

Date: 23.1.2013



Exhibit number: 277

**QUEENSLAND CHILD PROTECTION  
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY**

Our reference: [eDocs document number]

**Statement of Witness**

<i>Name of Witness</i>	David Reginald Smith
<i>Date of Birth</i>	09/02/1953
<i>Address and contact details</i>	Known to commission staff
<i>Occupation</i>	Section Supervisor
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Senior Sergeant Brett Barber
<i>Date taken</i>	21/09/2012

I, David Reginald Smith state;

1. I am 59 years of age.
2. I am a former employee of the Department of Children's Services, [herein referred to as the department].
3. I commenced working for the department in 1982. I initially commenced working for the Department at the Sir Leslie Wilson Youth centre as a youth worker.
4. I also worked for the department at the John Oxley Youth Centre, [herein referred to as JOYC]. I started working at JOYC the day it opened in 1986. I ceased working at JOYC the day it was closed. A couple of years after starting at JOYC, I became a senior youth worker. In total I worked at JOYC for about 12 years.
5. I remember some of the staff from my time at JOYC were: Fred Feige, Connie, Lorraine Hayward, Bruce Cassidy, Lex Clements, Bisby, Col Bray and Trevor Cox. I recall one of the managers was Peter Coyne.

Witness signature.......... Signature of officer..........

6. I was a delegate for the Qld State Services Union also known as the QSSU. I remember no one else wanted to be a delegate for the QSSU so I got selected by default. There was another union at the centre which was the Australian Workers Union also known as the AWU. The delegate back then for AWU was youth worker Fred Feige.
7. I remember Peter Coyne was a manager at JOYC in about 1989. Peter Coyne was about 28 years of age when he became manager at JOYC. I remember at the time that Peter was manager, there were rumours around JOYC that the system was going to privatise. I initially liked Peter Coyne. He was really smart. He also had a social working background. But after a while, Peter started to harass staff and he tried to get some staff out of JOYC. It seemed to me there was an agenda.
8. I remember after a while things started to get bad between the staff and Peter Coyne. I remember Fred Feige and I spoke about the staff issues and we decided to take these staff issues to our respective unions. After I became the union delegate, Peter started to scrutinise me a lot more. To me it was like harassment. At one point, prior to the Inquiry starting Fred Feige and I met with the relevant minister. It was this action that led to the Heiner Inquiry. I remember this Inquiry was just before there was a change of government. The Heiner Inquiry went belly up because it was not duly constituted. Peter Coyne got shifted after the Heiner Inquiry.
9. I remember the Heiner Inquiry. I attended this Inquiry and met with Mr Heiner. The Inquiry was conducted at the conference room located at JOYC. I recall that there was also a lady present taking notes in the room. I think there was another person but I am not sure. The meeting with Mr Heiner was also being recorded. I remember at some stage Mr Heiner told me that this meeting was an investigation to get the facts.
10. I spoke to Mr Heiner about the management issues including the harassment of staff that was occurring at JOYC. However, I can't recall specific incidents that I spoke about to Mr Heiner.
11. I cannot recall if I gave any evidence about sexual abuse to Mr Heiner, I expect I did. If I was aware of any incidents of sexual abuse, I think I would have raised these issues with Mr Heiner because I would have had the venue and opportunity to raise these concerns. I know there was the Annette Hardy [Harding] incident. Whether that was before or after this, I would have raised it to Mr Heiner. There was the school outing in the canoe

Witness signature.....

Signature of officer.....

somewhere that was seen and observed. There was the staff taking girls out on leave. Which one I would have raised, I don't know. Whatever incident was current I think I would have raised it because it was a question of management.

12. During my meeting with Mr Heiner I took some notes. These notes included the points that I raised to Mr Heiner. I no longer have these notes as I disposed of them about 3 years ago.
13. I remember a number of incidents of sexual abuse that occurred at JOYC. One involved a girl called Annette Harding. This incident occurred on a field excursion. The second incident occurred in a canoe on another excursion. Another incident I recall involved a long term female resident, [REDACTED]. On this occasion it was alleged that a youth worker [REDACTED] was involved in a relationship with [REDACTED].
14. On Friday 21 September 2012, I met with Detectives Colless and Barber of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. These Detectives showed me a document. This document was dated 3/10/1989. I recognised this document as being the one I prepared while I was at JOYC. I signed and dated this document in the presence of the Detectives.






David Reginald Smith

### Declaration

This written statement by me dated 21st September and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 3 is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed at Wacol this 17th day of January 2012

Witnessed:   
Name Denise Preen Rank DSC Reg. No. 10736

Witness signature  Signature of officer 

27 Harlin Road  
Woodend 305

3.10.89

Dear Mr Pettigrew,

My name is David Smith and I have worked for the Dept for six years as a Youth Worker and at times as an Acting Senior Youth Worker.

Much of the time Peter and I have had a positive working relationship, until most noticeably when I became the Union Delegate for the Department. In this capacity I have tried to work towards a more harmonious relationship between Management and Youth Workers. It seemed to me that Peter took objection to me, believing that I was intending to support a Youth Worker's allegations rather than me acting as an intermediary in the situation. For a short time I was under surveillance by certain staff, looking to find issue in the performance of my work. I notified the Union, who then spoke to Ian Peers. I came in to work the next day and Peter informed me that all action against me would be dropped and that he was extending "an olive branch" to me. This I accepted.

However, as Union Delegate, I have been spoken to by various Youth Workers (who have given you statements) and I have come to the conclusion that in the foreseeable future I will be subject to harassment by Peter when he believes that he can do without my services.

On Sunday 1.10.89 an article appeared in the Sunday Sun accusing Peter of being incapable of managing JOYC. On Monday morning 2.10.89 Peter proceeded to the Wentworth Section, arriving at 8:10am. He proceeded to carpet myself and my partner in front of the residents. When I related this experience to other workers, they informed me that this type of treatment by Peter was familiar to their experience. I have taken the opportunity to write to Peter to explain my concern about such a destructive process and I hope that he will accept my letter of concern.

I believe that Peter could learn to be a good manager by delegating the responsibility of the running of the wings to individual wing managers, who would handle the day-to-day running of the wing and personnel management, and be directly accountable to Peter. This would give staff a consistency which is now lacking and allow Peter to pursue a greater role in the management of JOYC rather than giving his attention to individual Youth Workers and trivial matters. Part of the problem at the moment is our bureaucratic structure and its inability to deal with our shift working environment. I have already discussed such a reorganisation with Peter but I understand that there are financial restraints which prevent him from implementing such a strategy.

Yours sincerely

*D Smith*

David Smith

*This is a copy of that  
a document that  
I prepared for M. Pettigrew  
on or about 3/10/89  
while working at John Oakey  
Youth Detention Centre*

*2632 21/9/12  
D Smith*