

**INQUIRY INTO UNSOLVED MURDERS AND LONG-TERM
MISSING PERSONS CASES IN NEW SOUTH WALES
BETWEEN 1965 AND 2010**

Organisation: Search Dogs Sydney

Date Received: 3 June 2026



Any One, Any Where, Any Time

Search Dogs Sydney Inc

www.searchdogssydney.org

Committee: Portfolio Committee No. 1 - Premier and Finance

Re: Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Unsolved murders and long-term missing persons cases in New South Wales between 1965 and 2010

Background and Establishment of Search Dogs Sydney Inc

Search Dogs Sydney Inc provide search, investigation and recovery services, free of charge, for families of missing and unlocated persons across Australia. Our current volunteers, search technicians, pilots, investigators and specialists, support the over 100 families of missing loved ones. We do not receive any financial support from the NSW or Federal governments and are a registered not for profit organisation and registered ACNC charity. Search Dogs Sydney Inc are the only organisation outside of the Australian Federal Police with 4 certified Lost Persons Behaviour Instructors trained and authorised to provide this life saving training to Search and Rescue professionals.

Search Dogs Sydney Inc was formed in 2016 after the NSW State Emergency Service ceased operation of the USAR Canine Capability in January 2016. This loss of capability to the NSW community came about when the agency (NSWSES) requested a report (**Attachment A**) be drawn up to ascertain support for a canine capability in NSW. It is clear that this report was in fact flawed with much of the data unable to be correlated as being accurate at the time of publication and was in fact authored by an employee of the NSWSES that had no previous experience or knowledge in the often dangerous and complex nature of canine search, rescue and recovery. Ultimately, this report has shown to have been a major factor for the lack of integration of any canine capability into the NSW Police policy and procedures when undertaking missing persons investigations.

This report subsequently left several highly qualified and experienced Search Technicians, as too their highly trained canines, to be cast aside and not be utilised for missing persons investigations, and the NSW community to be left with a lack of capability in specialised search, rescue and recovery dogs for missing persons and disasters. These decisions then ensured that the NSW Police dog squad once again was responsible for training, certifying and deploying USAR dogs. A role that the NSW Police forgo in 2010 as it was outside their area of expertise and required vast investments in time, effort and resources to provide such a capability. There were

subsequent gaps identified with the NSW Police Dog squad undertaking the role as per the Major Structural Collapse Sub Plan (**Attachment H**) by providing GP (General Purpose) dogs to undertake USAR operations that are not adequately trained, assessed or experienced.

(**Attachments D,E,F,G**) As such, Ms Heather SCOTT still remains missing, her body unlocated, during the Lismore flood event in February/March 2022. The response by the NSW Police highlighted the severe deficiencies within the NSW Police Force and the NSW Police Dog Squad to respond to disasters with the current standards of dogs not being suitable for such roles and responsibilities.

In September 2014, our founding members attended the Rozelle Building Collapse. In this USAR multi agency response, Search Dog Boof was able to correctly pinpoint the location of the remains of the mother and child that was tragically found deceased. It was at this event that both founders identified and commenced to correct the issues surrounding canine capability in NSW with regards to Search, Rescue and Recovery, and subsequently Australia. Noting that no Police Force in Australia, nor any USAR Capability, have adequately trained, assessed and qualified search and rescue Human Remains Detection canines for use in ASR 5 type disaster responses. These assets are currently only available through NGO's. The NSW Police still do not have effective capability for these operations as witnessed in their multiple USAR deployments.

In 2019, Search Dogs Sydney Inc became a founding member of the Australian Search Dog Federation. This alliance provided support for our organisation to train and assess both our Handlers, Search Technicians and Canines to a standard consistent with other teams and organisations across Australia. The absence of an Australian Standard for Search and Rescue dogs has been the topic for discussion within AFAC and the canine organisations for many years and was first highlight in the Best Practice Guidelines (**Attachment B**). However, AFAC determined in 2019 (**Attachment C**), thanks to lobbying by the NSW Police Force, that Canine Search and Rescue standards should be set down by the individual states and territories. The Australian Search Dog Federation ensures we have access to knowledge, resources and technical sharing, in conjunction with the highest assessment standards in Australia. It is also our peak body that assists in representing our specialists' capabilities. This relationship also allows for access to and the prompt deployment of resources from around Australia to assist communities across NSW with Search, Rescue and Recovery canines 365 days a year.

Government Engagement and Advocacy Efforts

Since our inception in early 2016, Search Dogs Sydney Inc have continued to approach the NSW Police and many Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries on numerous occasions, including having Parliamentary Secretary Melanie Gibbons attend a site visit, so too the Shadow Police Minister Walt Secord, who both made promises to ensure our organisation would gain recognition and funding, but to no avail once they returned to Macquarie Street. For many years prior to 04 December 2023, we lobbied Ms. Anne Stanley MP, Federal Member for Werriwa, for assistance, also to no avail, including a meeting held on that date for which the MP has failed to acknowledge any requests or issues raised at the meeting held by missing persons representatives, ASDF representatives and SDS representatives. We have also requested the

minutes to the meeting of 04 December 2023, however the Member for Werriwa refuses to provide a transcript. This transcript would show the requests of family members and missing persons specialists, for an inquiry into the many failings of missing persons investigations currently being overseen by the NSW Police.

Former Shadow Police Minister Paul Toole presented our petition with over 10,000 signatures to NSW Legislative Assembly for a debate in June 2025 (**Attachment I**), the requested items in this debate was supported by the then Shadow Emergency Services Minister Gurmeh Singh, Shadow Attorney General Mr. Allistar Henskens MP and Greens member Jenny Leong , however once again, the NSW Police Minister Yasmin Cately could not attend the debate nor provide a response to the debate that was presented, preferring to leave a response by Tara Moriarty (**Attachment J**) , who vehemently opposed this inquiry but now seems to support it.

We have attempted to meet with the current NSW Police Minister, however as noted in emails via Mr Nathan Hagarty, Member for Leppington, the Minister does not believe there is anything to discuss. It is our view that the NSW Police Minister should act on behalf of not only the NSW Police, but also be a conduit for access to the NSW Police force by providing easier access to meetings that provide both positive and negative reviews of the performances of the NSW Police Force. Yasmin Cately MP, by not wanting to meet and discuss the matters contained within this submission has and continues to compromise missing persons and unsolved homicide cases, including solved homicide cases where the body of the unfortunate victim has not been recovered.

