



Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse

Statement

Case Study 38 – Criminal Justice Project

Name: Peter Yeomans APM
Title: Detective Chief Inspector
 Child Abuse Squad, State Crime Command - NSW Police Force
Date: 21 March 2016

STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything that I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I have provided a previous statement dated 17 March 2016 to the Royal Commission in relation to this case study.
3. On 18 March 2016 I was provided with a copy of the statement of CDN dated 7 March 2016, and of the statement of CDP dated 9 March 2016. I am aware that CDN and CDP, being parents of children interviewed by JIRT, have raised concerns that they were not allowed to be present during the interviews held with their children, and that the children were interviewed without a support person.
4. I commenced at the NSW Police Force Child Abuse Squad (CAS) in 2012 and oversee the operational side of investigations into child abuse and sexual assaults involving children, which includes conducting, and supervising the conduct of, interviews with child complainants. My qualifications, skills and responsibilities are otherwise set out in my previous statement.
5. In accordance with the training provided to police who conduct interviews with children within the Child Abuse Squad (which I have outlined in my first statement), at all times during the

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interviewing of a child, the interviewing Police are concerned about the child's needs, health and welfare. The Police build good rapport with the child prior to the formal interview, so that the child is comfortable with those officers and does not require an additional support person during the interview process.

6. It is the experience of Child Abuse Squad Police that, in the majority of cases where a child is interviewed, it is not appropriate for a parent to be present during the interview for evidentiary reasons. The parent may themselves be a witness in future proceedings and their presence during the interview could contaminate the integrity of their evidence and that of the child. Further, experience in these matters has shown that in many cases the presence of a parent during the interview is not helpful to the child's preparedness to make a disclosure. This may be because the child is uncomfortable discussing the sexual abuse in front of the parent, the child may feel influenced by the parent in relation to what the child can say or the parent unwittingly reacts to something the child discloses that may cause distress or a reaction on the part of the child that affects the child's answers or preparedness to speak in the interview. Where possible, Police prefer to interview the child without a parent being present.
7. Generally, after the initial interview of the child the non-offending parent / carer may be informed that there has been a disclosure by the child, however the intricate details are usually not discussed as the investigation at this point is in its infancy and discussing the child's disclosure may jeopardise the outcome of any investigation. It is at this point that the child's parent / carer are made aware, and offered, appropriate support services.
8. The police provide regular updates to the parents through the course of proceedings. If a parent has any concerns they are always welcome to ring the Police undertaking the investigation to discuss any issue or for an update of the investigation.

Witness:



Lorinda Brasell

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21/02/2016

Signature:



Peter Yeomans APM
Detective Chief
Inspector