

STATEMENT OF NORRIE CANNON

1. On Thursday 12 February 2015, Ms Wendy Blacker of Gadens Lawyers spoke with me and provided me with a letter addressed to me from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**the Commission**).
2. I have read and considered the matters raised in the Commission's letter and I have set out below my memory and recollection of the relevant matters I can recall.
3. No student, parent, teacher or School administrator at Knox Grammar School (**the School**) ever reported an incident of child sexual abuse to me.
4. I was unaware of the incidents of abuse relating to Mr Damien Vance, Mr Chris Fotis and Mr Adrian Nisbett until they unfolded in the media.
 - (a) I believe the incidents occurred before my time in boarding. Further, my contact with the people mentioned above was very limited as they were not working in my House. I was not the Senior Boarding Housemaster and I recall they were only in boarding for a short period of time, I think during my first year in boarding. My contact with them was limited to occasional interactions in the Dining Room.
 - (b) I was unaware of the circumstances in which Mr Fotis left boarding. I can recall Mr Vance left boarding overnight to be with his sick mother in Melbourne and that he never returned to the School. I believe Mr. Nisbett either resigned or retired from the School.
5. With regard to Mr Nick Williams, I was unaware that there were any allegations of sexual abuse made against Mr. Williams until my phone conversation with Ms. Blacker on 12 February 2015.
6. As Director of Boarding, I had concerns regarding Mr. Williams' failure to follow boarding protocol and reported these concerns, both verbally and in writing, to the Headmaster. As a consequence of his breach of Boarding Policy and his failure to comply with directives and IR policy, his role in boarding ceased. My recollection is that the Headmaster met with Mr Williams and advised him that he had failed to follow policy and specific directives regarding:
 - (a) not having boys in his private room in the boarding house; and
 - (b) not taking boys in his car.
7. As a consequence, Mr Williams left boarding. I am not sure if he was dismissed or resigned by mutual agreement with the School.
8. I also recall an incident involving Mr Williams coaching a sporting team, around the same time I gave my report to the Headmaster. It was reported to the School by a physical education staff member. I cannot recall what the incident related to specifically, strange behavior is all I can recall.

9. With regard to Mr ARH I was unaware there were any allegations of sexual abuse made against Mr ARH until my phone conversation with Ms Blacker from Gadens Lawyers on 12 February 2015.
10. With regard to conversations I had with the Headmasters, Mr Pearson and Dr Timothy Hawkes, I do not recall having any conversations with either Mr Pearson or Dr Hawkes regarding these gentlemen nor do I recall any allegations of sexual abuse.
11. With regard to matters that might be relevant to the Commission's enquiries and, specifically, conversations I had with Headmasters Paterson, Crawley and Weeks, when I was appointed as Director of Boarding in 1999, that I worked with and through to establish:
- (a) A boarding staff selection and induction process;
 - (b) A Boarding Staff Handbook;
 - (c) Compulsory professional development days for boarding staff;
 - (d) The requirement for all staff to undertake formal professional accreditation through the course offered through the Australian Boarding Schools Association;
 - (e) regular policy reviews to incorporate and reflect upon the changing nature of legislative requirements related to the Child; and
 - (f) established a Boarding Parents Association.
12. Further, I can recall having conversations with Headmaster Weeks during the course of fulfilling my role as Director of Boarding regarding comments he had heard about people on teaching and boarding staff. As previously stated, I had never heard anything specific regarding inappropriate behavior towards children or abuse by any Knox staff member.
14. Finally, as I have never had an allegation reported to me or had a suspicion of abuse by anyone at the School toward a child I have not had cause to report any matter to the police.
15. This statement contains my knowledge of events in response to the matters raised in the letter to the best of my recollection and belief.



Norrie Cannon

17 February 2015