

CA5

NICOL ROBINSON HALLETT'S
 LAWYERS
 ESTABLISHED 1890

Our ref: SJH:CLK:527446

Your ref:

3 February 2006

CA

REDACTED

REP. 142-06.
 BY PHONE
 KIMBEALY
 HALLETT'S

Dear CA

North Coast Childrens Home

I am writing this general letter to all of our clients to advise as to where matters presently stand and to ensure that you are not left in the dark as to progress.

We formally wrote to the Diocese of Grafton on 5 January 2006 to confirm our instructions. I attach a copy of that letter for your information.

Since the letter was sent, several other former residents have been able to come forward and therefore some of the information, such as periods of residency and also the number of alleged abusers mentioned in the letter, have changed. Experience has shown that in actions such as this, people will continue to come forward over a lengthy period of time and indeed many will come forward after the initial claims, such as your own, are settled.

In response to our letter, we received the attached copy letter from the Diocese' Lawyers, namely Foott Law and Co, on 30 January 2006. The letter is the sort of response we would have expected at this point in the process, in that it says very little of any import save that the Church would be seeking to have these matters settled by Mediation and this is of course is the manner in which we will be taking each of these claims. Our initial letter to you, a copy of which is attached, sets out the process that we are following .

We do note, however, that reference is made by the Churches' Lawyers to the "Professional Standards Committee". Unless we are very much mistaken, this would indicate that some of the abusers may be still alive and that the Church would wish to deal with their abuses by way of an internal sanction process. For example, if the Church satisfies itself that a Priest has abused persons in their care then it can remove 'Holy Orders' from that Priest. It would be our view that such an internal process is a side issue and that if **any** of the abusers are still alive then this is clearly a matter for the Police.

At the present time we are again inviting the Church to provide any information that would enable us to trace any of the abusers no matter whether they were, or are, members of the Priesthood, employees or former employees, as well as any information that would enable us to

- 2 -

CA

3 February 2006

contact any of the members of the Homes' Management Committee in respect of the periods of abuse.

We will be speaking further with you in early course to assist us in compiling your claim and will then be able to complete your formal statement (this is of course a standard letter that we are sending to all clients and it may be the case that we have most of the information we need from you already).

Whilst each claim is dealt with depending on its own particular circumstances in terms of evidence etc, it is the case that procedurally each claim will be run in the same way. By this I mean that it may well be the case that you have now provided all the relevant information you can, or it may be that we are at the stage of still obtaining details from you. It may also be the case that we may propose that a medical report would be of use in a person's particular claim (especially if a client is, or has been, seeking professional help with their trauma). This again depends on a review of each person's individual claim and we will be proposing whether that would be beneficial for you when we speak further with you.

At the present time we are still collating a lot of information from individual clients, a lot of which we need to confidentially cross reference to other claims. For example, it may be the case that client 'A' provides information that we feel may assist client 'B's' claim. This could well be information about client 'B' that client 'B' had forgotten about but which nevertheless would assist their claim.

There is of course a great deal of work that we are continuing to undertake in respect of these matters and it may be the case that we are not in contact with you for several weeks. If this should be the case, please feel free at any time to contact us concerning your claim, however please also be assured that this matter is being given the writer's and this teams' continual attention as we progress what is already, in the writer's experience, one of the worst cases of serial abuse in Australia to date.

Once we have collected all of the information that we need to present the best case that we can on your behalf, you will then see that the matter will pick up pace very quickly.

Again, if there any matters you feel we haven't addressed in this letter, or there are other matters you wish to raise, then please feel free to contact me.

Yours faithfully
NICOL ROBINSON HALLETTS

per:



SIMON HARRISON

Partner

Direct Line: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]