This has highlighted the difficulty of engaging constructive discussions when it involves the NSW Police Force and the need for a clear path for organisations with feasible solutions to complex issues involving law enforcement to engage in constructive discussions with the relevant Ministers and the lack of NSW Police Executive will to follow up any potential solutions to the crisis they are currently enduring with a shortage of police numbers and issues pertaining to missing persons and a lack of suitable resources.

The time and effort spent on advocating on behalf of our missing loved ones has dramatically affected the amount of time and effort we as an organisation has been able to provide to directly searching for the missing.

NSW Police

Assessment of Feasibility and Procurement Concerns

Search Dogs Sydney Inc have sent numerous emails and registered post introduction letters to Local Area Commanders within a 3 hour response time of our Western Sydney headquarters, have attempted to meet with multiple Police Commissioner's and Local Area Commanders,

with the only official response (**Attachment W**) we have received, in over 10 years, was advising us that the use of our specialist capabilities was 'not feasible'. However, a Feasibility study was never undertaken to our knowledge and has never been provided or made public if in fact this study was undertaken. Yet, when the NSW Police did not have dogs available, trained or handlers educated in the risks associated with deploying dogs in disaster zones, the NSW Police State Crime Command reached out and requested the specialised support of Search Dogs Sydney.

Given the vast amount of missing person searches that Search Dogs Sydney has undertaken and located missing persons both alive and deceased, highlights that our organisation is not only feasible but is approximately 5 years ahead of current NSW and National law enforcement agencies when it comes to investigation techniques and technological advancements. However, given the obstacles placed by the NSW Police Force, there is no clear pathway designed for agencies such as ours to approach the NSW Police with advancements in techniques and technologies. This has resulted in many deaths over the past 10 years that we believe could have been avoided.

With missing persons investigations coming under so many different departments of the NSW Police i.e. Police Rescue, LAC's, State Crime Command, Public Order and Riot Squad, Missing Persons Registry etc. has meant that information flow has been ineffective from our approaches through to the families seeking clarification and updates of cases with many internal documents seeming to conflict with each other, including recommendations for searches as per the NATSAR Manual for peer reviews external to the coronial inquest process.

It must also be noted that it appears that many underhanded and potentially corrupt tactics then ensued after our advice that we were 'not feasible'. Whilst we attempted to make an application to the NSW Government under their Unsolicited Proposal legislation, as recommended by Mr B Mumberson in the attached letter (**Attachment I**), the NSW Police and the VRA entered into negotiations simultaneously to commence a search dog capability in NSW. It is our belief, subject to email correspondence (**Attachment O**), that the NSW Police then procured a search dog capability, based on relationships held by members of both organisations.

The actions of both the NSW Police and the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) seem to contravene the application of these rules of the Unsolicited Proposal legislation protections and appears that immediately after receiving the letter that the NSW Police sat down with the then VRA Commissioner, Mark Gibson and potentially other members of the VRA, to open a search dog capability.

Search Dogs Sydney, had we chosen to join the VRA would have been responsible for remunerating the VRA at a rate of \$55,000.00 per annum.

Reporting and Initial Response to Missing Persons

Over the past 10 years, Search Dogs Sydney has been requested to assist in locating many missing persons by families and friends of missing loved ones. We shall not mention each and every name in this report, however we have noted many instances whereby the NSW Police have failed to accept the initial missing persons report that has been filed. This causes delays to search response times and has ultimately led to the reported missing person being located many months later deceased.

These reports come from most Police Local Area Commands across the state. This failure appears to highlight a systemic issue surrounding

- the training of NSW Police when a person is reported missing,
- other competing priorities for NSW Police personnel that are usually managing the front desk,
- senior officers that appear to be biased towards not accepting and deploying resources due to the staff shortages and other associated issues including budgetary constraints.
- A distinct lack of knowledge of the resources available to them
- A lack of honest reporting by supporting units of the NSW Police of their actual capabilities.

Although there appears to be a pathway and SOP for police to follow when a person has been reported missing, from the outset this system is fundamentally flawed by not allowing for the rapid response of specialist capabilities to be notified and deployed to reduce the time for the missing person to receive the assistance and support required. Missing persons, which is NOT a criminal offence, are placed into the same NSW Police workflows and triaged according to current workloads of concurrent criminal matters. This workflow has the potential to cause more harm to missing persons suffering from health issues, age related issues and mental health by delaying access to the necessary resources for their swift and rapid location. The scaling up of resources as time progresses since a person has been reported is fundamentally flawed and enlarges the search areas exponentially, so too the potential for harm to the missing person.

As soon as a missing persons report is entered into the system, organisations such as ours should be automatically advised so that we can determine if our resources can be utilised. Currently, the report has to slowly trickle through the NSW Police system, seeking the support of multiple different ranks of police, involve multiple different departments of the police and often the frontline police change every shift and the correct resources sometimes not deployed for several days and sometimes not at all. These issues are highlighted in the attached case studies.

Investigative Practices and Procedural Concerns

With so many departments being involved with a missing persons investigation, eyewitness reports, capture of dash cam and CCTV footage and follow ups of sightings are inadequately followed up. General duties officers are tasked with these matters as the detectives are not often available, this is then only undertaken if there are no other competing priorities or urgent requests for assistance. General Duties personnel are not trained detectives or SAR specialists and often unknowingly overlook the importance of the situation yet are often given the primary role of investigating sightings, taking reports from families and witnesses, or being dispatched to a possible sighting many hours after the report has been made.

The NSW Police SOP is too cumbersome to be effective for the search for missing persons and should be greatly simplified to ensure a more cohesive approach. The NSW Police have shown their indifference for missing persons by:

- Closing the missing persons unit
- Failing to provide families with dedicated family liaison officers
- Not deploying available resources early enough
- Failing to capture valuable CCTV days and sometimes weeks afterwards
- Detectives missing critical CCTV footage due to not viewing correctly
- Not having adequately trained and dedicated dogs or air assets
- Failing to call in SES, RFS etc as soon as possible, rather, waiting for more evidence to come to light
- Base decisions on biases and other operational requirements rather than factual evidence available
- Guided by LAC procedures and practices based on individual LAC Commanders views and ideas.
- Complete lack of oversight to these investigations in the event that families have concerns about the various approaches taken by the officers involved in the search and/or investigation.
- Failing to document GPS data of searches accurately and providing the data to the many layers of NSW Police personnel involved in the investigation

On several recent missing persons requests for assistance, Search Dogs Sydney has been made aware of comments to families by the NSW Police that they do not have the resources and/or Detectives to allocate to their investigation. The most current being Ms. Rita-Marie Collin, missing from Kariong (05 May 2026) on the Central Coast. The family did not receive any

support or assistance from a specialist investigator until 72 hours had passed (08 May 2026). It took NSW Police almost 120 hours (10 May 2026) before they requested the support of external agencies. By which time SDS dogs and drones had already searched the areas in the days prior. Given the medical requirements and the extreme mental health issues surrounding her disappearance, this highlights the need for a flexible and specialist agency to provide resources when the NSW Police are unable to and for both agencies to investigate simultaneously to resolve these issues and locate the missing person.

