



## VICTORIA POLICE

**Christine Nixon** <sup>APM</sup>  
**Chief Commissioner of Police**

Victoria Police Centre  
 637 Flinders Street  
 Melbourne 3005  
 Victoria Australia  
 Telephone [61 3] 9247 6890  
 Facsimile [61 3] 9247 6869

P.O. Box 415  
 Melbourne 3005  
 Victoria Australia

Our Ref: CRB 44379/05

Mr Russell Savage

**REDACTED**

Mildura VIC 3500

Dear Mr Savage,

I refer to your letter dated 16 August 2006 to Minister Holding regarding former Detective Senior Constable Denis Ryan. This matter was referred to me by the Minister for consideration on 4 September 2006.

Since your letter, I have arranged for a comprehensive sworn statement to be taken from former Assistant Commissioner, Services Department, John O'Connor who worked as the Chief Commissioner's Special Investigator in 1972. At that time, Mr O'Connor was tasked by the Chief Commissioner, together with Detective Inspector Harvey Childs, to personally investigate the reported misconduct by Monsignor John Day, Parish Priest at the Sacred Heart Church, Mildura.

This matter was subject to inquiries by the Mildura CIB at the time and Assistant Commissioner O'Connor met with Senior Constable Ryan and Detective Sergeant James Barritt in Mildura on 20 January 1972. Later that day, Assistant Commissioner O'Connor and Det Inspector Childs interviewed nine youths, none of which made any allegations against Day. Subsequently, Senior Constable Ryan did not produce any statement of complaint to Assistant Commissioner O'Connor however one statement alleging sexual assault by Monsignor Day was subsequently recorded.

Following extensive interviews and investigation the brief of evidence was referred to the Crown Solicitor's Office for approval to prosecute. The Crown Prosecutor did not approve the brief due to the lack of corroboration as was then legally required.

On 7 September 1972, Assistant Commissioner O'Connor met Denis Ryan again at the Mildura Court where unrelated charges against Detective Sergeant Barritt

were heard and dismissed. Assistant Commissioner O'Connor inquired as to why Ryan had resigned from Victoria Police and he advised that it was because he could not get on with Detective Sergeant Barritt.

Following examination of this extensive statement by former Assistant Commissioner O'Connor, I am completely satisfied with the conduct of the investigation into the Day matter and that Denis Ryan resigned from Victoria Police of his own accord.

I also attach for your records a copy of earlier advice to you dated 7 April 1998 from former Deputy Commissioner O'Loughlin regarding the Ryan matter.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

Christine Nixon APM  
**Chief Commissioner**

/ /