

---

## Second Statement

---

**Name** Terrence John O'Brien  
**Address** 12-14 Zouch Road  
Denham Court  
NSW 2565  
**Occupation** Minister, Director  
**Date** 16 July 2015

---

### INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is supplementary to my statement dated 10 July 2015 (**first Statement**) and is given in response to the letter dated 16 July 2015 from the Royal Commission (**Commission**) into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. As requested, this statement addresses the matters set out in paragraphs 4(a) – (f) of the letter dated 14 July 2015 from the Commission. I have used those paragraphs as headings.
2. I believe this statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
3. As a director of Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia (**Watchtower Australia**) and a member of the Branch Committee in Australia, I believe I am the most well-placed person to answer the questions in the letter from the Commission.

**A. What is the extent to which, if any, information, including statistical information, relating to incidence and/or prevalence of child sexual abuse within Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia, is provided to the Governing Body and/or Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania (Watch Tower Pennsylvania)**

4. No information relating to the incidence or prevalence of child sexual abuse in Australia, including statistical information, is provided by either Watchtower Australia or the Branch Office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia (**Branch Office**), which is located in Sydney, to the Governing Body, Watch Tower Pennsylvania, or to any other entity outside Australia.

---

Signature:.....

Witness:.....

**Statement in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia**  
**Second Statement of Terrence John O'Brien**

**Page 2 of 5**

**B. Where information of the kind referred to in paragraph 4(a) is provided by Watchtower Australia to the Governing Body and/or Watch Tower Pennsylvania, what is the use to which, if any, that information is put in the development of the systems, policies, and/or procedures promulgated by the Governing Body and/or Watchtower Australia, for raising and responding to allegations of or concerns about, and managing the risk of, child sexual abuse within Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia**

5. The answer to this question is the same as the one I have given above since it is the responsibility of the Australia Branch Committee (**Branch Committee**) to respond to allegations of and manage the risk of child abuse in Australia.

**C. Provide details of any insurance policy held by Watch Tower Pennsylvania or the Governing Body since 1975 which provides or has provided insurance cover for any claim for compensation or redress of any kind arising from an allegation(s) of child sexual abuse within Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia**

6. Watchtower Australia does not hold, and has not held, any insurance policy which provides or has provided insurance cover for any claims relating to child sexual abuse. However, as a result of the Commission's letter dated 16 July 2015, I have made further inquiries with the Legal Department of the World Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York since this is not information which could be supplied by any member of the Governing Body. I have been informed that although Watch Tower Pennsylvania has never had a claim for compensation arising from an allegation of child sexual abuse in Australia, it possibly had liability insurance coverage for such claims for the following years. The policies which may be relevant for the those years are set out below:

Dates	Insurance Company	Policy Number
01.01.1984 – 01.01.1987	Insurance Company of North America	45HF 6670
01.01.1991 – 01.01.1992	Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania (ICSP)	80-213218
01.01.1992 – 01.01.1993	ICSP	80-213297
01.01.1993 – 01.01.1994	ICSP	80-213297
01.01.1995 – 01.01.1996	ICSP	80-213297
01.01.1996 – 01.01.1997	Royal Indemnity Company (RIC)	RIW 664751
01.10.1997 – 01.10.1998	RIC	RIW 664751
01.10.1998 – 01.10.1999	RIC	RIW 664751
01.10.1999 – 01.10.2000	ICSP	80-0264446
01.10.2000 – 01.10.2001	ICSP	80-0265738

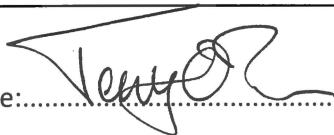
Signature:.....

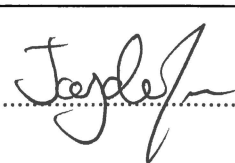
Witness:.....

Dates	Insurance Company	Policy Number
01.10.2002 – 01.10.2003	ICSP	80-0266080
01.10.2003 – 01.10.2004	ICSP	80-0266080
01.11.2007 – 01.11.2008	ICSP	80-0268549
01.11.2008 – 01.11.2009	American Insurance Company (ACE)	CXCD 37029749
01.11.2009 – 01.11.2010	ACE	CXCD 37030600
01.11.2010 – 01.11.2011	ACE	CXCD 37031367
01.11.2011 – 01.11.2012	ACE	CXCD 37032116
01.11.2012 – 01.11.2013	ACE	CXCD 37032761
01.11.2013 – 01.11.2014	ACE	CXCD 37033297
01.11.2014 – 01.11.2015	ACE	CXCD 37033996 001

**D. What is the relationship between and respective roles of Watch Tower Pennsylvania and the Governing Body, and the relationship between and the respective roles of Watchtower Australia and the Australian Branch Committee/Branch Office**

