



Royal Commission  
into Institutional Responses  
to Child Sexual Abuse

Statement

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Name BC  
Address [REDACTED]  
Occupation [REDACTED]  
Date 24 October 2013

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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 BC and my date of birth is [REDACTED].
3. I am currently a [REDACTED] at [REDACTED].
4. I am the mother of:
  - a. [REDACTED] who was born [REDACTED] and
  - b. BA who was born [REDACTED] ("BA").
5. I am now aware that during 2013, the Royal Commission telephoned me several times. As a personal practice, I do not answer telephone calls on my mobile phone which indicate a 'private' or 'blocked number'. Accordingly, I did not answer any calls from the Royal Commission as it transpires. I do not receive voicemail messages.
6. On 21 October 2013, I watched some of the webcast of the first day of the hearing in this matter. While listening to the webcast of the opening statements I first heard parts of the YMCA Code of Conduct, read to the Royal Commission. I have never seen this document or heard the contents of this Code before. On reflection of my knowledge of Jonathan Lord, and the sexual abuse of my son by him, there are several behaviours within the YMCA Code of Conduct I now believe Jonathan Lord breached and that other staff members must have seen these behaviours as well.

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Witness: [REDACTED]

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7. It was this, together with my experience of the Kogarah Joint Investigation Response Team "JIRT", in respect of which I wish to address the Royal Commission. On 22 October 2013, I contacted the Royal Commission by telephone, and arranged to attend and to provide this statement.
8. On 21 October 2013, while I was listening to the start of the public hearing, I heard Counsel assisting the Royal Commission explaining grooming. Counsel said the Royal Commission would hear a YMCA worker was telephoned by Jonathan Lord while she was at work and that he asked to speak to the boy known as BA. While I did not know at the time that BA was the pseudonym given to my son, I immediately had a bad feeling about hearing of the incident with the phone call. Until 21 October 2013, I had never heard of this incident occurring in relation to my son. However, as will be explained below, he was one of Jonathan Lord's favourites, and it sounded to me that it was plausible that the reference to BA may be to my son. I now know that "BA" is his pseudonym.
9. To the extent that it seems that YMCA knew this information about the phone call, or should have known by talking to their staff after the allegations against Jonathan Lord came to light, I feel very disappointed that this information was not told to me.
10. I am shown a document entitled "Statement of a Witness" which I recognise as a statement given by me to Police on 17 November 2011. A copy of that document is attached and marked "A". My reference in paragraph [16] of Document A to 'Chloe' is a reference to Chloe Starr.
11. I repeat the information contained within Document A and say further as follows.

#### **Interactions with Jonathan Lord**

12. I first met Jonathan Lord ("Jon") in 2009 when he began work at the YMCA after school care centre at Catholic School 2 which centre my son BA attended.
13. From the time Jon started at the centre in 2009, I observed that he was well liked by both children and parents. From my observation he was always enthusiastic, polite and went 'beyond the call of

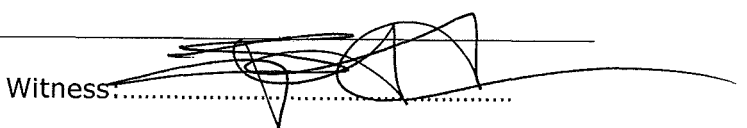
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duty' to make after school care fun for the children. I also had the opportunity to watch him prepare activities for vacation care in advance, he seemed to always be creating interesting activities for the kids. I also recall that he brought his old PlayStation video game console into the centre, together with video games, for the children to play. I also recall that in 2010 he set up a comfortable movie watching area with a heater for the winter.