The Bonds family were advised when their son went missing (09 Dec 2025) that the NSW Police could not conduct an investigation and search simultaneously when reports of CCTV images came to light. The search was stood down after just 3 hours and did not commence for another 18 days because NSW Police could not spare the resources. Sadly, Mr. Bonds body was located approximately 400m from where he was last seen some 21 days after he was reported missing to the NSW police. The NSW Police Investigators subsequently failed to provide all information to the NSW Coroner when reporting his death whereby the Coroner was forced to request further information.

It appears due to answers provided to NSW Parliament and the Special Commission of Inquiry into the LGBTIQ hate crimes and the Wood Royal Commission (**Attachment L**), that NSW Police investigations into the long term missing are undertaken following the Standard Operating Procedures, Unsolved Homicide Team, State Crime Command, Homicide Squad (**Attachment M**) are triaged utilising potentially corrupt, false and/or misleading case notes provided by the NSW Police. Based on this document, investigators are instructed NOT to contact and reinterview witnesses but merely rely on the information contained in the files. This technique is fundamentally flawed due to several issues.

Firstly, based on the findings of the Wood Royal Commission, in particular the evidence provided by Trevor Haken, any investigation carried out and overseen by the NSW Police prior to and possibly for many years later after the Royal Commission, that the evidence would be and could be severely compromised due to the widespread and systemic corruption of NSW Police officers and the failed Internal Affairs Investigations that were designed to seek the truth but were also compromised due to police 'holding the line' or being tipped off to collude with evidence and pervert the course of justice.

Extract from Trevor Hakens testimony -Wood Royal Commission

5.21 Mr Haken joined the NSW Police Force, as it then was, in 1969 aged 19, immediately after leaving high school. He initially served at North Sydney where he said that he first encountered corruption in the form of a pre-existing system of gratuities from tow truck operators and undertakers⁸⁵⁸ in addition to witnessing assaults and verbals.⁸⁵⁹ In 1974 he was posted to Number 21 Division, the training ground for young detectives, where he became aware of

improper associations between police and criminal identities, the selective policing of illegal gaming and prostitution, alcohol abuse and the exercise of police powers beyond the law.

5.22 Whilst stationed as a junior detective at Chatswood in the late 1970s, he said that he engaged in opportunistic corruption involving the theft of drugs and money, and in the thwarting of internal investigations by 'holding the line'.⁸⁶⁰

5.23 From 1979 to 1982, Mr Haken served at the Drug Squad CIB. Corruption in that Squad was not the hit and miss affair he had previously encountered. On his account, he became a participant in the systematic manipulation of evidence, the abuse of police powers, the breach of the criminal law in the pursuit of a conviction, and opportunistic theft.⁸⁶¹

5.24 Following a dispute with a senior officer in 1982, Mr Haken was sent to Phillip Street, the first of two 'penalty' stations at which he was to serve. He admitted to this Commission that he participated in the theft of property during the execution of a search warrant while serving at this station.⁸⁶²

5.25 In 1983, he joined the Commonwealth-New South Wales Joint Task Force on Drug Trafficking (JTF), a posting that he expected would lead to career advancement. He gave evidence that during his three years' service at the JTF he engaged in, or became aware of, numerous incidents of corrupt conduct. His experiences there served to reinforce for him the notion that corruption was part and parcel of life as a member of the Service and that involvement in corrupt conduct served to enhance the reputation of an officer amongst those officers who 'played A grade'.⁸⁶³

5.26 Mr Haken, by now a detective sergeant, developed a drinking problem while serving with the JTF, which together with the animosity that developed in respect of the uneven distribution of stolen money during Operation Pickup (also known as 'the Christmas Club') led to his transfer to the second 'penalty' station, Central Detectives in Sydney. Here his drinking problem worsened. On his account, he continued to be a recipient of corrupt payments from criminals and to be involved in the manipulation of evidence. He became disillusioned with the Service whilst stationed at Central Detectives which was understaffed and neglected, and this led him to complain to the media. The Service's response was to transfer him to the Kings Cross Detectives' Office.⁸⁶⁴

5.27 Upon his arrival at Kings Cross, Detective Sergeants John Swan and Neville Scullion introduced Mr Haken to 'the laugh' - an arrangement by which police received payments from drug dealers and operators of strip clubs. 'The laugh' was confined to the sergeants in the Detectives' Office.⁸⁶⁵ Mr Haken eventually became the person who collected and divided the contributions among members of 'the laugh' sorting it into envelopes with coded pictures to identify the officers.⁸⁶⁶

5.28 In 1991 Mr Haken was appointed as head of the Kings Cross Drug Unit which earned a reputation for a high workload and arrest rate at street level. When as a supervisor he allocated jobs which had a corruption potential, he assigned them to officers he knew were corrupt. He went undetected for years because there were so many officers in precisely the same position, and such a high volume of work.⁸⁶⁷

5.29 Partly as a result of the rules which Mr Haken and other senior Kings Cross police had developed in consultation with the criminal element, the drug trade in Kings Cross changed

from a largely disorganised ad hoc affair to an organised network of major drug factions operating with relative impunity.⁸⁶⁸

5.30 In late 1993 Mr Haken was transferred under a cloud of suspicion to the City of Sydney detectives under the immediate command of Detective Inspector Fowler. This period of service Mr Haken described as one of little work and long lunches. He still received his share of 'the laugh' and also received payments from a Chinatown businessman engaged in the rental of Asian soap opera videos in return for ensuring police action against the video pirate competitors of that businessman who were engaged in copyright infringement.⁸⁶⁹ In late 1994 Mr Haken learnt that he was under investigation by Internal Affairs. After being called to the NSW Crime Commission for examination and there denying any misconduct, he was approached by the Royal Commission. He then agreed to assist the Commission by working covertly for it. This activity, which extended over a period of nine months, led to the breakthrough which later unfolded in the evidence and persuaded other officers to co-operate with the Commission.

