

Police challenge Walsham report

20/5/2006

By Bret Christian

Police say video cameras at Stirling station were not recording vision at the time Phillip Walsham died nearly eight years ago.

In a challenge to a report on page 1 of last week's POST (May 13), Inspector Jon Tuttle submitted a three-page response to points raised in the report.

- Station video

Police say two blank tapes mentioned in a report in the POST (May 13) were copies of tapes from inside a train carriage.

There is conflicting and confusing evidence from then Westrail employees.

One security officer pointed on court graphics to four camera locations and said their tapes needed to be collected from surveillance head office in Perth.

Another employee said the cameras were not recording.

There is other evidence that six tapes were collected by two different officers on different days - a total of 12 tapes.

There were no faults reported that night for cameras at Stirling Station, according to a statement by a supervisor responsible. This man did not give evidence in court.

- McDonald's tapes

Police say it is untrue that there is a tape missing from McDonald's in Tuart Hill covering the same period.

The manager of the shop said there were eight cameras but one was not working. Defence sources say they were given only six tapes of the relevant period.

- McDonald's Laser

Police also say they did not "miss" surveillance footage of a Laser car belonging to a witness at McDonald's.

They say the "absence" of this car from the tapes was noted in a letter to the defence from the Department of Public Prosecutions.

Police were unaware that one of the accused men had located the car belonging to the witness on the video footage. Police had located the car independently.

- No photos

Police who took photos of the scene were not forensic officers. They said the camera was not working, not that there was no film.

The officer's file note for the night is marked "no film".

- Parked car, "blood" spots

Police have also disputed the position of a parked police car, and the lack of testing of marks on the road seen on a police video, said to resemble blood spots.

Police say an officer gave evidence that swabs would have been tested if there was any suggestion they were blood.

An officer pointed in court to where he parked his car - the "point of impact."

A forensic officer said he did not test the road for blood.