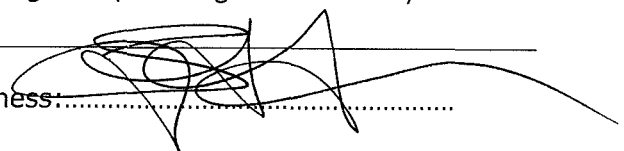
14. Jon spent considerable time with BA and I am aware, from conversations that I have had with BA and others since September 2011, that it was obvious to a number of people that BA was a favourite child of Jon's. I knew from BA and my observations, that he and Jon often played handball with other boys outside at the centre, and I observed Jon giving BA piggybacks at times.
15. On one or two occasions at the Catholic School 2 centre, I observed BA jumping all over Jon and I asked him to stop, in Jon's presence. I later explained to BA that by doing this, he was putting Jon in a difficult position, and that Jon could get in trouble for having physical contact with the children as it isn't considered appropriate in a professional setting. I knew I could put this to BA in those terms as he is a very articulate boy.
16. In early 2011 I recall that Jon told me that if I ever needed a babysitter for BA, he would be glad to assist me. At that time I thought he seemed to be a suitable babysitter by reason of my observation above that all the kids loved him. To me he seemed mature, I knew he had his driver's licence, and I assumed he had a first aid certificate by reason of working at YMCA. Another parent of children who attended the centre told me they were using Jon as a babysitter and it was working out really well. Jon gave me the mobile phone number at the Catholic School 2 centre and offered his assistance as a babysitter. At one time when I collected BA from after school care, Jon also asked me if he could take BA and one of his friends to the movies in the city in the holidays.
17. At about the same time in early 2011, BA said he would like Jon to visit us at home and that he and Jon had discussed having an out of YMCA farewell get together (including other children) for Jon

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when he left the Catholic School 2 centre. The children were upset that Jon was leaving the Catholic School 2 centre for another centre. Sometime later (possibly a few months), Jon returned to work at the Catholic School 2 centre one day per week on Thursday afternoons, Thursday being a day BA regularly attended.

18. I refer to paragraph [10] of Document A where I discuss the first time Jon babysat BA. I recall that on that day I contacted the Catholic School 2 centre on the staff mobile phone, during the day, to let them know that Jon would be picking BA up, signing him out, and driving him home. I assumed they would need this authorisation for an alternate person to collect BA. I do not remember which YMCA staff member I spoke to but she did not tell me that this was in breach of YMCA policy or the YMCA Code of Conduct. I recall that she didn't sound happy about it but she didn't suggest to me that it shouldn't take place.

19. I recall that after the first occasion when Jon babysat BA, I still needed to pay him. The next time I saw him at the Catholic School 2 centre, I offered him \$100 (calculated at 4 x \$25 per hour) and he told me *"That's too much, I don't do it for the money"*. We agreed on \$80 which he accepted.

20. Around term 2 of 2011 (between April and July 2011) I had a conversation with Jon at the Catholic School 2 centre in which he told me he was in trouble with his supervisor. He joked that maybe he would lose his job soon. He told me that they had a disagreement over the something to do with him transporting children but I cannot confirm the exact details of the disagreement. I think he was referring to a period of time in the previous vacation care (being the Easter school holidays 2011) but this timing may not be exact. I do not now recall whether he named Jacqui Barnat in that conversation, but certainly since I have become aware that Ms Barnat was his supervisor at the time.

21. In June 2011, around the time of BA's birthday, Jon gave BA a birthday present. I recall thinking at the time that this was unnecessary but I was not particularly alarmed by this incident alone. He

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had not given BA presents for his previous birthday even though BA had been in Jon's care at that time.

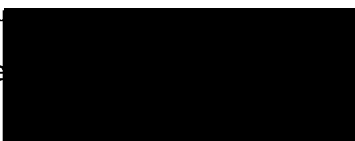
22. I recall on one occasion in term 3 of 2011 (being between July and September 2011) when I came to pick BA up from the Catholic School 2 centre, Jon had set up a giant movie screen and chairs for the children. It may have been part of planning for the upcoming vacation care but I am unsure. On that occasion, BA and Jon were the only 2 people sitting watching a movie as all the other children had gone home. BA was sitting on Jon's lap. I observed Jon was holding BA's hand in a strange way. It wasn't till later that I thought about the inappropriateness of this. There was another staff member present in the centre at the time but not sitting watching the movie. I believe this was not the first occasion I had seen BA sitting on Jon's lap but I am less clear of the dates of other occasions.