5.31 Mr Haken attributed his deviance to the environment in which he found himself. Like others similarly placed officers, he acknowledged that there were detectives who did not take money, and that the decision to do so was his alone. However, he found that to join the club of detectives, he had to engage in corrupt activity and join in drinking and similar practices.⁸⁷⁰ The alternative was to be treated as an outcast.⁸⁷¹ He was always able to find someone with whom he could 'carry out untoward activity'.⁸⁷²

5.32 He regarded the giving of false evidence as part and parcel of being a detective,⁸⁷³ something encouraged by senior officers and the public. He made no attempt to rationalise the theft of money or drugs, similarly regarding it as part and parcel of life as a detective, particularly where the 'victims' were drug dealers.

5.33 He informed the Commission that if a corrupt officer moved station, he usually took his comrades with him. This made it much safer to continue to operate corruptly.⁸⁷⁴

5.34 Mr Haken noted the paradox that it is possible to be an effective police officer and a corrupt officer at the same time. This was his position during the latter part of his service at the Kings Cross Drug Unit. He had seen many other detectives 'work both sides of the street'. He cautioned that the more successful an officer was in working the 'sunny side of the street' the more likely he was to succeed on 'the dark side', and the more difficult it was to unmask him.

5.35 Mr Haken said that he knew detectives would hold the line, lie on oath and rebut any suggestion of corruption unless they were trapped by tapes and videos.⁸⁷⁵ An increase in the odds of being caught out, which he did not consider high while internal investigations were carried out by police,⁸⁷⁶ would discourage corruption.⁸⁷⁷ This was an important factor in the entrenchment of corrupt practices.

5.36 Finally, in relation to internal inquiries he said that, in his experience, targets were almost invariably tipped off by friends or workmates, including those who were otherwise honest. This was at least in part due to the 'them and us' relationship which existed with Internal Affairs. In any Internal Affairs investigation of himself, Mr Haken had always been aware of the inquiry well in advance of any interview. As a result he was able to collude with his colleagues. Because of the general perception that IA leaked 'like a sieve', he did not expect any colleagues, whether honest or not, to dob him in.

Sadly, under the current NSW Police Standard Operating Procedures for the Unsolved Homicide Team (Section 2.1, Triage and Review Process) (**Attachment M**), all unsolved homicide and long-term missing persons matters risk being affected by systemic bias. This arises from reliance on briefs of evidence, case files, and coronial materials that may have been shaped by inaccurate or misleading investigative documentation, particularly during periods of misconduct identified by the Wood Royal Commission (pre 2005).

The directive not to re-interview witnesses—despite this being a fundamental investigative practice—further undermines the integrity of these reviews. As noted by Mr Haken, there was a culture in which providing false evidence was, at times, normalised among detectives. Consequently, any investigation relying on such material is inherently compromised and the investigation should not utilise this information until it has been verified as factually correct by re interviewing the witnesses in person.

This raises a critical question: to what extent have coronial investigations been affected by flawed or misleading police evidence? This concern extends to both historical and current cases, particularly where the Unsolved Homicide Team continues to rely on documentation that may be unverified, compromised, or unreliable, without undertaking independent validation through witness re-engagement.

Additionally, the reassignment of cold cases and long-term missing persons investigations to Local Area Commands—following the restructuring of the former Missing Persons Unit—has introduced further limitations. Investigators often face significant constraints in time, resources, expertise, and access to specialist capabilities. The scale and complexity of NSW Police systems, including platforms such as E@gle.i, also hinder effective statewide coordination and information sharing. Critical data pertaining to investigations is not easily accessible and shared between investigations hindering the ability to identify cross jurisdiction, both internally and externally investigations. External stakeholders, including Search Dogs Sydney, have identified serious deficiencies in these systems and their application and have developed unique investigative applications for investigations.

The current investigative processes within the NSW Police Force are currently in question with potential human remains located in Lake Ainsworth in August 2024, have not been exhumed by the NSW Police for forensic identification. This information was provided to NSW Police State Crime Command Detective Inspector Nigel Warren by Hedley Thomas. To date, no investigator from the NSW Police have contacted us to have formal statements undertaken, nor undertaken operations to exhume the remains from the Lake even though they have been provided with concise GPS coordinates. It is believed that these remains may be that of missing person Bronwyn WINFIELD (**Attachment P**)

With the transfer and closure of the missing persons unit, Local Area Commands are not structured, resourced nor staffed adequately to undertake long term investigations given the

constraints placed upon Investigators by NSW Police management and often competing priorities of their current criminal case loads and a distinct lack of forensic and search specialists. Search Dogs Sydney have been made aware by forensic specialists that the NSW Police do not have the ability to scientifically test for human remains in soil samples. A critical investigative technique when searching for human remains in conjunction with specialist search technicians, technologies and dogs trained in forensic archaeological investigations. One must question what resources were then utilised to search for the remains of Lyn DAWSON whose body still remains unrecovered given that the NSW Police have qualified in a previous coronial investigation of Ray SPEECHLEY, that the NSW Police do NOT have cadaver dogs trained to search for human remains that have been disposed of for longer than 3 years.

The issues raised above highlight the urgent requirement for an independent investigative body be developed to ensure that these missing persons investigations and the search for the remains of unsolved and solved homicides are not compromised and that mandatory reinvestigation of all information, including that obtained by the NSW Police, is undertaken to ensure that everything humanly possible to provide the families and loved ones with answers

Spontaneous Volunteers

NSW Police regularly, however very haphazardly, utilise a geotargeting text approach to locate a missing person. This approach has seen feedback from the community including:

- Is it a scam – sent a spam message and told to click on a link
- It has been highlighted that there are many devices that are in a geotargeted location that do not receive a text message
- Members of the community who receive these texts are not informed if the missing person has been located
- If they can issue the SMS asking for general public's assistance, why can they not request specialist support from agencies such as Search Dogs Sydney.
- Police and emergency services are unable to provide the resources to manage the varying numbers of community volunteers this task has been easily managed by SDS for many years
- Lack of consistency for its use between LAC's

Social media is utilised however by switching off commenting reduces the spread of the message; persons cannot easily upload photos to Crimestoppers or 131444 etc and many witnesses who have valuable information do not have an alternative way of providing intelligence as they are concerned with contacting law enforcement utilising current channels. Given the size of the NSW Police media unit, commenting should never be switched off for a missing persons investigation.

