



Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

Statement

Name BZS
Address Known to the Royal Commission
Occupation Known to the Royal Commission
Date 24 February 2016

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. Where direct speech is referred to in this statement, it is provided in words or words to the effect of those which were used, to the best of my recollection.
3. This statement has been prepared on the basis that the Commission will issue a Notice to Produce under *Royal Commissions Act 1902 (Cth) s 2(3A)* for the production of a signed copy.

Background

4. My name is BZS, I am in my mid-twenties.
5. My parents divorced when I was an infant. I lived with my mother and siblings during my childhood.
6. I became interested in dance and drama during primary school, and was involved in a co-curricular dance class in Year 6 taught by Grant Davies (Grant). I recall that there were approximately 12 students in this class, which was held on one afternoon per

Signature

BZS

Witness: ...

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Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing Arts

Statement of BZS continued

Page 2 of 8

week. The class involved learning dance moves and techniques as well as routines for concert performances at the school. We also entered into an eisteddfod.

7. I was living with my mother and stepfather at the time. One of the other dance student's mothers usually drove me home after the elective lesson or I took the train.
8. I enjoyed the classes Grant taught and I worked hard in them.
9. At the end of the 2002 school year, Grant called me on the landline at home. He asked me if I wanted to be a part of a school performance he was directing. I was very excited to be offered this role and readily accepted. Rehearsals for the performance started in around the last two weeks of January 2003 and continued through Term 1. The rehearsals were held on school grounds.
10. Sometime before rehearsals began in January 2003, I also started dance classes at RG Dance studio for a period of one or two weeks. At the time, RG Dance was located in Five Dock. Grant and his sister, Rebecca Davies (**Rebecca**) ran RG Dance together. I recall that Grant, Rebecca and a ballet teacher called Sarah Henderson (**Sarah**) taught the summer holiday classes.
11. While attending the summer holiday classes at RG Dance, I decided to take up more regular classes there to further my interest in dance.
12. At the beginning of Year 7 in 2003, I started attending regular classes at RG Dance. I attended classes every Saturday for a few hours, and then every Thursday evening and one other night during the week. At the peak of my involvement with RG Dance I attended 13 or more hours of class every week. On weekdays, I would get to RG Dance

Signature: BZS

Witness:

REDACTED

Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing Arts

Statement of BZS continued

Page 3 of 8

by catching a train to Town Hall after school, then a bus to Five Dock. In the early days, my mother came to pick me up after class in the evenings.

13. From memory, classes ranged in sizes from 12 to 20 students. Classes were taught by Grant, Rebecca, Sarah and Tracie-Marie Seipel. The classes were held in a large church hall, as well as a smaller room behind the church. Doors generally remained closed during class. I cannot recall other adults, such as parents, being able to watch the classes.

14. On reflection, the environment at RG Dance was intense, with a strong focus on winning competitions and pushing the flexibility and strength of students.

15. I recall that when I first met Grant during the co-curricular dance class, I admired and looked up to him as a role model. He was very friendly and charismatic. My relationship with him became closer through my role in the 2003 school performance as I previously mentioned. In May 2003, he gave me presents for my 13th birthday, including the Jesus Christ Superstar CD. I looked to him like a big brother or father figure, because I didn't have a stable male figure in my life.

Sexual Abuse by Grant Davies

16. I was abused by Grant from 2003 to 2004.

17. When I wasn't at the RG Dance studio for classes, Grant frequently texted me on my mobile phone and we would talk on MSN Messenger. He would also text and chat with me during school holidays. I had a prepaid mobile phone plan at the time and couldn't afford to keep up my credit to be able to reply to Grant's messages. When I told Grant

Signature:

BZS

Witness: ...

REDACTED

Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing ArtsStatement of BZS continued

Page 4 of 8

this, he gave me his credit card details so that I could use it to recharge my account whenever needed.

18. Grant's messages on MSN would sometimes be sexual. I recall him directing me to look at pornographic websites.

19. Sometime in 2003, Grant started to drive me home after classes at RG Dance. My mother was unable to pick me up after class on certain days and I recall that Grant offered to drive me home after classes on Thursdays. Grant often bought me dinner on the way home.

20. For reasons I do not recall, I stayed with Grant overnight on more than one occasion. At the time, Grant lived in a unit with BZB. I remember the first night I stayed at Grant's place. From memory, BZB was in the apartment. I was on the fold-out bed in the lounge room. That night after dark, Grant came into the lounge room to speak to me. It was at this point that he begun discussing highly sexualised topics and when the sexual abuse began.

