

"CONFIDENTIAL"

Anne, A Copy For Your Information

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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

DATE: 24 February 1999
TO: Mary Eather Secretary NASG
FAX NO: REDACTED
FROM: Phillip Bauman (Director of Corporate Services
 Mercy Administration Centre)

NO OF PAGES (including this page): 1
 (Please advise if complete transmission is not received)

MESSAGE

Dear Mary

Following a call we received here yesterday at the Admin Centre from a former Neerkol resident, I was a little concerned that there may be some confusion among former residents about the confidentiality provisions of the settlement offer. The confidentiality stipulation agreed to by Simon and Geoff refers only to the need for the details of the settlement offer to be confidential. It certainly does not mean that people who accept the offer are in any way prohibited from speaking publicly about their experiences at Neerkol. The former resident who rang was under the misunderstanding that by accepting the offer, their right to speak to the media or whomever about their life experiences at Neerkol was in some way restricted.

As you know, a great many people have had their Neerkol experiences published in the print media or have spoken to the electronic media. That has always been their right and entitlement and acceptance of the offer in no way changes that situation. Whilst I am sure the NASG Committee members understand the intent of the confidentiality provisions, I was concerned after we received the call that some former residents may believe wrongly that their right to free speech regarding their experiences at Neerkol is somehow curtailed by acceptance of the settlement offer.

I know in your role as Secretary of the NASG that you are in contact with many former residents and I thought you might like to be aware that there could be some confusion regarding this confidentiality clause. By knowing of the possible misunderstanding, you may be able to remove any fears and anxieties that people may have about the extent and meaning of the confidentiality provision in the settlement offer. Thank you for this and for all that you do to assist the former residents of Neerkol and to help the process of reconciliation. Please give me a call if you have any queries with this note.

Kind Regards

Phillip
 Phillip Bauman