7. *Watch Tower Pennsylvania*: is a non-profit corporation established in the United States to support the activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses. It produces and publishes Bibles and Bible-based literature, art and videos, supports missionary work, and provides humanitarian assistance especially to people around the earth who have been adversely affected by a typhoon, earthquake or other natural disaster.
8. *Governing Body*: is an ecclesiastical body of elders that oversees the preaching and teaching activity of Jehovah’s Witnesses worldwide. The Governing Body uses Watch Tower Pennsylvania, as it does other corporations, to accomplish its goal of preaching the good news worldwide. No members of the Governing Body are directors or officers of Watch Tower Pennsylvania or any other corporation used by Jehovah’s Witnesses.
9. *Australia Branch Committee*: is an ecclesiastical body of elders serving at the Branch Office that oversees the preaching and teaching activity of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Australia, New Zealand, and various other islands (**Branch Territory**). The Branch Office is the regional headquarters of Jehovah’s Witnesses operating under the oversight of the Branch Committee which provides spiritual direction to Jehovah’s Witnesses in its Branch Territory. The Branch Committee functions to ensure that the spiritual needs of the congregations under its oversight are adequately cared for.

Signature:.....

Witness:.....

**Statement in the matter of Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Australia**

Second Statement of Terrence John O'Brien

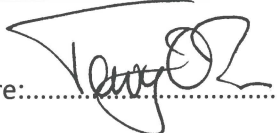
Page 4 of 5

10. *Watchtower Australia*: is a company limited by guarantee that is used by Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia. Although Watchtower Australia is a separate entity from the Branch Committee, it is used by the Branch Committee and Branch Office to assist in handling matters that require the services of a legal corporation. This includes printing, distribution of Bibles and Bible literature, holding title to property and other related legal matters. At times, members of the Branch Committee may also serve as directors or officers of Watchtower Australia.

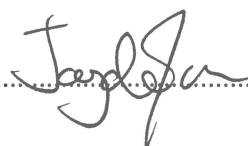
**E. What is the relationship and source of authority between the Governing Body and the Branch Offices and between the Branch Offices and Congregations within their Branch Territory**

11. The Governing Body is the highest ecclesiastical body of Jehovah's Witnesses. They examine and apply the Scriptures to provide spiritual guidance and direction to Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide. They have the responsibility of giving direction to the Kingdom-preaching activity, for which Jehovah's Witnesses are well-known worldwide. (Matthew 24:14) The Governing Body does not have any legal authority over Branch Offices, Branch Committees or congregations. The Governing Body is not involved in the administration and implementation of child sexual abuse policies and procedures in Branch Offices of Jehovah's Witnesses.
12. The relationship of the Governing Body to all Branch Offices and congregations is modelled on the first century Christian arrangement. The Bible book of Acts provides the clear Scriptural basis for this twenty-first century arrangement. In Chapter 15 of the book of Acts, a doctrinal matter that needed clarification was brought to the Apostles and older men, who acted as a decision-making governing body (verses 1-21). That first century governing body made a decision which was then conveyed by letter to the various congregations (verses 22-31). Each individual heard the spiritual direction and decided whether to accept it. I use this account to demonstrate that the role of the Governing Body in the first century and the one today both consisted of a group of elders who provide clarification on Scriptural teachings.
13. The same principle is true of the relationship between the Branch Office and the congregations. Under the oversight of the Branch Committee, the Branch Office supports and facilitates the preaching and teaching activity of, and provides spiritual direction to Jehovah's Witnesses in its Branch Territory, including providing spiritual direction in the matter of the prevention and response to child abuse.

Signature:.....



Witness:.....





14. Each congregation is an unincorporated association which is separately registered as a charity with the Australian Taxation Office and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. As such, each congregation has an autonomous committee that administers the secular affairs of the congregation. In turn, every congregation is made up of members who individually choose to follow the religious beliefs of the Jehovah's Witness faith as set out in the Scriptures.
15. The spiritual oversight of each congregation is cared for by the Scriptural arrangement of a body of elders. — Acts 14:23; 20:17.

**F. The role of the Governing Body in appointing members of the Branch Committee or any other position in Australia**

16. An experienced elder is recommended for appointment as a member of the Branch Committee to the Governing Body by the current members of the Branch Committee. If the Governing Body approves the recommendation, the elder is then appointed to serve on the Branch Committee.
17. The same arrangement exists in relation to the appointment of circuit overseers (also referred to as travelling overseers), where a recommendation of an experienced elder is made by the Branch Committee to the Governing Body for their approval. If approved by the Governing Body, the elder is then appointed to serve as a travelling overseer.
18. There are a number of other assignments that follow the same procedure. These include members of the religious order who work at the Branch Office (also known as Bethel) and instructors for theocratic schools for full-time evangelizers and travelling overseers. These schools are only for baptised adults.
19. The Governing Body does not appoint legal corporation members, officers or directors in Australia.

Signed: 

Date: JULY 20, 2015

Witness: 

Date: 20 JULY 2015

Signature: 

Witness: 