

STATEMENT OF DINO ALI

REDACTED

D.O.B: 20 July 1949

1. An overview of your involvement with the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, including but not limited to an overview of:
 - (a) the congregations you have attended;
 - (b) any roles you have held within the Church; and
 - (c) your role as an elder in the Mareeba Congregation.
 - 1.1. I have served 2 periods as an elder in the Mareeba Congregation, from 1986 to 1997, then from 2006 to 2015.
2. Your knowledge and understanding of the systems, policies and procedures in place within the Jehovah's Witness Church between October 1988 and November 2000 to;
 - (a) respond to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse made within the Church;
 - (b) prevent child sexual abuse within the Church;
 including but not limited to, your understanding of those systems, policies and procedures as they related to your role as an elder in the Church.
 - 2.1. My understanding of the procedures to deal with child sexual abuse in the congregation is to take seriously any such allegations, and immediately call the Branch office who will give direction for such cases.
 - 2.2. Two elders will investigate the allegation promptly. If they find it has substance, the body of elders will nominate three elders to form a judicial committee to deal with the wrongdoing.
 - 2.3. If the wrongdoer is unrepentant they are disfellowshipped from the congregation. This is announced to the congregation without giving the reasons for the disfellowshipping. Congregation members do not associate with disfellowshipped persons.
 - 2.4. In the congregation we are taught from the Bible that we have a personal responsibility to report wrongdoing to the elders if we become aware of it and the wrongdoer does not come forward himself.
 - 2.5. Child abuse is considered a crime by Jehovah's Witnesses. Reporting it to the Police is a personal decision for the victim and his or her parents (if a minor). We respect his or her absolute right to do so.



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- 2.6. Spiritual education is a priority in the congregation and the high morals of God's Word are consistently emphasized. Family values are most important and discussed at our meetings, and open communication is encouraged for young or old, to approach an elder for help.
- 2.7. 'Shepherding calls' are made regularly by 2 elders to families and individuals. The elders will provide whatever shepherding assistance they can.
- 2.8. Publications are provided for parents and children (and members of the public generally) to be educated as to child sexual abuse and also how to respond if and when it occurs. For example, the books "Young People Ask", Volumes 1 and 2, "Learn from the Great Teacher" and articles in the Watchtower and Awake magazines from time to time.
3. Any training that you have received, participated in, and/or delivered in relation to responding to allegations, prevention, and/or identification of child sexual abuse prior to and/or during your consideration of the allegations made by BCG [redacted] in 1989.
- 3.1. Courses (or Schools) were conducted for elders for 1 or 2 days every 2 or 3 years. The instruction at those schools included handling all sorts of serious wrongdoing including child sexual abuse.
- 3.2. The Branch regularly sent all elders letters and updates on handling judicial matters of serious wrongdoing including child sexual abuse.
- 3.3. From about the 1990's the elders received specific direction and instruction in handling cases of child sexual abuse, in the form of letters from the Branch and discussion of the subject at elders' schools.
4. A summary of your experience, both prior to and since the allegations made by BCG [redacted] in 1989, of responding to allegations of child sexual abuse within the Church.
- 4.1. Apart from BCG [redacted] case, I was aware of only 1 other case, in the late 1980's. The body of elders including me were informed by one of our elders that an individual in the congregation had committed child sexual abuse and that we needed to be vigilant as to his not having contact with children. I understand this individual was later disfellowshipped when more cases of abuse came to light. I was not on any judicial committee that dealt with him.



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5. The response of the Mareeba Congregation to allegations of child sexual abuse made by BCG [redacted] in relation to BCH [redacted] in or around May 1989, with specific reference to:

- (a) when, and in what circumstances, you became aware of the alleged abuse;
- (b) any correspondence, including the substance of that correspondence, that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Mareeba Congregation, had with the Legal and/or Service Departments of Watchtower Australia after you became aware of the alleged abuse;
- (c) any discussions or meetings that you, alone and/or together with any other member of the Mareeba Congregation, were involved in, including the substance of those discussions or meetings, with any person about the alleged abuse, including but not limited to any discussions or meetings with:
 - i) BCG [redacted]
 - ii) BCH [redacted]
 - iii) any other member of the REDACTED family; and/or
 - iv) BCJ [redacted]

