**Case Study 4, transcript A: Fictional interview with the Police officer regarding the suicide death of a high school student.**

**\*Please note that this interview is one part of a set of four interviews making up this case study.  
\*\*The transcript features a series of questions (highlighted in yellow) for students to consider while working through this case study.**

**[STARTS]**

**REPORTER: G'Day Tony. What have we got?**

[The reporter and the police officer (Tony) know each other. How might this impact on the type of information the police officer provides?]

**POLICE OFFICER**: What do you reckon, Einstein? We’ve got an 18-year-old male in a St Hugh's school uniform…deceased. He was found by those kids over there, hanging from a tree, on their way home from school.

**REPORTER: When did it happen? I mean, when did he do it?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Dunno exactly. But he was last seen at school about 11 o’clock this morning.

**REPORTER: You got a name?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Of course I’ve got a name, but you know I can't tell you anything ‘til his parents have been officially notified.

**REPORTER: Off the record?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Off the record it’s Carl Lomas…was Carl Lomas.

**REPORTER: You don’t mean ‘Lomas’, as in Mayor Lomas? This is the second son of Mayor Lomas?**

[The boy is from a well-known family. How does this impact on the newsworthiness of the incident? What other considerations are there?]

**POLICE OFFICER:** Now, you’re getting the picture.

**REPORTER: You’re sure it’s Mayor Lomas’s son? I mean how do you know it’s him?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Mate I know everything! Plus, his license and wallet were in his coat pocket.

**REPORTER: So you’re saying this is Alan and Rosita Lomas’s second son. And their other son, Frank, he was killed in a car accident, wasn’t he?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Yeah. Actually I was first one on the scene of that one too. It wasn’t a pretty picture either. He was going down the road doing about 100 k’s an hour, and then ran straight into a concrete road barrier.

**REPORTER: I thought that was an accident.**

**POLICE OFFICER:** You know how these things are.

**REPORTER: Was it suicide?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Open verdict. Not much chance of that here.

[Does this information influence how the current story is reported?]

**REPORTER: What d’you mean?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** I can’t tell you everything, can I?

**REPORTER: Come on, off the record…**

[Can a journalist ethically make such an arrangement with a police officer? And once having made the agreement, can the journalist ever ethically breach it?]

**POLICE OFFICER:** OK…totally off the record, and don’t even think about getting clever with this. He's found hanging by the old school-tie over there. When we cut him down he smelled like a brewery. So what do you think happened?

[Can the journalist use this information? How? What are the constraints?]

**REPORTER: OK, can I get a grab for the camera then?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** Sure, but it’ll be the real short version. No gory detail, OK?

**REPORTER: OK.**

**REPORTER: Tony, can I just get you to stand there. Steve, can we get a mid-shot of Constable Douglas please, just over my shoulder, but I don’t need to be in it.**

**REPORTER: Everybody set, rolling camera. Verbal ID coming up. Kooroogool Community Park, an interview with Senior Constable Douglas. Senior Constable Douglas, can you tell us what happened here today, please?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** At approximately 8am today, the Cairnley police station received information that a body had been discovered in this park. That body is of a male but we have been unable to confirm the identity of the person as yet.

[This grab is the official version of events. Is everything else speculation?]

**REPORTER: Can you tell us who found the body?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** The body was found by two male youths who were walking through the park.

**REPORTER: And do we have the cause of death at this stage?**

**POLICE OFFICER:** I cannot comment on the cause of death until that has been confirmed by the coroner. At this stage, the death is not being treated as suspicious.

**REPORTER: Constable Douglas, thank you very much. And cut.   
Thanks very much, Tony. You don’t mind if I have a quick word with the boys?**

**POLICE OFFICER**: Be my guest, but don’t be hard on them. They’ve had a rough day.

**[ENDS]**