23. At some point during this mid-2011, I started to reconsider Jon's interest in BA – I couldn't put my finger on the problem, it just occurred to me that BA was a somewhat vulnerable child given some of our family circumstances, and that he could be a target for grooming, a concept of which I was aware. I recall that one night in 2011 I collected BA from the centre and I had just come from a very difficult & upsetting meeting. I saw Jon but I didn't discuss the details with him, I recall being visibly upset because of my meeting. Later that evening Jon sent me a text message offering his support and help. I was very uncomfortable with this direct contact.

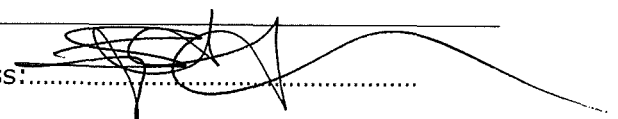
24. I also couldn't work Jon out. To my knowledge he was a 24 year old man who was not studying for a teaching degree (whereas many of the YMCA workers were/are trainee teachers to my understanding). He never mentioned a girlfriend, friends or a church group to me and was available at short notice, to babysit on Friday nights, explaining to me that he worked for his mum in real estate on Saturdays so he had to get up early and therefore couldn't go out.

25. By the time I received the letter form YMCA about allegations against a worker in mid-October 2011 as referred to in paragraph [26] below, I had come to suspect that Jon's motivation in

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babysitting and his attention to BA may not have been legitimate and that I should not encourage a friendship between him and BA outside of YMCA. I became evasive at YMCA, excusing myself as being in a hurry in the last term before the assault became known (being July to September 2011). I accept that I did not tell anyone at YMCA about my unease in relation to Jon or any suspicions I had about him.

#### Disclosure of abuse by BA

26. I recall it was the first Thursday back at school in Term 4 (making it mid-October 2011) when I received a letter from the YMCA via email, notifying me that a worker had been stood down over allegations about a child. I felt sick as soon as I read the letter. That same afternoon I attended the centre to pick BA up, I knew that if Jon Lord was not there, I would need to talk to BA.
27. When I arrived, Chloe Starr approached me and asked me if I had received the letter. I told her I had received it. She explained to me that she was not allowed to discuss any aspect of the issue with parents. I commented to Chloe that I could see that someone in particular was missing from work this afternoon. She said *"yes, that's why you need to go home and talk to BA. I know "he" was babysitting for you."* At some point in the conversation I recall that Chloe said *"and this is why we are not supposed to babysit for people"*.
28. Upon reflection later, I thought *"God, I wish someone had told me he wasn't allowed to babysit for me!"* Until Chloe had implied it by her comment, I had no idea. Had I known he was breaking rules, it would have given me cause to think twice about taking him upon on it. It would also have given me cause to reflect upon why he would break the rules just to be able to babysit. This was more so given he had said the money was not the main reason he babysat.
29. The afternoon that I received the letter, as set out in paragraph [24] and [25] I asked BA about Jon as soon as we were in the car after I collected him. I said *"has Jon ever behaved inappropriately towards you"*. Again I knew that BA would understand what I meant by this. He said yes and that Jon had *"put his hand down my pants"*. During our discussion in the car, which lasted almost

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an hour, I asked BA if he remembered the "NO, GO, TELL" strategy or any other strategy he had been taught in child protection at school. He said no.

30. When we arrived home BA and I spoke to BA's father and we told him about BA's disclosure. Later that evening, BA's father told me that he had telephoned Miranda police (as this was the recommendation made by YMCA for concerned parents in the letter I had received that afternoon). He told me that Miranda police had given him the phone number for the DOCS Hotline whom he had also called and made a report to DOCS. He told me that DOCS had advised that if I rang them and quoted the report number he'd been given, I could add further detail to the same report. He said I only had 45 minutes to make the call otherwise they would start a new report. I could not understand why this was such a narrow window in order to speak to them before having to start a whole new report.

