



Royal Commission  
into Institutional Responses  
to Child Sexual Abuse

**Statement**

Name AU  
Address [REDACTED]  
Occupation [REDACTED]  
Date 30 September 2013

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

2. My full name is AU. My date of birth is [REDACTED]

3. I have three children:

a. AM, born [REDACTED];

b. [REDACTED] born [REDACTED] and

c. AV, born [REDACTED]

4. In 2011, my youngest son AV began kindergarten at Public School 2, where my two elder children were already enrolled. In or about February 2011 I enrolled all three children in the YMCA before and after school care at Caringbah Public School for Tuesdays and Wednesdays, because there was no full time availability at their school in its program. To my knowledge my children were the only students from Public School 2 to attend YMCA before and

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Witness: *C. J. Hatuech*

after school care. They were driven to and from their school on those days by Jonathan Lord in the YMCA bus.

5. It became apparent to me shortly after my children started attending YMCA before and after school care that they preferred going to the YMCA centre than to the before and after school care program at their own school. I understood from speaking with my children that they had grown very fond of Jonathan Lord because he made a big effort to entertain them and pay them attention. I recall that he would often cuddle them or be playful with them by carrying them on his shoulders. When we arrived in the mornings my children would often be the first ones at the centre and John would allow them into the kitchen to get whatever they wanted for breakfast. There were occasions when I dropped my kids off at before school care and Jonathan Lord had opened the centre alone. As a result, my children were left alone with Jonathan Lord until the next staff member arrived.
6. I first became aware that there may be an issue with Jonathan Lord when I received an email from the YMCA. The email stated that allegations had been made against a male YMCA staff member. The email didn't explain the nature of the allegations or mention the staff member by name, but I wondered if it was Jonathan Lord because there were only two male child care workers at the YMCA and I had not seen Jonathan Lord for a while. After I received that initial email I asked my children if they knew where Jonathan was. I recall that one of them said that he might be on holidays. The next day that I was at the YMCA I asked one of the staff members where Jonathan Lord was. She did not answer my question but instead asked me whether I had received any emails from the YMCA and she suggested that I speak to my children.
7. I went home and approached each of my children individually. I asked them if anyone had ever touched them in a way they shouldn't have. They each said no. Not long after this, in or about

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*C. Ghantous*

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Statement of AU continued

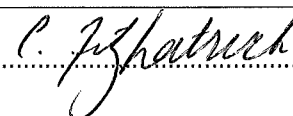
early November 2011 I received a telephone call from a police officer from Kogarah Police. The officer asked me to speak to my son AM as he had been identified by a witness in the Jonathan Lord case as being one of Jonathan Lord's "favourite" children. The police officer told me that AM was in the same age group as boys that Jonathan Lord was accused of sexually abusing. The police told me that they suspected that Jonathan Lord may have been grooming AM, and that I should tell AM what Johnathan Lord had done to encourage him to disclose information about what may have happened to him. When I spoke to AM about this, AM was very upset and disappointed. He said to me that Jonathan Lord had once put his hand on his knee when they were on the YMCA bus together but that this was the only contact they had had. I told AM that it was fine for him to be upset by this as it was inappropriate contact. I also asked AM not to discuss this or Jonathan Lord with his brother and [REDACTED]

8. I was immediately upset by the police's suggestion and very concerned that it was true. I knew that Jonathan Lord had paid a lot of attention to AM. There was one weekend in or about June 2011 where Jonathan Lord had made an arrangement with AM to come and watch AM play football on a Saturday. At the time I did not think it was suspicious. I just saw him as a young guy who liked kids. Jonathan spent a lot of time trying to get to know me and would enquire as to how my university study was going. The weekend that he was going to come and watch AM football game, the venue of the match was changed on the morning they were due to play. AM was worried that Jonathan Lord wouldn't know about the change in venue so I telephoned the Caringbah YMCA and said to the lady who answered the phone *"I know this will sound very strange but do you have a way of contacting John Lord to tell him that the venue for my son's football match has changed?"* The lady told me that this *"wasn't strange at all"* and that Jonathan Lord often attended events of children from the YMCA. Jonathan Lord attended the football match and brought with him another little boy who he was babysitting on the day.