- In the past 2 years, Search Dogs Sydney is the only organisation in NSW that has the ability, training and specialist tools to manage, document and electronically track the hundreds of spontaneous volunteers that wish to assist and support in the search for a missing person anywhere within NSW.

Oversight and Accountability

The NSW Police appear to have not learnt any lessons from the past, especially the use of internal investigations given the 2 serious misconduct and malfeasance complaints raised in regard to canine search and rescue capabilities of the NSW Police. NSW Police, rather than investigate these serious matters, emailed the complainant warning that any further complaints would be filed and ignored. (**Attachment N**). This approach to conducting investigations correlates to the issues contained in the Wood Royal Commission as to the current SOP's to not actually conduct face to face interviews. This lack of transparency has created a culture of compromised investigations and substandard investigative practices across the service.

Throughout this complaint process of both the Surry Hills Building Collapse and the Lismore Landslide, both the NSW Police and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, not a single investigator made contact to discuss the issues in detail. The complainant was never contacted to be interviewed to understand the implications of the complaints and why they were being raised. Instead, the complaint was put into the system, the timeframe for resolving complaints went through the motions and the bare minimum was undertaken to resolve the issues. When the NSW Police were contacted for follow up, there was no way of tracing the complaint number from the LECC within the police system and the LECC was not of an assistance when requesting a follow up.

It is the view of the author that

(**Attachment K**). This complaint was subsequently dismissed with no action taken to resolve the issues highlighted. In a telephone call from a member of NSW Fire and Rescue, the officer attempted to deflect responsibility to the NSWSES. We welcome the committee request all documentation, including any and all peer reviews and emails etc from these agencies to ascertain the actions of both agencies from the commencement of the initial complaint through to the responses of both agencies as this currently leaves the NSW community urgently lacking in canine search capabilities in the event of disaster.

It is clear from experience that both the LECC and internal NSW Police complaints processes are not suitable for oversight into missing persons investigations. We recommend that Search (NSW) be adopted urgently, with all NSW Police computer inputs for Concerns for Welfare or Missing Persons, be referred automatically and then the search/investigation be overseen by independent Investigators and Search experts to ensure that no evidence is lost or not collected. That the correct resources are deployed appropriately and that families are provided an alternative support network during this heartbreaking times of ambiguity.

Feasibility Determination and Procurement Concerns

On the 23rd of November 2021, we received correspondence from the Manager, Ministerial Services, NSW Police Force (**Attachment W**) advising us that our services were not feasible and recommended we follow the NSW Government 'Unsolicited Proposal' framework. Before we had the opportunity to commence down this pathway, the NSW Police and VRA entered into agreements to undermine our capability. This included advice from the VRA that we were not successful because we did not have a relationship with the police (**Attachment X**), yet we had attempted to form the relationship since our inception in 2016 to no avail.

This raises the questions as to

- what actions did the NSW Police undertake with the VRA to commence a canine squad
- why did the NSW Police Force not permit SDS to follow the NSW Government Unsolicited Proposal guidelines
- Why is the former commissioner of the VRA, who made executive decisions in regard to this capability, now an executive within the VRA dog squad
- What NSWSES information was removed and utilised for personal gain to create a dog unit by a NSW SES paid member that subsequently became the VRA Dog squad
- Why did the VRA attempt to charge SDS \$55,000.00 per annum to become members only to then deny this.
- Why was it imperative that the new VRA search dog capability receive over \$175,000.00 sponsorship prior to the unit being officially launched?
- Where does this sponsorship money get spent?

Yet given the not feasible view by the NSW Police Executive branch, the NSW State Crime Command branch were compelled to request our assistance to the Surry Hills Building fire in

June 2023 as they had been advised by the NSW Police Dog Squad on 3 separate occasions, to 3 separate officers, that

- a. They did not have dogs trained for disasters of that nature?
- b. They did not have any dogs available to attend and
- c. They were awaiting veterinary advice?

Given that the NSW Police dog squad had been providing Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) dogs to Fire & Rescue NSW since January 2016, one must question what due diligence the squad had undertaken prior to deploying their dogs to an additional 12 USAR events prior to the Surry Hills building fire and the NSW Polices abilities to provided suitably trained dogs as required to undertake USAR investigations.

NSW Police Dog Squad – Capability and Operational Concerns

When SDS commenced operations in 2016, the NSW Police dog squad had approximately 116 dogs under its control. This is down from a unit high of 169 dogs in 2013 and the current 2025 dog levels of just 74 dogs. The decision by AFAC (**Attachment C**) in 2019 to leave the training and assessment standards to be determined by each State or Territory, was detrimental to every missing person as it subsequently left the Standards to be determined by each Law Enforcement and organisation to train and assess at varying standards. When questioned in NSW Parliament (**Attachments D,E,F,G**) the standards NSW Police train to vary dramatically. This variation would be and is very detrimental to an effective and precise Search, Rescue and Recovery dog.

Without attempting to underscore the importance of proper training, regular ability for the dogs to receive adequate ‘nose time’ in training and handler skills, there are some simple things that distinguish the difference between a Search and Rescue dogs and a General Purpose dog.

Firstly, a General Purpose dog is trained to track down and apprehend a fleeing suspect when a crime has been or is suspected to have been committed. These dogs utilise their extreme jaw strength to hold a suspect on the ground or in position whilst a human police officer can restrain the said suspect. A SAR dog is trained to locate a human in any environment, notify its handler and be extremely friendly whilst undertaking the task.

Secondly, a General Purpose dog is tasked with locating evidence discarded by the suspect/criminal i.e. Drugs, weapons, cash, clothing or stolen property etc. These dogs cannot and should not be deployed in Urban Search and Rescue environments because of the copious amounts of debris and human contaminated items. This is also the case when a dog is searching for a missing person in a residential or metropolitan area. The dogs are simply not able to distinguish between humans and items that humans have touched/handled. (**Attachment K**).

Thirdly, there is no training methodology available anywhere in the world to be able to train a Law Enforcement dog to determine the difference between a fleeing suspect/criminal and an innocent missing person or persons suffering mental health issues. As the NSW Police Minister advised NSW Parliament in Budget Estimates.

Since our inception we have lobbied numerous Police Ministers, Police Commissioners, the State Rescue Board, AFAC, Local Area Command Chief Superintendents and MPs of all persuasions from Local, State and Federal affiliations to have Canine Search, Rescue and Recovery recognised as a stand alone 'rescue' response when a person is reported missing. Yet each and every person or organisation has had an almost identical response. It's up to the police. Yet the Police and the Minister refuse to enter into discussion on how to improve the current capabilities.

