

commission for
children and young people
and child guardian

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Reference: BCC343/10/DN33354

- 6 JUL 2010

Mr Kevin Hasseman
Chief Executive
Swimming Queensland
PO Box 1279
CAPALABA BC QLD 4157

PROCESSED
7/7/2010

Dear Mr Hasseman

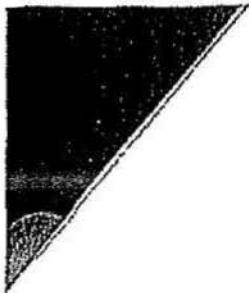
Recently the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (the Commission) received two separate anonymous complaints concerning Mr Scott Volkens alleging his continued involvement and coaching of children.

The first complainant was concerned that Swimming Queensland (SQ) "have allowed Mr Volkens to continue" despite a negative notice being issued to him and allowed him to be the head coach for a representative swimming group which travelled to China in May 2010. Furthermore, the complainant alleged that Mr Volkens continues to coach at the Sleeman Aquatic Centre where he provides assistance/coaching to swimmers on a regular basis.

The second complainant alleged that they had recently received a newsletter from SQ showing a photograph of Mr Volkens together with eight other male coaches on a recent trip to China (assumed to be the one mentioned above) which included predominantly females aged 14 – 17 years. This complainant was concerned that the male/female ratio of coaches was inconsistent with the Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association guidelines and did not provide a good emotional environment for young girls. Accordingly, this complainant was concerned SQ was not safeguarding the interests and wellbeing of children and young people, particularly given Mr Volkens' continued presence within the coaching environment.

As I am sure you would be aware, Mr Volkens was issued with a negative notice by the Commission on 1 June 2009, in a decision that was ultimately upheld by the Queensland Civil Administrative Tribunal, in a ruling handed down on 31 May 2010. Accordingly, if Mr Volkens has been or continues to engage in regulated child-related employment activities under the Commission's legislation, both he and his employer (SQ) can be held liable for prosecution action.

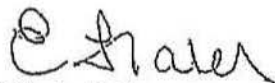
I am particularly concerned given these recent allegations and therefore ask that you address the allegations by providing a response to the following:

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- What role does Mr Volkens currently hold with SQ and what level of contact/interaction does he have with individuals who are under 18 years of age?
 - With respect to the allegation that he travelled to China as Head Coach in May 2010, please provide evidence of SQ's specific risk management plan that should have been developed for that high risk activity/special event, as required as part of SQ's child and youth risk management strategy pursuant to Section 171 of the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*. In that regard, I am particularly interested in how SQ managed his activities within that representative team environment.
 - Given that Mr Volkens holds a current negative notice, what strategies have SQ implemented to specifically restrict his activities to ensure compliance with the Commission's legislation since the issue of his negative notice.
 - What risk management strategies does Swimming Queensland have in place to mitigate risks to children and young people more generally within the swimming environment? (In that regard, please produce a copy of your complete child and youth risk management strategy which you are required to have in place pursuant to Section 171 mentioned above).
 - Your comments in relation to these allegations or any additional information you consider relevant.

If you prefer, I am more than happy to have representatives from the Commission meet with you to discuss these issues further.

I am particularly keen to clarify Mr Volkens' employment activities and therefore ask that you either respond to this correspondence by 16 July 2010, or seek a meeting with my representatives by contacting Mr Neil O'Connor, Manager, Blue Card Compliance directly on REDACTED as soon as practicable.

Yours sincerely



Elizabeth Fraser
Commissioner for Children and Young People
and Child Guardian