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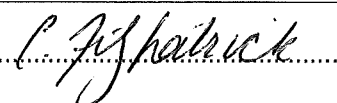
Statement of AU continued

9. I also recall that some time in or around mid-2011 Jonathan Lord approached me when I was collecting the children from YMCA Caringbah and told me that he would be happy to babysit for the kids and that he often babysat for YMCA families. I declined his offer as politely as I could. I felt I didn't know him well enough to have him in my home.
10. On the afternoon of 29 November 2011 I was at home with my children when 3 police officers attended my house. I recall it was a male officer and 2 female police officers, one of whom I now know to be Leanne Kelly from the Kogarah JIRT. The Police asked me if they could speak with me in private. We went and sat out on the front porch of my house and left the children inside. One of the police told me that Jonathan Lord had confessed to sexually abusing my son AV. They didn't give me explicit details but they did tell me that it involved "skin on skin" contact. So that I didn't frighten AV, the police advised me that I shouldn't try and discuss with him what had happened with Jonathan Lord before I brought him to the police station for his interview the next day. They suggested I tell AV that the police just wanted his help. They also told me that Jonathan Lord had released his statement, which said that he had tried to touch AM but that AM had told him "not to touch him there". After I had been to the police station the next day, I asked AM again if anything had happened to him, but he denied it.
11. I was shocked by the information that the police had told me, as I had already directly asked AV if he had been touched and he had denied it. After the police left I took the children to the home of a girlfriend of mine and drove to [REDACTED] (their father) to tell him what the police had told me.
12. I gave AV the day off school the next day and took him to Kogarah police station to be interviewed by police. Before we went to the police station I reassured AV that he hadn't done anything wrong and that the police needed his help.

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Statement of AU continued

13. When we arrived at the police station AV was taken to a room away from me. He appeared calm when he went into the room but I could tell from his appearance and demeanour when he came out an hour or so later that he was upset and embarrassed. He was very red in the face and appeared withdrawn. The police gave me the number of a counselling service at Sydney Children's Hospital. When we left the police station I asked AV why he hadn't told me about what Jonathan Lord did to him when I had asked him. He appeared embarrassed and said that he didn't know why and that he had forgotten about it. I could tell that he didn't want to talk about it. I recall Leanne Kelly telling me that Jonathan Lord had confessed to two incidents of abuse of AV but that AV would only confirm one of them. Accordingly I understand that Jonathan Lord was only charged with one count of abuse in relation to AV.
14. After I discovered that AV had been abused, I was quite upset that the staff at YMCA had been as uninformative as they were at the time the news broke. I withdrew my children from YMCA before and after school care as soon as I discovered AV had been abused. No one from YMCA ever contacted me to ask me why I had done so, nor was I offered any assistance by YCMA. I continued to receive marketing emails from YMCA offering child care services. I recall that before I withdrew the children I had received a generic email from YMCA inviting me to an information evening regarding the Jonathan Lord incident. However I did not attend as I didn't know at that time that my children had been directly affected.
15. I took AV to counselling at the Sydney Children's Hospital from about December 2011 until early 2012. Around that time AV asked to stop attending counselling and I didn't want to force him to. I recall that during one of the counselling sessions AV finally admitted that there had been two incidents of abuse. I telephoned Leanne Kelly to tell her this, following the events referred to in paragraph [13] above. Leanne seemed disinterested in this and I took that

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*C. J. Shattuck*

disinterest to mean that it was too late for them to charge him with the further incident. I was annoyed and confused by this.

16. In 2012, leading up to the sentencing hearing, Debbie Scott from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions mentioned to me that AV and I may be able to apply for victim's compensation. I asked her on a few occasions for further information, but she never followed up with me. On or around 25 September 2013, Debbie Scott called me to notify me of the Royal Commission hearing. I asked her again about victim's compensation, and she told me that the laws had changed and that I would probably receive a lot less money than I could have before. Although she told me that she would send the information through, I felt like she was a bit apprehensive about giving me the information and wasn't forthcoming. At the time of the sentencing I was not sure if I wanted to apply for victim's compensation, as I didn't want to feel like I got any financial gain out of the experience. I also wasn't focusing on following it up as I was concentrating on trying to make sure my family was supported. But I would have appreciated being fully informed of the options that were open to me.

AU

Signed:

Date: 30 September 2013

Witness: ..... *C. Fitzpatrick* .....

Date: 30 September 2013

Signature AU ..... Witness:.....