ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
AT MELBOURNE

Commonwealth of Australia

Royal Commission Act 1902 (Cth)

PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO

THE RESPONSES OF TURANA, WINLATON AND BALTARA, AND THE VICTORIAN POLICE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (AND ITS RELEVANT PREDECESSORS)

SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF BDA

1. The evidence of BDA is summarised in the Submissions of Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission.¹
2. Relevantly, BDA had an abusive stepfather.²
3. In October 1987, when he was 7 years old, BDA tried to take his own life. He attempted to hang himself with a skipping rope tied to a soccer post in the school playground.³
4. Following, he was admitted to care of the Department for being exposed.⁴
5. When he was 10 years old, BDA was sent to Baltara.⁵
6. When he arrived at Baltara, BDA was described as a nervous, tense, sad and rather slightly built boy.⁶
7. Grant Holland, a former Baltara Youth Officer, told the Royal Commission a boy like BDA was a target for abuse by older and bigger boys.⁷

¹ Paragraphs 136-151.
² BDA C9718 line 21-23.
³ BDA C9718 line 42 - C9719 line 25.
⁴ BDA C9719 Line 27-40.
⁵ BDA C9719 line 35-40.
⁶ Grant Holland C9763 lines 26-32.
⁷ Grant Holland C9763 lines 34-37.
8. Mr Holland said there was insufficient staff to provide proper supervision for the boys, and the training for Youth Officers to deal with child sexual abuse was deficient. He described the training given as not current (and not) good.

9. BDA told the Royal Commission, whilst he was at Baltara, he was abused by an older, bigger boy on the first night he was there.

10. Baltara records show there were other incidents of abuse perpetrated against BDA. BDA said he Blocked off those memories.

11. At 15, BDA was placed at Turana where two other boys sexually abused him.

12. On 20 October 1993 BDA absconded from Turana. Police picked him up the next day. When he was returned to Turana, BDA told Youth Officers he was sick of getting hidings from other boys and he would rather stay in the slot (solitary confinement) because at least he felt safe there.

13. Counsel Assisting has summarised BDA’s evidence of the awful consequences of the sexual abuse perpetrated upon him.

14. As an adult, BDA has been trying to piece together his early life by obtaining Department files. He has received some records and has been told he will get more but he has been frustrated by the delay in receiving them.

15. Now, BDA is a single parent who is bringing up his seven year old daughter by himself.

16. He told the Royal Commission he is doing his best to make a better life for her and for him.

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8 Grant Holland C9764 lines 1-14.
9 Grant Holland C9765 line 9 - 9766 line 15.
10 BDA C9720 line 27-39.
11 BDA C9721 line 25-37.
12 BDA C9722 line 37-46.
13 BDA C9723 line 15-C9724 line 8.
14 Submissions of Counsel Assisting, paragraph 151
15 BDA C9724 line 28 - C9725 line 7.
16 BDA C9725 line 21-49.
17. It is submitted BDA showed great courage in presenting himself to the Royal Commission for questioning. His instructions are he would also have wished to identify himself publically as a victim of child sexual abuse but feels it is in his daughter’s best interest that he remained anonymous.

18. It is submitted, insofar as they are apposite to the experiences of BDA, the Royal Commission should accept the submissions of Counsel Assisting in relation to available findings.

19. It is submitted in making such findings, the Royal Commission should take into account the evidence of the current Department Head, Dr Pradeep Philip, who acknowledged, when BDA was held at Baltara and at Turana:

• There was inadequate supervision of boys at Baltara. 
• There was inadequate training of child care officers working at Baltara.
• The Department failed to protect BDA from sexual abuse by other boys whilst he was held at Baltara.
• The Department failed to protect BDA from abuse at Turana in 1993 and 1994.

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9 November 2015

17 BDA C9725 line 46 - C9726 line 1.
18 Dr Pradeep Philip C9938 line 44 - C9939 line 7.
19 Dr Pradeep Philip C9938 line 9 - 13.
20 Dr Pradeep Philip C9938 line 18 - 21.
21 Dr Pradeep Philip C9939 line 27 - 32.