21. Grant sexually abused me on a regular basis from 2003 until I left RG Dance sometime in 2004. It is difficult to think of a time when he didn't abuse me on the Thursday evenings he drove me home.

22. Between about the middle and the end of 2004, there was a period of estrangement between Grant and myself. I had started to consider that what had been occurring was inappropriate.

23. In late 2004, I stopped attending dance classes and thought about moving to another dance studio. Ultimately, I used focusing on school work as an excuse to leave RG Dance

Signature: BZSWitness: REDACTED

Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing ArtsStatement of BZS continued

Page 5 of 8

and didn't attend another dance studio. I didn't have further contact with Grant after I left RG Dance.

Disclosure of the Abuse

24. I recall that my mother once sat me down when I was still at RG Dance and asked me whether anything inappropriate was occurring between Grant and myself. Grant was abusing me at the time, but I told her that nothing inappropriate had occurred. I later told Grant what my mother had asked and he asked what I had said. I told him that I told my mother that nothing was happening. I remember Grant looked concerned and he said to me, 'People who are convicted of abusing children and sent to gaol can have knives shoved up their assholes by fellow inmates.' I remember feeling what I would now describe as being emotionally blackmailed, and also concerned that what was occurring was wrong.
25. From memory, I did not disclose the abuse to my mother because I was worried that I had done something wrong and would be in trouble.
26. I never disclosed the abuse to anyone while it was happening. Prior to realising that the behaviour was inappropriate, I felt that Grant had created an environment that appeared to normalise the behaviour. On reflection, I think he was able to create this environment by gradually gaining my confidence, inserting himself into my life as a strong male role model.
27. In around 2005, I started to feel guilt and shame and personal responsibility about the sexual abuse. I dealt with it on my own for approximately six years. It wasn't until

Signature: BZSWitness: REDACTED

Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing Arts

Statement of [BZS] continued

Page 6 of 8

around 2009 or 2010 that I told my girlfriend what had happened. About a month later I also told my mother.

28. After disclosing the abuse to my girlfriend and my mother, I found it difficult to manage my grief. In 2011, I started seeing a psychologist. During my sessions I told her about the abuse I suffered. We discussed whether I should report the abuse to the police, and I decided to defer the decision for the future. I was primarily concerned with the impact that a trial would have on my life prior to properly dealing with the effects of the abuse.

Police and criminal proceedings

29. On 18 May 2013, I received a call from my girlfriend about a dance teacher who had been arrested in Chiswick. She told me there was an article about it on the Sydney Morning Herald website. I read the article, which did not name Grant, and had another conversation with my girlfriend about it. We talked about who I should call and how to report what had happened to me to the police.

30. I contacted Crime Stoppers on the same day and disclosed that I was a victim of sexual abuse and that I assumed that the man recently arrested was the same man, Grant Davies, who had abused me from 2003 to 2004. I left my contact details.

31. On 20 May 2013, Detective Senior Constable Rebecca Little from Burwood Police contacted me and I went to the police station to make a report.

32. I was a witness for the prosecution against Grant. I understand that Grant pleaded guilty to a number child sexual offences, including offences against me. I am also aware that Grant was scheduled to be sentenced in February 2016, but that sentencing has been adjourned until 27 May 2016.

Signature: [BZS]

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Statement in the matter of Case Study 37: Centres for the Performing Arts

Statement of BZS continued

Page 7 of 8

33. I found the detectives and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) to be very helpful and understanding. With great respect to the demands placed on detectives and Witness Assistance Service officers, I was disappointed with the frequency with which I was updated regarding the matter from 2013 to 2014. I was impressed, however, with the level of communication in the lead-up to the scheduled trial by the ODPP.

Impact of abuse

34. It was not until 2005 that I started to feel guilt and shame in relation to my abuse. I held myself responsible for what happened. For about six years, I dealt with my feelings on my own and tried to suppress them and the memories of the abuse. After disclosing my abuse to my girlfriend and my mother, I struggled to deal with everything I had suppressed for such a long time. It was a horrendous time in my life.

35. As I have said previously, in 2011 I sought professional help. My abuse was the major contributing factor to being diagnosed with depression in 2011. My psychologist helped me to deal with what had happened to me and it took a long time to emotionally understand that I wasn't responsible.

36. When Grant was arrested, I finally felt ready to report the matter to police. My mother and girlfriend were of great assistance throughout the process of reporting to the police and preparing for the scheduled trial.

37. The abuse that I suffered has had irrevocable effects, from the guilt and shame I felt as a teenager to the grief I now still feel for my younger self.

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38. It is my hope that this hearing will highlight the need for greater regulation of industries,
including performing arts centres, which have the care and supervision of children.

Signed: BZS

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