1. As these events took place over 25 years ago, I am unable to recall the details to any great degree. As I recall, at the time BCG [redacted] made the allegations of child sexual abuse, Ron de Rooy, Kevin Bowditch and I were in a judicial committee considering BCH [redacted] leaving his wife and family for a sister in another congregation, REDACTED [redacted] and his lying to the elders about his behaviour.
2. I was informed of the allegations by one of the other elders on the committee, I think Kevin.
3. I recall that BCG [redacted] allegations were acted on immediately by the elders. BCG [redacted] left the family home immediately when she had made the allegations and was taken in by Kevin Bowditch and his family for a while. Gavin Belcher and his family also helped care for BCG [redacted]
4. We elders on the judicial committee spent many sleepless nights following through to support BCG [redacted] and to deal with the allegations.
5. When BCH [redacted] was confronted with the allegations by the judicial committee, he repeatedly denied them, saying words to the effect "It's a crazy accusation".
6. The judicial committee did not feel it had clear proof of the allegations of child sexual abuse from either party, as it was one person's word against



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another's. However the committee concluded it had a basis for disfellowshipping [BCH] for his conduct with [REDACTED] and his lying.

7. I recall that [BCH] appealed the disfellowshipping but the appeal committee upheld the disfellowshipping.
8. I am happy [BCG] pursued the matter, within the congregation and later with the police.
9. I don't recall any discussion with [BCG] or her family as to reporting the matter to the authorities and I do not believe this was discussed.
10. I recall there was correspondence with the Branch but I do not recall the substance of that correspondence.

6. The decision of the Elders in the Mareeba Congregation to disfellowship [BCH] in 1989 and the reasons for that decision.

- 6.1. The decision to disfellowship [BCH] was based on his immoral relationship with [REDACTED] and leaving his wife and family, not having the scriptural grounds for a divorce (Matthew 19:3-9). [BCH] would not give up this course of conduct and was dishonest to the elders about it. As he would not repent and make the necessary changes required by God's Word, the Bible, he was removed as a member of the congregation.

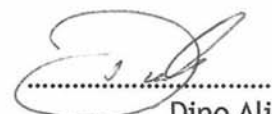
7. The decision of the Elders in the Mareeba Congregation to reinstate [BCH] in 1992 and the reasons for that decision.

- 7.1. I recall Mareeba Congregation received a letter from St George Congregation (where [BCH] had moved to after his case in Mareeba), recommending [BCH] be reinstated. The body of elders in Mareeba Congregation did not agree to reinstate him, as we believed his manner and attitude and his treachery to his wife and family were so serious, and we did not believe enough time had passed for him to demonstrate repentance.

8. Your knowledge of any correspondence between the Mareeba Congregation and any other Congregation and/or Watchtower Australia relating to the allegations of child sexual abuse made by [BCG]

- 8.1. I cannot recall anything regarding such correspondence.

9. Your knowledge and/or understanding of any specific systems and/or procedures that the body of elders in the Mareeba Congregation put in place in


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relation to [BCH] contact with children while he was a member of the Mareeba Congregation.

9.1. Almost immediately after his disfellowshipping, [BCH] left Mareeba Congregation and moved to Townsville. Later I heard that he had moved further south. He didn't hang around Mareeba Congregation at all.

9.2. I do not recall any specific measures at the time. Being disfellowshipped, all members of the congregation would apply the direction from the Holy Scriptures to avoid any contact with [BCH] so he therefore not be a threat to other children in the congregation.

9.3. In child abuse cases since that time, the elders have a policy of informing those who are in close association with the person socially, not to allow their children to stay overnight or be left alone with him under any circumstances.

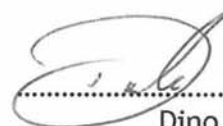
10. Your involvement, if any with the Queensland Police in relation to their investigation of [BCH]

11. Your involvement, if any, in the criminal proceedings against [BCH]

11.1. I recall a Police Officer, Natalie Bennett, approached the elders in Mareeba Congregation and the appeal committee elders for background details of [BCH]. We provided full assistance and made statements and gave the police access to all documents.

11.2. I appeared in court proceedings in Brisbane as a witness for the prosecution and in support of [BCG]

11.3. I am grateful to have been there as a witness for [BCG] at the trial, to help her get justice for herself.



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