



### Statement

**Name** BXE

**Address** Known to the Royal Commission

**Occupation** Wall and Floor Tiler

**Date** 22. March 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. In preparing this statement, I have been shown documents relating to my abuse at the cricket club. Where I refer to a document in this statement, I have used the document reference number, which appears in the top or bottom right hand corner of the document to which I refer. I have not independently reviewed the cricket club documents from which these documents have been drawn.
3. 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.
4. 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

5. My full name is BXE and I am 41 years old.

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Statement of BXE continued

6. I grew up in a small town in Queensland. Growing up, I lived at home with my mother, father, and my two younger brothers. Mum and dad worked in town. Dad was a builder and mum worked at the skating rink.
7. The town was a quiet little town, but I enjoyed growing up there. I was out all the time and around people. When I was younger, I loved sports. I started skating when I was three or four years old. We always used to play cricket at school. When started high school, I started playing other sports, like footy, and indoor cricket.

#### Sexual Abuse by Robert Ross

8. The local cricket club was a big part of the community. We had about 10 teams in town. The culture around the club was good. When I was about 7 or 8 years old, I started playing club cricket. I used to spend a lot of time down there. We would go down on Saturdays to train and play.
9. When I was about 11 or 12 years old, I moved up an age group. This was when I first met Robert Ross (**Bob**). Bob was the groundsman at the club. He would do the ovals and roll the pitches.
10. Bob was regarded pretty highly around the club and the community. He would volunteer a lot of his time to help around the club. He owned a local business and was always at the cricket club. Sometimes around the club, some of the older blokes who would play on the weekend would joke, "Watch out for Bob". We would joke amongst ourselves about Bob.
11. In 1986, when I was about 12 years old, I started training at the high school. We would train every day, Monday through to Friday. Bob would come over to the nets when he

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finished work every afternoon. As a coach, Bob knew what he was doing. The man knew his cricket. He would have been the best coach in the area.

12. When I was about 13 years old, Bob started to show me and the other boys I trained with Penthouse Black Label Magazines. The magazines depicted fully naked males and females. Bob would hand them out to us. Bob would flick through them with us. Bob never tried anything when we were all together. But he would always offer one of us a lift home.
13. One night, when I was about 13 years old, Bob brought me and another boy up to watch the Broncos play in Townsville. We had a fight about who would have to sit in the front seat with him. I was on guard the entire time we were in Townsville. I didn't feel comfortable at all.
14. When I was in about 14 years old, Bob drove around to our house. He asked me to come with him to try on shirts for the match on the weekend. I told Bob that I couldn't go as I had to look after my younger brother. Bob suggested I bring him along. I told him, "No, I'll go". I had a bad feeling and wanted to protect my brother.
15. Bob drove me to the cricket club and we went into the club house. There was no-one else around. Bob kept giving me different sized shirts to try on. I felt like Bob was deliberately pulling out the wrong sizes for me to try on.
16. After a while, Bob pulled out a pornographic magazine. He sat down next to me and pulled out my penis. Bob then began to masturbate me. I ejaculated and Bob cleaned it up with his handkerchief. After he had cleaned it up, Bob said to me, "Next time I'd like to take photos." I was in shock. I didn't know what to feel.

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17. I got dressed again, we went out and checked the pitches. Bob then drove me home. I did not tell anyone what he did to me.
18. After Bob abused me, I became wary of all men. I was never comfortable being alone with other men. I would see Bob with other boys and be a bit concerned and wonder what happened to him. But I was determined that he wasn't going to get to me. I was not going to let him touch me again. He would always offer me lifts home, but I would always refuse.
19. In year 10, I came back to school in town, I would see Bob every day. I went back into my shell. It was really difficult for me. I started to drink to try and escape him.
20. In year 12, I started smoking pot more regularly. It meant that I didn't have to remember what he did. The pot also helped me not to dream.

**Barriers to reporting the abuse**

21. When I was younger, I never considered telling anyone about the abuse. I was ashamed of what happened to me. I felt that if I told someone they would think I was gay and that they would turn it back on me and make it my fault.
22. I didn't think anyone would believe me.

**Reporting of the Abuse**

23. I kept the abuse secret until I was about 21 or 22 years old. I was having drinks with my girlfriend at the time. She told me about how she had been abused as a child and so I told her about what Bob did to me.
24. My girlfriend told me that she was going to talk to her mother about it. Her mother talked to my mum about it. It was a really difficult conversation. Mum was really upset. She and dad blamed themselves.

