

New South Wales Police

P.190

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STATEMENT in the matter of:
SANDILANDS

Place: Frenches Forest
Police Station
Date : 22 March 2000

Name: Neil ROOKES

Address: REDACTED

Tel. No.: REDACTED

Occupation: School Teacher

STATES:-

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which 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 shall be liable for prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

2. I am 45 (DOB: REDACTED55) years of age.

3. On 17 March 2000, I met with Detectives LISTER and RADMORE and provided a 10 page statement.

4. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 2 December 1993, drafted by Kerri LOVELL to myself. This document outlines a conversation Kerri had with the Minister of St Mary's Anglican Church, Caulfield, Ray BROOK. The conversation was about the Minister suspending Ken SANDILANDS from teaching at the Sunday School, as a result of information from AGR [REDACTED]. In addition, a previous incident was discussed, which involved a five year old girl being removed from the Sunday School, due to SANDILANDS whispering in her ear. I do not know anything additional about the information in this memorandum.


EXHIBIT

I PRODUCE THAT MEMORANDUM DATED 2 DECEMBER 1993.

5. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 2 December 1993, drafted by Kerri LOVELL to myself. This document

Witness:

REDACTED

Signature: 

Page No: 2

P.190A.

STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: SANDILANDS
Name: Neil ROOKES

outlines the conversation between Kerri and Christine McINTYRE of the Community Policing Squad, Greensborough, regarding possible police involvement and asking their guidance. The discussion involved suggested strategies that we would employ in investigating this matter.

EXHIBIT

I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 2 DECEMBER 1993.

6. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 2 December 1993, drafted by Kerri LOVELL to myself. This document outlines Kerri's conversation with AGR [REDACTED] regarding action taken by the school. AGR [REDACTED] had informed her that he had made contact with SANDILANDS. AGR [REDACTED] had a conversation with Ken ELLERY, the former Principal of Northside Christian College, who informed him that there was a past allegation similar to the present ones. I do not know who the past allegation referred to.

EXHIBIT

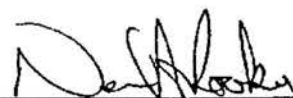
I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 2 DECEMBER 1993.

7. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 7 December 1993, drafted by myself to Kerri LOVELL. The document outlines a phone call that I received from REDACTED [REDACTED], father of REDACTED [REDACTED], who was a Year 9 or 10 student at the time. The phone call was regarding abusive phone calls from AGX [REDACTED] and REDACTED [REDACTED], who were also Year 9 or 10 students at the time. AGX [REDACTED] was living with the REDACTED [REDACTED] family at this time, as she was having difficulties with her mother and step-father. I do not remember what I was told about the abuse used in the phone calls, but I remember REDACTED [REDACTED] being very concerned. In my discussion with Mrs REDACTED [REDACTED] she mentioned that AGX [REDACTED] had disclosed to her that she had been molested by a former teacher of Northside Christian College. I recall that Mrs REDACTED [REDACTED] did not know who that teacher was. This information was forwarded to Kerri LOVELL for investigation.

Witness:

REDACTED [REDACTED]

Signature:



Page No: 3

P.190A.

STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: SANDILANDS
Name: Neil ROOKES

EXHIBIT I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 7 DECEMBER 1993.

8. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 9 December 1993, drafted by myself to Pastor SMITH. The memos mentioned in paragraph one, refer to memorandums prepared by Kerri LOVELL. This document outlines proposed action to be taken by the school, in relation to current allegations being investigated regarding Ken SANDILANDS. The students involved in this matter were those previously listed in my statement dated 17 March 2000 in paragraphs 31, 33 and AGX [REDACTED].

EXHIBIT I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 9 DECEMBER 1993.

9. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 10 December 1993, drafted by Kerri LOVELL to myself. This document outlines Kerri's conversation with AGE [REDACTED], where she disclosed that SANDILANDS had touched her on the genital area, on several occasions, when she was in Grade 3. In addition, SANDILANDS had remained in the room, when the female students were changing. This would have occurred in 1982 or 1983, prior to my term as Principal. I was not aware of these allegations, till this memorandum.

EXHIBIT I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 10 DECEMBER 1993.

10. Detective LISTER has shown me a one page memorandum dated 10 December 1993, drafted by Kerri LOVELL to myself. This document outlines Kerri's conversation with AGX [REDACTED], where she disclosed that SANDILANDS had asked her "do you love me?" and refused to talk to her if she did not respond. In addition, he put his legs tightly around her waist and pulled her close to his body. The memorandum does not state the date or time period that AGX [REDACTED] is referring to regarding these allegations. The school records would show if Ken taught AGX [REDACTED] in Grade 1 or 2 which would

Witness: [REDACTED]

Signature: Neil Rookes

Page No: 4

P.190A.

STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: SANDILANDS
Name: Neil ROOKES

probably have been in 1986 or 1987. I am sure that he would have taught her, as the school was a small school at this time and he was teaching the only Grade 1 or 2 class.

EXHIBIT

I PRODUCE THAT ONE PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 10 DECEMBER 1993.

11. Detective LISTER has shown me a two page memorandum dated 13 December 1993, drafted by Pastor SMITH and myself for record. This memorandum outlines an interview between Ken SANDILANDS, Pastor SMITH and myself, held in Pastor SMITH's office. I recall that Pastor SMITH had prepared a letter to SANDILANDS, outlining the allegations made by students and a request for a formal response was made. The letter specifically related to allegations made by AGR [REDACTED], AGE [REDACTED] and AGX [REDACTED]. I recall that Ken vehemently denied all of the allegations made by the above people. I cannot remember if the exact acts of the allegations were put to Ken in relation to specific students, but the students involved would have been mentioned. In paragraph 7, it states that, 'Ken agreed that he had been unwise and unprofessional on occasions' and I recall that he was genuinely apologetic for the stress he had caused members of staff, through his lack of attentiveness to specific behavioural guidelines. I recall he was referring to his previous rebuke and admonition that he had received in relation to breaching the guidelines set down for him. He did not admit to any sexual misconduct or offence. I cannot remember the exact words that he used. In paragraph 10, the proposed course of action to finalise the matter is outlined. I cannot remember seeing a response letter from Ken. I can say that points 1, 3 and 4 of paragraph 10 were carried out. I may have been contacted by parents in relation to the letters to them, but there were no further disclosures made by parents or students at that time.

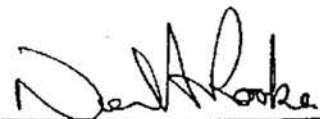
EXHIBIT

I PRODUCE THAT TWO PAGE MEMORANDUM DATED 13 DECEMBER 1993.

Witness: _____

[REDACTED]

Signature: _____



STATEMENT (continued) in the matter of: SANDILANDS
Name: Neil ROOKES

12. Ken SANDILANDS did not have any further involvement with the school, after his retirement.

13. I believe at all times the school and its staff acted appropriately, according to allegations made by students and parents. At the time of these allegations, I did not believe that we were mandated to report the allegations to the police or the Health and Community Services. I believe that the investigations were carried out thoroughly and professionally and that there was no direct evidence to report to the police.

Witness: REDACTED

Signature: 

22/8/2000.