Given the response of the NSW Police at the Coronial Inquest of Mr Raymond SPEECHLEY that they do not have a cadaver dog capability able to locate human remains after 3 years one must ask:

- Why do NSW Police dog squad deploy these dogs to searches for persons missing longer than 3 years?
- Why do NSW Police deploy dogs to interstate law enforcement for cases longer than 3 years?
- How many times have the NSW Police relied on these dogs for cases older than 3 years?
- Why do NSW Police deploy dogs to interstate law enforcement, Victoria and South Australia, given that both Law enforcement agencies have access to cadaver dogs in their own state?
- Why have the NSW Police not sought assistance from other organisations to provide canine support for this lack of capability?
- How do the NSW Police believe it to be best practice to drive around with a dog in the rear of a police vehicle for 34km and classify this as a thorough and comprehensive search practice?
- Given the requirement for evidence and documentation why do NSW Police not utilise GPS tracking on both the Handler and Dog when undertaking a search for a missing person?
- Why do the NSW Police believe that a joint USAR exercise is sufficient as an assessment for individual canines participating in USAR operations given this is the only organisation across the world with this belief?

Whilst the NSW Police have a great history in searching, locating and apprehending persons suspected of committing a crime, these dogs should NOT be utilised in the search for and location of any missing person due to the risks associated with the missing person suffering from a physical attack. Nonaggressive tracking/trailing dogs, certified USAR dogs as well as air scent area search dogs should be the only dogs utilised for missing persons searches. It must be noted that the NSW Police do not understand the term air scent area search (**Attachment T**)

as is mentioned in the National Search and Rescue Manual for which NSW Police is the agency responsible under the Inter-Governmental Agreement (Attachment U)

Case Study 1 – Tracking/Trailing Dog Team Performance

Search Dogs Sydney's training facility was broken into on Sunday 30 November 2025 around 11:00pm. This break in was captured on CCTV cameras and '000' was notified immediately. When volunteers from SDS arrived on scene the offenders then fled. Immediately the dog squad arrived and attempted to undertake a track of the 2 offenders who had fled just seconds earlier. The dog handler was unable to locate the opened temporary fencing and provide the dog with access to the fresh scent that would have been available. Technically this should have been a simple trail/track for the dog had it and the handler been trained correctly. Given;

- The scent was extremely fresh as the offenders had only just left the scene seconds earlier.
- The open temporary fencing was a clear indication of where to start the search
- It was a mild evening with a good dew point and no breeze
- The grass was not long but a near perfect length to hold scent available to the dog
- The area had not had any other foot traffic for many days

Instead, when the dog squad failed to locate the suspects, the officer proceeded to verbally abuse our President, who at the time was the Remote Pilot in Charge of the drone that was currently tracking 4 vehicles that had been illegally accessing the area. This verbal abuse was performed in front of 2 General Duties. The dog squad handler subsequently returned to his vehicle for several minutes and then returned to continue the barrage of abuse for his failure to apprehend or locate any suspects for a second time. Claiming that there was barbed wire fence somewhere. Unfortunately, we do not have a NSW Police event number as this was not provided, however a search of the '000' telephone records would confirm this event.

It is the view of our training staff that this dog and handler team requires further training to ensure that simple operations such as this should result in the suspect/s being located and that the handler failed to provide his canine partner with the information to affect a successful track/trail. This is more than likely due to systemic issues with regards to the training and certification practices of the NSW Police dog squad rather than an individual dog handler's inability to manage a situation.

Case Study 2 – Use of General Purpose Dogs in Missing Persons Incidents

A man was reported missing from a healthcare facility in northern Sydney. Late in the evening witnesses reported seeing a man running around the freeway naked. These two pieces of information should have been a red flag to the NSW Police that there may have been mental health issues in play and that a steady more tactful form of locating him should have been utilised.

Instead, a Senior Sergeant dog squad handler and his partner was deployed and, after many hours, successfully located the missing man in bushland. Sadly, the missing person was heavily mauled and attacked by the dog and was hospitalised for many weeks. The Snr Sgt dog handler was also treated for facial injuries. **(Attachment R)**

This case is a prime example of why NSW Police dogs should not be utilised in any way shape or form, when a person has been reported missing. Whether that is due to mental health, health related, vulnerable or a child. The dogs are unable to determine the difference between a missing person and a criminal. The excuses provided to NSW Parliament of the dogs now providing a bark alert is quite farcical and would mean that every single dog in the dog squad would have to have undertaken retraining. A practice that the dog community worldwide is of the understanding is improbable, nor achievable given that a NSW Police dog is trained to apprehend suspects accused of committing crimes.

A NSW Police dog is trained to protect their human handler in the event of a physical confrontation. By attempting to claim that these dogs will only bite when commanded goes against their initial training for when their protection training kicks in for an offenders change in behavior or if the officer is incapacitated, as stated by the NSW Police Minister to NSW Parliament **(Attachment S)**. Search Dogs Sydney would welcome the committee to attend our facility with the NSW Police dog squad to set up a demonstration of how the documentation for these dogs varies from when they are out in the field and operational.

Case Study 3 – Missing Person: Adrian Bianciu

When Adrian Bianciu was reported missing in the Galston area of Sydney, it took the family 2 attempts before his missing report was taken seriously by the police. On day 3 or thereabouts of the search, the missing person contacted '000' operators requesting a helicopter to rescue him as he was surrounded by high cliffs and was unable to go anywhere. That phone call took up a large percentage of the missing persons phone battery, and the rescue helicopter was never tasked to his location. He was located 4 months later deceased by members of the public after emergency services had allegedly searched the area thoroughly.

Family requested the use of the VRA dog squad who declined to assist, so to was a request for their deployment through the police rescue officer who was on scene and managing the search. This request was also declined by the NSW Police for reasons unknown.

The search for Adrian was suspended, according to the NSW Police statement to the family, because they did not have the personnel available to manage the search because they were required to attend the city to assist with the protests. This left many SES and RFS volunteers stranded who were willing to assist but unable to because of the red tape surrounding missing persons searches.

To make matters worse, the family, who had quit their full-time jobs to search for their son, located another missing man deceased, within the search area on 14 February. This area had allegedly been searched after the man's reported disappearance however due to a lack of NSW Police adequately keeping thorough search GPS logs meant an innocent family now has to deal with locating a deceased body when they were out searching for their own son because the NSW Police had suspended the search months earlier.