31. I telephoned DOCS within 45 minutes and added detail regarding dates and my observations to the original report.

**Investigation and prosecution of Jonathan Lord**

32. A few days after 13 October, I received a call from Leanne Kelly. She told me that the investigation was being handled by Kogarah JIRT. We made an appointment for BA and me to meet with her at Kogarah around two days later. During that call, Leanne explained the process involved in interviewing BA before we attended. She suggested that I to explain to BA that we would meet a plain clothes police lady at a building, not a police station, so no one would see him go there. I knew that BA was very concerned about anonymity and really didn't want to speak to police as a general concept. She also explained that if they wanted to interview BA he would be with the police officer alone and that I would not be allowed to attend the interview.

33. BA and I attended Kogarah JIRT on 20 October 2011. We met Leanne Kelly and a lady from DOCS who explained that she was there to ensure BA was supervised at all times (in terms of care and safety). Leanne showed BA and me the interview room and the recording equipment and asked

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BA if he would be OK to talk with her in the interview room without me. BA agreed to the interview without hesitation. He didn't seem upset going in.

34. BA was with Leanne and the DOCS lady for approximately 1 hour. At the end of the interview, Leanne explained that BA had clearly disclosed an assault to them and further action would be taken. I observed that BA was still calm.
35. I recall he came out of the interview and he went and played in another room while Leanne and I sat outside that room, its door was open. I believe she told me that Jon would be charged with indecent assault against BA. Several days after the interview Jon Lord was charged and Leanne Kelly telephoned me to notify me that he had been charged, with bail refused. She explained that he was on suicide watch during that time.
36. After that time, Leanne Kelly kept in regular contact with me. She kept me informed of next steps in the court process explaining which court dates would be "routine, procedural" court hearings which would not progress the matter. Leanne invited me to attend the major court hearings and explained that some other parents would be attending. Leanne never discouraged me from attending any hearing. I declined to attend the hearings as there may be other parents of BA's friends at the hearings and they would identify me, making the connection to BA, which he expressly did not want.
37. Leanne took time to explain the process to me in many, lengthy phone calls. To my knowledge, she followed up with me after each and every court appearance, to tell me the results of the court hearings and next dates, even the procedural hearings. She always offered the opportunity to ask questions and discuss my concerns. Leanne also arranged for me to give my statement at Miranda police station, at a time convenient to me and giving me some privacy as I would not be recognised at Miranda police station. It was in these circumstances that I came to provide Document A to police on 17 November 2011.

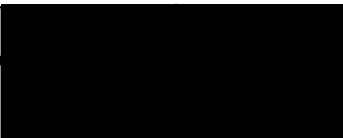
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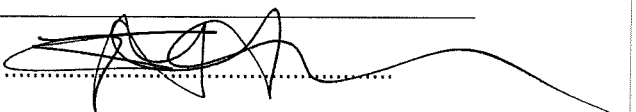
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38. Throughout the prosecution process I received communications from both YMCA and Catholic School 2 informing me of information that was being made available to the public. At all times, I felt that the information that YMCA and Catholic School 2 was providing me I had already received from Leanne shortly prior. The information did not appear to conflict, although the YMCA/School information was more generalised. In one of the YMCA letters, it said that Catharine Clements had been appointed as a result of the Jonathan Lord allegations.
39. At some time in late 2012, after Jonathan Lord pleaded guilty, I telephoned Catharine Clements and, without disclosing my name or telephone number, told her I was the mother of a victim of Jonathan Lord's who had been in his care in YMCA. I explained to her that I wanted the YMCA management to know that staff had been aware that Jon Lord babysat BA for me and had, at no time, alerted me to that being a breach of protocol. I told her that I felt YMCA should review its policies and that staff should always be aware that they had a duty to report breaches.
40. From late 2012, once Jonathan Lord had pleaded guilty and was awaiting sentence, I dealt with Debbie Scott from the NSW Office of the Director Public Prosecutions, who was also very helpful to me. Debbie explained to me the purpose of victim's impact statements and victim's compensation and she sent me the forms for the compensation. She also explained that there is a register we could be part of so we always know where Jonathan Lord is being held in custody and when he is released in the future.
41. While listening to the evidence of the Royal Commission on 21 and 22 October 2013, I heard some parents and child care workers' evidence. In particular one parent stated that she was disappointed with the lack of media attention to the case, and that the police seemed to be scared of the media. In my view, the police were just doing their job protecting the names of the victims and attempting to keep media in check. The same parent was surprised at the lack of parents at court but people need to understand that some children did not want to be identified and their parents attending court would have identified those children. To me, BA's privacy and his wishes

