the bonnet. Ms McCauley did so, but then dropped the bonnet on to him, hitting him on the helmet and causing him to suffer grazed knuckles. I think she mouthed off a bit at us, and one of the commanding officers, it may have been Sergeant **A192** called the RUC. I cannot now remember who the other team leader was at the incident. I do not know what was said, but I remember that the police came along soon afterwards and dealt with it. Once the RUC appeared on the scene, they took over and that was the last we heard of it. I do not recall there being any further follow up work to be done or any further contact in relation to it.
13. I have been asked by those interviewing me what I know of the alleged abusive language towards Ms McCauley referred to in the Message Form dated 7 October 1997 contained at **RNI 215.059-060**. I can confirm that I do not recall any of our patrol using abusive language whilst I was present and certainly I did not use any abusive language. Further, I do not recall any of our patrol talking about the incident after the event.

#### **Weekend of 13 - 14 March 1999**

14. I was working on the weekend of 13 - 14 March 1999, which was the weekend before Rosemary Nelson's murder. I was involved in a "surge" operation in the Lurgan area. Surge operations were routinely ordered where there was intelligence indicating that an attack was imminent. It involved swamping an area with troops to prevent an attack taking place. Flooding an area with troops stopped the movement of people and weapons or whatever else may be used to carry out an attack. It also allowed us to keep an eye on what was going on in a particular area. Surge operations usually involved the whole company.

which was divided into teams to patrol different areas. Helicopters and dogs were often used as part of this process.

15. I have been asked by those interviewing me whether the surge operation that weekend was at all unusual. Surge operations frequently happened, especially in the Lurgan area. I do not think the use of helicopters that weekend was anything out of the ordinary and nothing sticks out in my mind as unusual. I have also been asked by those interviewing me, but I cannot remember, whether the operation was based on any particular intelligence and / or whether we were told not to go into any particular area for any reason.
16. I have been referred to a statement I made dated 21 September 1999 **RNI 833.096**  , dealing with the patrols that I was involved with on 14 March 1999. Prior to being shown this statement during the course of this interview, I had only a very vague recollection of making this statement. I should clarify that I did not write the statement myself. It was written for me and I just signed it having read it over and checked it. I note from the statement that I was on patrol from 11am until 11pm on 14 March 1999. I cannot recall who else was working on my team. I think the person who drafted my statement already had this information, which is why it appears in my statement. I cannot remember the patrol itself. Nothing during that patrol sticks out in my mind as being abnormal or outside of the usual routine. Of all the patrols that I undertook during my time in the RIR, this patrol does not stand out at all. I confirm that my 1999 statement is accurate to the best of my recollection.

17. I do not have anything else to add in relation to either the weekend of 13 – 14 March 1999,  
the VCP incident with Ms McCauley, or more generally.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the contents of this witness statement are true.

Signed: **A194** .....

Dated: ..... *25/05/07* .....