

ATTENTION

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11/159/01

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**NORTHERN DISTRICT COMMANDER**

Enquiries: IND/EP

3897  
RELEASED UNDER  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
TASMANIA POLICE

17 July 2001

Commissioner of Police

COPIES NO. A-2752/01

FILE NO. Bindd 24/85

20 JUL 2001

ACTION DcoP

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:

Deputy Commissioner J JOHNSTON  
HOBART

[Handwritten notes: Noted, R/L, 11/159/01]

**ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO IMPORT FOXES INTO TASMANIA**

The file involving the fox investigation, Northern District is forwarded for your attention.

The attached report (copy) submitted by Inspector Otley and dated 13 July 2001 was forwarded by facsimile for the information of the COP on Friday 13 Jul 2001 following a request from the Commissioner.

[Handwritten initials]

**Co-Operation - National Parks & Wildlife Services**

I have shown concern at this enquiry from its commencement. As you would be aware initially the cooperation of DPIWE (Parks & Wildlife Service P&WS) left a lot to be desired and it wasn't until I understand, a direction was given at executive level in DPIWE that this changed.

**Original Information**

The original 'brief' provided us, contained information which on the face of it supported that there was a real likelihood of foxes having been brought into the state. However, on investigation it became abundantly clear that the original informant (spoken to by police) had only passed on part of that information, most of which was hearsay and gossip. The remaining information seems to have come from P&WS personnel who have relied on rumour and probably 'guesswork'

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None of the information was confirmed and some was found to be highly suspect.

**Explanation for Information**

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[REDACTED]

**Responsible Person**

Police also had problems in the initial stages in identifying a responsible person within P&WS to work with and to take ownership for that Department. The individual members, generally worked well with police.

**Exhibit Analysis**

There was a clear lack of support from P&WS with regards the analysis process of exhibits taken possession of which were likely to have confirmed the existence of a fox (foxes) in the state. We were continually given explanations (run around) to cover for the slowness of the analysis. It is not said that it was deliberate but it did identify with poor practices.

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**Covert Enquiry**

The enquiry done by police here has been covert. I think the lack of publicity on our involvement and particularly with the type of information we were working with demonstrates the success of that approach. The members involved in the investigation are to be commended for their technique and adroitness as it has prevented an escalation of publicity as would no doubt have occurred. This is not to say that the detail giving cause for our involvement will not be mischievously released in the future, as many people are now aware of police involvement .

**Evidence**

The police enquiry has not uncovered any 'real' evidence whatsoever that would tend to confirm the existence of a fox (s) in Tasmania

The analysis done on exhibits have proved negative and many of the 'so called' sightings have been suspect. I reiterate the original information provided to police is unconvincing and was proved to be wrong in some instances and with the informant denying having provided some detail.

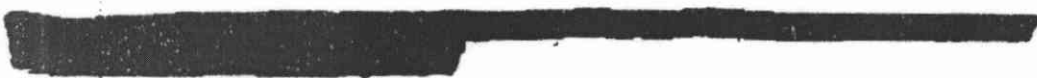
**St Helens**

The information as recently provided from St Helens did not fall within the scope of this enquiry and therefore has not been enquired into.

It does seem however, that the information on that shooting is spurious.

**Conclusion**

I think Detective Sergeant Coad sums up the situation reasonably well when he says:-



I think it is fair to say that had police received a similar quality of information on a crime, the chances are that the rating given it would have been at the lowest end of the scale.

A further part of this file has been retained within the CIB office.

In the absence of a further direction/request the investigation is now concluded



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Commander

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NOTED  
  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER  
31/7/2001