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in that regard were the most important priority for me during this very difficult time, not media attention.

42. In the lead up to the sentencing in January 2013, I spoke with both Leanne Kelly and Debbie Scott and they both prepared me for the fact that Jonathan Lord would not receive as lengthy a sentence, as I might expect or hope. I was disappointed that he was able to make a plea bargain due to pleading guilty and coming forward with names of other victims. In my view, six 6 years does not seem long enough given he stole the innocence and childhood of 12 children.

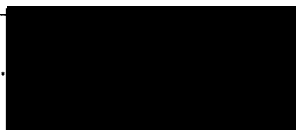
43. Immediately following the judgment Leanne Kelly assisted and supported me when a journalist attempted to contact me directly, following the sentencing, having found out my identity despite the Judge giving BA a pseudonym.

#### Events since sentencing

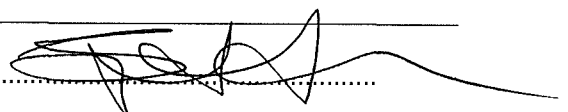
44. I have recently become aware that victim's compensation has been reduced in recent legislation and am disappointed with this change of legislation. I am also disappointed at the time frames and level of complexity in processing the compensation claims. While I know that there is no way to compensate for the true impact of sexual abuse on a child, there are ongoing costs associated with dealing with the aftermath.

45. Above all else, BA wishes to maintain his privacy. He has been adamant since his disclosure and police interview that no one know about what happened to him, beyond me, his father and a very small handful of people. BA attends a private psychologist and we did not disclose the assault to his school, as I did not think it was their responsibility in any way and the more people who knew, the more likely it would become public knowledge. This has had some downsides for BA, for example I have witnessed one difficult event where BA was placed in an uncomfortable position, during the teaching of child protection at school, and the teacher was unaware of the assault. This is not a criticism of Catholic School 2 at all, as they have no knowledge of BA's abuse.

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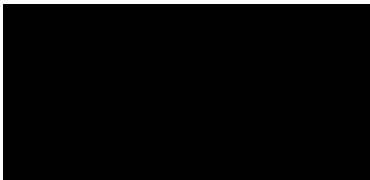
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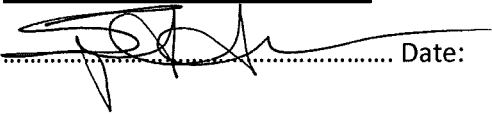


46. BA was devastated at the betrayal of trust and loss of Jon who was a very important friend to him.

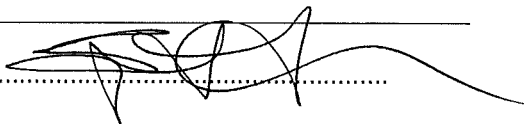
He is mistrustful of adults and their motives. He truly grieved the loss of his friend and the realisation that Jon wasn't really BA's friend to start with. BA is scared to be alone and has expressed fear of ever coming face to face with Jonathan Lord again.

47. BA did return to YMCA after school care for a time, specifically because he and I agreed that people might realise he was missing, and therefore suspect he had been abused. But in early 2012 he asked me if he could stop going as it was bringing up too many reminders for him. Of course I immediately withdrew him.

Signed:  ... Date: 24 October 2013

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