



NSW POLICE FORCE

P190A

Version 4.2 (07/05)

## STATEMENT OF A WITNESS

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>In the matter of:</b> | Strike Force GLENROE |
| <b>Place:</b>            | Armidale             |
| <b>Date:</b>             | 4th February 2016    |

|              |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|
| <b>Name:</b> | Father Richard GLEESON |
|--------------|------------------------|

### STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything that I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 65 years of age.
3. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2015, I met with Detective Sergeant Michael SPARKES and Detective Senior Constable Joshua REEKS and provided an eight page statement to them. This statement was true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I have made this further statement at the request of Detective REEKS.
4. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2016, I received a phone call from Detective REEKS and he asked me if I am aware of a cellar or underfloor space underneath the Church at St Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Moree. I do remember that there was a cellar underneath the Church which could be accessed via a trap door in the work sacristy. I think that there were steps of some kind leading down into the cellar under the Church floor, but I don't remember what they look like. This trap door led to a ladder which went down into the cellar which was used as a storage room. I never went down into the cellar myself but I am aware of other people going down there.
5. I remember that the people working in the Church (volunteers) would go down there maybe a couple of times a month. I am aware that things like old brassware, old wood and metal items were amongst the things that were stored down there. I remember one occasion, when somebody told me that the lid to the baptism font was stored in the cellar, and I told them that if

Witness

REDACTED

Signature:

*R. Gleeson*

Richard GLEESON  
04/02/2016

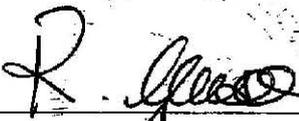
Page 1 of 2

**Statement of Richard GLEESON  
In the matter of Strike Force GLENROE**

somebody brought it up I would be able to restore it and use it for the baptism font. I am not sure what it was doing there in the first place. I don't know who brought it up but I remember somebody did and I polished it up and we started to use it again. I also remember another occasion when a lady who worked as a cleaner, was cleaning the sacristy and she fell down into the cellar because someone had forgotten to close the lid to the trap door.

- 6. I am not aware of any other trap doors or other access points to the area under the Church floor, but it would not surprise me if there were, because I know that people were able to gain access underneath the Church for maintenance and building purposes.
- 7. The cellar door in the sacristy was usually covered up but it was easily accessible.

Witness: 

Signature:   
Richard GLEESON  
04/02/2016