

ANNEXURE

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To: royalcommissionsecretariat@pmc.gov.au
 Submission to RC into Child Sexual Abuse

Submission to the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse

I would like to have some input into your investigation. A summary of my experience follows:

- o I am 40 years old and live in REDACTED Qld.
- o I was sexually abused, sometimes daily and sometimes weekly, as a 13-14 year old girl, in the small rural town of Scone NSW, between November 1985 and March 1986.
- o My abuser was the swimming coach of the Scone Swimming Club, a man then in his thirties called Stephen John Roser.
- o At the time I did not disclose the abuse to anyone – I had no words to describe it – and repressed all memories of it until they traumatically resurfaced in 1991.
- o I made a statement to police in 1993 and my abuser was eventually charged and convicted of abusing me and another girl (11yo). I STRONGLY suspect he abused many other children in the swimming club during those months, including one girl (8yo) who was a heroin addict by the age of 15.
- o My life was in constant emotional turmoil from the time of the abuse, and particularly through the remembering process, through disclosure to police, psychologists, friends and family, through court processes and Victims Compensation Tribunal (VCT) processes.
- o The emotional turmoil subsided somewhat in 1996 when a VCT judge spoke to acknowledge the impact and injustice of my suffering and awarded me the maximum compensation amount.
- o The pain no longer overwhelms me, but it continues deeply within me through every new stage of life. Having children of my own REDACTED has given me different insights into what happened to me as a child. It should not have happened, and I've developed a renewed anger about the fact that it did, and that the abuser received such a lenient sentence and lives an apparently normal existence. I imagine he has no concept of the many stages of pain and isolated suffering that I have experienced, and continue to experience, as a result of his actions, just as wider society has little understanding of the needs and suffering of survivors of child sexual abuse.
- o I want to contribute to this Royal Commission because I believe there must be a way for society to better prevent and manage this problem, and because both the initial AND ongoing needs of innocent victims need to be acknowledged and supported. I consider myself lucky to have survived this abuse. At 20 I was suffering anxiety, depression, a dissociative disorder and was suicidal because I had no clue what to do about the abuse. Somehow I navigated a complex, often insensitive, set of processes to emerge intact, educated, functional and capable. Intact, but never complete – the child that I was before the abuse (and the person that I was going to become) did not survive.
- o My interest in contributing to this Royal Commission comes from my desire for the investigation not to be overly dominated by big institutions eg. the Catholic or other churches, big schools, even survivor groups etc. There are, I am sure, MANY individuals like me who were abused in tiny 'institutions' like the Scone Swimming Club, who don't have any affiliation with powerful groups who can speak on their behalf. I feel that the right thing to do is to express my experience as a reflection of the many other children abused in small institutions who either did not survive the impact of the abuse, or who do not have a voice at this time.

I can be contacted, preferably by email, as below.

Thank you and sincerely,

AEB

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