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Statement of BXE continued

25. After mum had found out, I felt much better. I felt like I could talk to people about it.
26. Around the same time, in 1994, she went and spoke to the local police station to get advice, but nothing happened. Mum also went to the local school to tell the school about Bob.
27. Mum made a meeting for me to go and talk to the police. But I wasn't ready to talk to the police.
28. Over the years I have told a few of my friends about what Bob did to me.
29. In about 2007 or 2008 I told one of my friends and his partner what happened to me. I knew he had a son that played cricket in town and wanted to warn him to keep his son away from Bob.
30. At the time, Bob was still at the club doing the grounds and coaching.

#### Police Investigations

31. At the end of 2012, I ran into one of my friends at the pub and he asked me if anything had happened. When I told him what had happened he said, "I knew it, I fucking knew it". We talked for a while about the abuse and got very emotional.
32. A couple of years passed, and I thought that he had forgotten about going to the police.
33. In about 2014, I got a phone call out of the blue telling me he was making his police statement and told me to be ready.
34. On 21 October 2014, I provided a statement to Queensland Police. I talked to the police partly for myself to get some closure, but also to help my mate.
35. I thought the police were good while taking my statement. They made me feel at ease as much as possible. It was hard though, we were out in the middle of the station, with all

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Statement of BXE continued

the other police officers around me. I would have preferred that we were somewhere more private where I could give my statement and talk about the abuse.

36. When Bob was charged, I felt good. I wanted everyone in town to know what sort of man he really was. I wanted his name to be wiped off the cricket club. Some people didn't and still don't believe that Bob was capable of abusing kids.

37. After Bob committed suicide, I was in shock, but I didn't lose any sleep. I would have preferred that he went through the court and given us the opportunity to prove what he did.

#### Impact of abuse

38. About two weeks after Bob abused me, I tried marijuana for the first time. Around the same time I was caught breaking and entering. The abuse really screwed me up. I retreated back into my shell. I became less social. I would sit in my room more and stopped really talking to my parents. I started to misbehave a lot more.

39. I turned away from my family. My parents split up when I was about 15. I blamed myself for them breaking up.

40. I gave up cricket when I was about 16. I was going to just take a break from it to give myself some space from Bob. But I never went back. This is partially because of what Bob did, but also because I kept smoking pot. Today, I regret I didn't play cricket longer.

41. When I was around 16 and a half, I began to use and dabble with other drugs. I would smoke marijuana from the moment I woke up until I passed out. I kept smoking until I was about 28 years old, when my first child was born.

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42. I left school in about 1991. I struggled and was depressed. I lacked motivation and muddled around for about a year, not knowing what to do with myself. It was a very difficult time for me. I hated going to work. If it weren't for my father putting me through my trade, I would not have the qualifications I do today.
43. When I was about 19 or 20, I stopped talking to my mother. I only started to mend the relationship when I was 34. I started to take more and more risks. Looking back now, I am surprised that I made it to age 21.
44. I still struggle with relationships. I have trouble trusting and communicating with partners. I feel like I have built this high wall around myself and I can't let anyone else in. I feel like the same thing happened with my last partner. I know it is happening and struggle to do anything about it.
45. I love my family, but show very little affection towards them. I do not always speak to them nicely and sometimes call them names or use harsh words. I have very little patience with my children. My family feels I always put them last.
46. I can't think of sex in a loving way. My partner often feels like I am very derogative and demeaning. It was hard to hear from partner. Sometimes I don't realise that I am doing it. I feel the way that Bob abused and used me affects the way I treat people. He has made me pretty emotionless.
47. I smoke, gamble and would say that I have been an alcoholic since I was 15 years old. This is the impact that Bob has had on me. You can't forget, no matter how hard you try.

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Statement of BXE continued

48. I think it is harder for kids in smaller towns to report abuse. It hasn't changed much over the years. It was hard for me to report the abuse because everyone knows everyone. It is still the same today. People gossip all the time. If you stand out people talk about you.

49. These communities don't understand child abuse. Even today, I feel that communities try and sweep problems under the rug and try to forget about it.

50. I want police, schools and local sporting clubs to take more notice of what kids are saying. Adults need to listen to what kids are saying and look into things. I feel that too often we disregard children and do not follow up with them.

51. It is because of this that I want people to know the type of person Bob was and what he did to me. I want people to know the impact that the abuse has on you. This needs to stop happening to other kids.

Signed: ..... BXE .....

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