Case Study 4 – Missing Person (Dementia Patient), Illawarra Region

A man with dementia was reported to Illawarra Police, a search was undertaken and an entire peninsula closed off to the public for approximately 72 hours. With valuable time being lost due to the NSW Police not utilising up to date Lost Persons Behaviour, SDS arrived on day 4 and offered assistance to the NSW Police Rescue officers on scene, advising of where this man should be located and that we had the resources to quickly, methodically and accurately search the areas in question. This offer was rejected by the NSW Police and SES crews were deployed to search the area. Polair was also tasked and did a low-level sweep and failed to locate the missing man. (This technique is extremely dangerous to the personnel in the aircraft, so to members of the public who are not aware of an extremely low level helicopter causing severe rotor wash and disturbance on the ground) Once the NSW Police believed they had cleared the area they deployed personnel to other areas and subsequently on day 5 of this man being missing he was located by a 16 year old member of the public, deceased.

When the SES members were questioned by SDS as to how they missed not locating the man the response was 'the area was too thick so we didn't go in there'. This is common practice on many searches across the state by many agencies and highlights why properly trained and assessed 'air scent, area search' search and rescue dogs will search all areas thoroughly and methodically so that young members of the public, or any members of the public, do not have to deal with the trauma of locating a deceased body that should have been located by the NSW Police and Emergency Services.

Once again, the NSW Police where offered the services and full capabilities of Search Dogs Sydney, once again the NSW Police Force have refused to utilise these specialist services, and once again the missing person has been found deceased due to the police malfeasance to utilise all available resources at their disposal.

Data Management and Transparency in Missing Persons Investigations and Unsolved/Solved Homicides

There are more than 838 long term missing persons in NSW. Sadly, this number is only approximate as the NSW Police do not provide an accurate public facing, easily accessible figure. Nor do they provide an accurate database of the names, photographs and ages of these long-term missing persons.

In July 2025 SDS attempted to ascertain missing persons numbers here in NSW and some fairly simple information pertaining to these investigations. This information included

- Number of missing persons
- How many were located alive or deceased
- Where were these people reported missing from ie Local Area Command
- Where were these people located
- Where these missing people were found by members of the public or by NSW Police actions

We originally approached the Bureau of Crime Statistics who advised they do not keep the information and recommended we contact the National Missing Persons Coordination Centre. We contacted the NMPCC who advised they do not keep any records or statistics of missing persons in NSW, they then suggested we contact the NSW Police. We subsequently applied for a GIPA request for the information from the NSW Police. The NSW police subsequently contacted us to advise that they do not hold that information and subsequently refunded our money for the GIPA request. Subsequently we received no information about the numbers of missing persons here in NSW and were forced to request this information through the then Shadow Minister for Police Mr. Paul Toole who was able to request this information through NSW Parliament.

In NSW, there is no centralised database that is maintained by any agency in NSW that accurately manages and tracks:

- Numbers of missing persons
- Ages of missing persons
- Last known movements of the missing person?
- Photographs of the missing person?
- Medical conditions of the missing person?
- Whether the missing person was located alive or deceased?
- Who located the missing person? This would assist with knowing which agencies may have the better training/personnel suitable for missing persons searches?
- If the person was located alive, where were they located?
- If the person was located deceased, where were they located?
- How long did it take to locate the missing person?
- If the death occurred when it was a missing persons investigation, why was there no critical incident declared?
- What agencies and resources were involved in the search?
- Was there a Peer Review undertaken? If not, why not?
- How much was spent on these investigations?

How can the NSW Police

- Train adequate resources for missing persons investigations
- Budget for resource allocation for missing persons investigation

- Provide support and assistance to other organisations involved in missing persons investigations
- Adequately provide support to families of missing loved ones

If the NSW Police do not keep accurate and easily accessed records of missing persons investigations. Yet, the NSW Police Minister in NSW Parliament claims that there has been a clear reduction in the amount of time that a person has been reported missing for. Is it that the NSW Police Force is withholding information that had been previously asked in the NSW Parliament?

Peer Reviews

According to the NATSAR Manual, section 6.8, a peer review should be undertaken after each search.

A Peer Review is a formal structured review of a SAR incident prior to it going forward to the coroner or an inquest. The review is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the SAR incident in-line with the requirements identified.

Will the NSW Police:

- Provide the Inquiry with the last 300 peer reviews?
- Did these peer reviews include the agencies involved or just the NSW Police?
- What department is responsible for undertaking a peer review?
- Are the peer review correlated with the Coronial Inquest findings?
- What is the 10 most common items found through a peer review and what changes has the NSW Police undertaken to ensure improvement?

Without quality Peer Reviews there is no improvements on services provided by our emergency services personnel and police. It is stated within the manual the these reviews are to be conducted sperate to a Coronial Inquest yet it appears that the NSW Police do not undertake them, and if they are undertaken, are not thorough and do not include all departments within the NSW Police that participated in the search, nor the organisations requested to assist.

Active Investigations – Definition and Accountability

What is an “Active Investigation”? It’s a term utilised by the NSW Police to avoid answering any questions in relation to a case. However, when it comes to a long-term missing person, this terminology is in desperate need of an overhaul.

- If the case is ‘Active’, then there should be clear guidelines as to when the last time the police acted on the investigation, i.e. less than 3 months, less than 6 months, 1 year.

- If the case is 'Active' then there must be a clear guideline as to when the Next of Kin or relevant stakeholders were given proper and in-depth updates?
- If the case is an 'Active' investigation, then there needs to be clear advice as to the differences between an Active criminal case or an active missing persons investigation (missing persons is not a crime)

This information is clearly spelt out in the SOP for Unsolved Homicides and is purposefully utilised by the NSW Police to confuse investigation knowledge to the public.

“No Body, No Parole” Laws – Effectiveness and Operational Impact

- How effective have these been since their introduction?
- How many offenders have disclosed the body?
- How many offenders are currently incarcerated and affected by the laws?
- Of those still incarcerated, how many times have NSW Police conducted a physical search for the remains of the victim?
- Given that the NSW Police disclosed to the NSW State Coroner that they do not have cadaver dogs capable of locating remains in the bush for longer than 3 years, what alternative resources have the police deployed in the search for these victims?

Canine Capabilities – Training, Deployment and Operational Oversight

Why do the NSW Police cross train their cadaver dogs with other tasks such as drugs given there are more than 838 long term missing persons in NSW? Would it not be of utmost importance to place the recovery of human remains over the location of drugs or other contraband?

