



MEDIA RELEASE

Western Australia Police Force



WA POLICE FORCE STATEMENT

The Western Australian Police Force respects and supports press freedom. We respect the important work journalists do. But we also have an important job to do keeping our WA community safe. We do not make laws and we do not choose when we do, or don't, enforce the law. If the law is broken, as we will allege it was in this case, we are duty bound to respond appropriately.

This Order to Produce was issued by a Magistrate, upon an application by a police officer, under the Criminal Investigation Act 2006. The Magistrate deemed that WA Police have reasonable grounds to suspect that the material requested is relevant to a suspected offence.

Police routinely use an Order to Produce to gather materials for investigations, particularly where a business such as a news room requires a formal, legal document to process the request. In this instance, police have requested the ABC's footage as part of an investigation into suspected offending.

Non-compliance with an order to produce, without reasonable excuse, is an offence. The maximum penalty is 12 months imprisonment and a \$12,000 fine.

We in good faith offered the Four Corners team a sit down interview which lasted well over an hour. We invested time and resources ensuring all their follow up questions were answered. Our agency works agnostically to facilitate hundreds of lawful protests every year.

Although ABC's Four Corners chose not to include it in their program, The Western Australian Police Force's message to the activists is "work with us," to stage your protests lawfully. Generally speaking our agency is open to reducing the scope of an Order to Produce, where possible, to protect confidential sources. Conversations between WA Police and the ABC are continuing.

WA Police is hopeful we can find a resolution which will allow us both to meet our respective obligations to the public we serve.

The Western Australian Police Force has received numerous requests asking us to confirm if the Four Corners Team were aware of an alleged criminal act before it was committed. This relates to matters which are currently before the courts. At this time it is appropriate to reserve comment and allow the evidence to be heard in full before the courts.

WA Police can confirm the Four Corners Team are not under investigation.

End Release | Police Media Unit | 10 October 2023

