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Re letter from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian dated 6 July 2010 – responses to the points raised by the Commission

Point 1

Mr Scott Volkens is employed by Swimming Queensland to lead the development and growth of elite coaches in Queensland. His key functions are to:

- Contribute to the vision and strategies that will ensure Queensland continues at the forefront of swimming in Australia.
- Work with Target and Gold Squad coaches by providing technical support and advice for the training environment.
- Plan Swimming Queensland training camps and clinics as required.
- Foster a productive working relationship with all stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for the development of coaches throughout Queensland.
- Provide mentoring, support and education to targeted coaches.
- Assist the Swimming Queensland Development Manager and Queensland Academy of Sport High Performance Director to formulate and monitor operating budgets.
- Disseminate information to coaches through workshops, website updates and Association publications.
- Provide reports to the Board of Swimming Queensland and/or the Queensland Academy of Sport as required.

This is essentially the same role as that performed by Mr Volkens as Head Coach of the Queensland Academy of Sport in the 10-year period prior to his transfer to Swimming Queensland.

Mr Volkens' contact/interaction with individuals under 18 years of age is minimal and in the presence of other adults.

## Point 2

The China development trip was undertaken under Swimming Queensland's Safe Trips Away guidelines, a risk management document which forms part of the organisation's child and youth risk management strategy.

In particular, in relation to Mr Volkers' involvement with the trip, Swimming Queensland appointed its Development Manager, Mr Wayne Lomas, as the Head of Delegation. Ms Kellie Pritchard-Peschek, a Performance Scientist employed by the Queensland Academy of Sport, was appointed Female Team Manager. Mr Volkers' role on the team was as Mentor Coach. As such, he provided mentoring, support and education to the team coaches.

Mr Lomas shared a room with and provided direct oversight of Mr Volkers for the duration of the trip. Mr Lomas was aware that Mr Volkers has been issued with a negative notice by the Commission.

Mr Lomas is second-in-charge at Swimming Queensland and has extensive experience in team management at State and National levels. He has managed Queensland and Australian swim teams since 2001, including 15 trips overseas (six of them to China).


In recognition of his team management skills and experience, Mr Lomas has been appointed Head Team Manager for the Australian Swim Team at the 2010 World Short Course Swimming Championship in Dubai.

## Point 3

To ensure its compliance with the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000, Swimming Queensland obtained legal advice in formulating Mr Volkers' position description. This included a face-to-face meeting involving Swimming Queensland's CEO, Development Manager, Legal Adviser, and Mr Volkers, at which the specific activities to be carried out by Mr Volkers in his employment with Swimming Queensland were canvassed in detail.

On the recommendation of its legal adviser, the offer of employment made to Mr Volkers' by Swimming Queensland included the following statement:

*I note that your application for a blue card has been refused and you have been issued with a negative notice by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. Consequently, your employment with SQ is conditional upon you complying at all times with the conditions imposed upon you under that negative notice.*



Swimming Queensland recommended to Mr Volkens that he take legal advice himself to ensure his own compliance with the Act in his employment with Swimming Queensland. Mr Volkens subsequently informed Swimming Queensland that he had taken such advice.

Swimming Queensland's Development Manager has since prepared a program of approved activities for Mr Volkens arising from Swimming Queensland's 2010/11 Operational Plan.

#### Point 4

Swimming Queensland will produce a copy of its complete child and youth risk management strategy, as requested.

#### Point 5

The following comments relate to the complaints referred to in the Commission's letter.

##### *First complaint*

Mr Volkens' role on the development team that travelled to China was Mentor Coach. As such, he provided mentoring, support and education to the coaches on the team, who in turn were responsible for instructing, interacting with and assisting with the supervision of their designated swimmers. Mr Volkens' does not coach at the Sleeman Aquatic Centre – or anywhere else, for that matter.

##### *Second complaint*

The Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association guidelines do not prescribe or recommend a male/female coach ratio for teams.

The Sports Psychologist regularly used by Swimming Queensland and the Queensland Academy of Sport in athlete development activities has advised that he does not concur with the complainant's view about the male/female ratio of coaches on the China development trip not providing "a good emotional environment for young girls".