A cadaver dog is typically trained to locate whole human bodies, whereas a human remains detection dog is trained to detect any part of human remains at any stage of decomposition.

Given the distinction between a cadaver dog and a Human Remains Detection Dog;

- Why do the NSW Police not have any Human Remains Detection dogs in their arsenal?
- Why do the NSW Police not utilise the services of alternative organisations to fill the gaps in capability?

How many times over the past 10 years have the NSW Police Dog squad worked with alternative organisations that provide trained Cadaver, Human Remains Detection, Live Find area search capabilities? And what are these organisation's names and dates of joint training or operational deployments?

How often are the cadaver dogs exposed to training sources?

- What are the sources?
- Who provides the sources?
- Where are these sources stored?
- Where are the 3 cadaver dogs located? As referred to in BE 21 Oct 2025?
- Where are the training records for each of the cadaver dogs highlighting their training history, exposure to scent and operational deployments/history?
- Can the NSW Police dog squad provide GPS evidence of where the cadaver dogs have searched over the past 12 months?
- Aside from the deployment of the cadaver dog on 03 October 2025, what other times have the NSW Police deployed a cadaver or HRDD since 1970, in the search for Cheryl Grimmer?

Of the names listed in the Terms of Reference for this inquiry,

- How many times have cadaver/HRDD been deployed in the search for any of these missing and unsolved homicides?
- What are the names, breeds, training logs and operational finds of these dogs that were deployed?
- Can you itemise when these searches occurred, who requested the searches and provide GPS data for these searches?

Given the statements provided to Channel 10 on December 1, 2025, as well as the answers provided by the Minister for Police on the 21 October 2025, (Attachment S)

1. When did the NSW Police formally change the training to the GP dog capability to introduce barking when locating a fleeing suspect?
2. How many times has this approach been successful when apprehending a suspect?
3. How many times has this approach been successful when locating a missing person?
4. Where is the research that the NSW Police undertook prior to undertaking this

Anti-Competitive Behaviour

Failing to provide all information to families results in the families doubling up on private investigations. By withholding the search information, Search Dogs Sydney then lose valuable time and resources by researching areas completed by other organisations. SDS must be very careful not to interfere with an 'active' police operation with the threat of 'hindering and investigation' often mentioned by the NSW Police. Yet, what recourse does SDS have when the NSW Police fail to provide the families or SDS with proper search details that hinder our search operations that are running simultaneously?

Go missing is not a crime, yet we have criminal investigators with that mindset investigating these matters that are not willing to work with specialists in the field by sharing data that would impact the faster location of missing persons.

Forensic Capabilities

On a recent search, two canines operated by SDS indicated on the presence of Human Remains in the area. This information was then passed on to the NSW Police who eventually responded and dismissed the area as a crime scene. Soil samples were subsequently taken and provided to scientists at University of Technology of Sydney (UTS) for forensic analysis and examination.

The specialists from UTS contacted the NSW Police Forensics Manager requesting a copy of the protocols utilised in determining DNA contained within soil samples. She was advised that the NSW Police do not undertake nor have the capability to test soil for human DNA. Search Dogs Sydney, in conjunction with the UTS are now currently developing these protocols as the initial samples provided to the laboratory have indicated a low-level presence of alleles at 2 of the sample's sites. These sample sites were exactly where the canines indicated, however due to current limitations, UTS will need to conduct further research to bring this forensic testing to light here in Australia.

Given the lack of forensic testing, how many other police investigations have been compromised due to the lack of determining DNA at certain crime scenes and the misuse of untrained canines deployed at these investigations. It is our recommendation that all potential crime scenes where this data could have been available should be re-investigated and forensic officers be trained in the taking of these samples for further investigation.

Inter Agency Cooperation

Due to the NSW Police being the only agency in NSW to be able to manage a search in NSW, millions of dollars in assets and resources sit idle in sheds across the state. NSWSES, RFS, VRA all have valuable assets and personnel that could be utilised to search for missing loved ones. These resources could be utilised to assist Search (NSW) if the legislation and view of missing persons here in NSW was to change. These changes, in addition to additional specialised training, would and could assist greatly in relieving the burden and grief currently suffered by those with a missing loved one.

One example of this is the search for Kay Docherty in Windang NSW (Missing since July 1979). Search Dogs Sydney have undertaken extensive mapping and investigative work and have now determined that due to the excess amounts of the weed blackberry and other weeds, a controlled hazard reduction burn would be necessary to carry the investigation forward. This backburn has not been undertaken as the NSW Police nor the RFS are willing to request this to be undertaken. Should a backburn be undertaken, Search Dogs Sydney could then utilise trained archeological human remains detection dogs, as to Ground Penetrating radar, to continue the search.

The Solution

The creation of an independent search organisation Search (NSW).

Urgent enactment of the SPaR legislation (Attachment Z) to ensure families and police receive the resources and assistance they so desperately require to undertake these traumatic investigations.

Funding commencing at \$65,000,000.00 per annum to be provided from the current 'Proceeds of Crime' as currently confiscated by the NSW Crime Commission.

This organisation will provide the State of NSW with a comprehensive taskforce of specialists in every field to ensure that missing persons and unsolved homicides are investigated thoroughly. It will provide resources to search for the over 838 long-term missing bodies who's remains are awaiting location. It will provide support to the families of unsolved and solved homicides to ensure that the bodies, subject to the 'No body, No Parole' laws are brought home respectfully.

Search (NSW) will provide relief for strained members of the NSW Police force by assisting in the investigations of almost 2000 human remains still to be located or identified across the state.

Search (NSW) will offer former officers of the NSW Police, emergency services and ADF new avenues of employment and career advancement.

Search (NSW) will provide oversight from the moment a person is reported missing to assist our vastly under resourced NSW Police with specialist support and investigations for the over 11,000 persons reported missing in NSW annually.

Search (NSW) will provide a specialist training facility for current NSW Police and Emergency services to understand critical concepts when undertaking missing persons investigations from land, sea and air.

Search (NSW) will ensure that critical research and development is undertaken so that NSW is always applying Best Practice and leading the way in searching for our missing loved ones.

We trust that the committee will urgently enact the recommendations to assist not only the families of missing loved ones, but to provide assistance and support to our police and emergency services.

Yours Sincerely

Chris D'Arcy
President
Search Dogs Sydney Inc
02/06/2026