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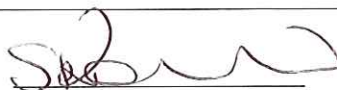
QUEENSLAND CHILD PROTECTION
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY


Statement of Witness

<i>Name of Witness</i>	Sabina Konicanin
<i>Date of Birth</i>	8/10/1958
<i>Address and contact details</i>	Known to Detective Sergeant Fabian Colless
<i>Occupation</i>	Senior Training Officer
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Sergeant Fabian Colless
<i>Date taken</i>	19 September 2012

I, Sabina Konicanin state;

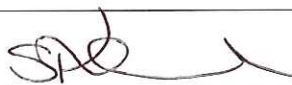
1. My full and correct name is Sabina Konicanin and I am 53 years of age having been born on the 8 October 1958. I am currently employed as a Senior Training Officer for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.
2. On the 19 September 2012, I attended the Office of the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry and provided the details contained within this statement.
3. I am a former employee of the John Oxley Youth Centre (JOYC), having started there in 1986. Prior to going to JOYC I was employed as a youth worker at the Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Centre. I worked at JOYC until a year before it closed and the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre opened. So I was at JOYC from between 1986 until 1999/2000.
4. I remember the JOYC centre managers when I was employed there as being initially Terry McDermott, then Peter Coyne, Tim Evans, Barry Collings, Ian McIntyre, Martin Grandellis and Paul Carter. I remember that Barry Collings and Ian McIntyre were there together for a period of time. I think that Paul Carter was before Martin Grandellis as he was there before Department of Corrections took over for two years.

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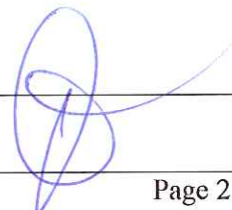
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5. I started as a youth worker, and then in 1991/1992 I became a senior youth worker. A few years after that I was a shift supervisor and then for the last three years of my time at JOYC I became a staff support officer.
6. I remember at that time at JOYC there was a management team which consisted of Anne Dutney who was the deputy manager, then there were people who were called principle youth workers who were Lynne Draper and Rudy Pekelharing. There were also a bunch of senior youth workers such as Trevor Cox and Bruce Cassidy.
7. When the John Oxley Youth Centre opened with Terry McDermott, it was opened under a very different philosophy then what was the philosophy at Sir Leslie Wilson Youth Detention Centre. The children that were there were boys under 15 years of age and girls, it was co-educational. It was a small facility and it was based very much around rehabilitation and positive behaviour programming. There was never a real issue as the expectations were very clear about what was happening at JOYC. When Terry McDermott left and Peter Coyne came, he was fairly young and inexperienced and quite bizarre with his behaviour. While he was the manager he developed a very clique team of people around him and there were lots of different problems that ensued after that. He would often wear a cap that had a hand with a gun on top of it when he visited the sections.
8. As I recall it, it was a place where the culture was around power and expectation of blind obedience to directions. I'm not sure if it was part of his immaturity or part of his personality, I remember we coined his management team, 'the Ipswich connection' because they used to associate and socialise together. I think it was whether you were in the clique or not to whether you were favoured for any kind of positions or promotions. My understanding is that Ipswich connection used to spy on people and report on people and I recall it was all very trivial. I remember it being a very tense working environment.

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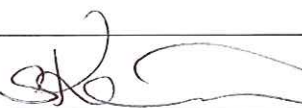


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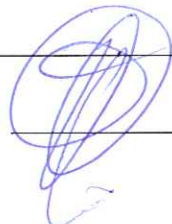


9. I think this all culminated to a point where there were so many complaints and ongoing complaints that when later there was a gathering of JOYC staff to introduce Tim Evans as the new manager because Peter Coyne was taken out of the centre and seconded somewhere else. I think at that time either Ian Peers or George Nix or someone in the Executive came to the centre and introduced us to Tim Evans. We were advised if we had any complaints we would be protected and we could make formal complaints. I think this gathering would have been just before the Heiner interviews. I can't recall who conducted this meeting but I think it would have been a senior executive officer from town. I believe that this meeting would not have been called by the union but by the Department.
10. I'm pretty sure, during this meeting, they said you can write it anonymously, you can make your complaint and it will be treated respectfully and you will be protected.
11. At that time I do not believe that I was part of a union. I don't think that if I was with a union that they would allow what was happening at JOYC at that time. We had some very aggressive children at the centre and I recall one incident where there was a female resident who was always quite aggressive and there were always incidents of her self-harming and I was just locked in a room with her. I was told to go in and watch her and supervise her while I was locked in the room with her. I couldn't get out and I was just advised to monitor her. I don't believe a unionised workforce would have allowed that to happen.
12. I remember that the Australian Workers Union AWU was quite strong but they only had a few members. I remember that one of the union members was Fred Feige who clashed with Peter Coyne and Coyne tried all matter of things to get rid of him.
13. I remember that I wrote a statement which was what Heiner was all about and then I was interviewed.

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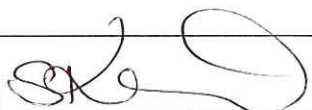


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14. On the 19 September 2012, I was shown, by Detective Colless, a photocopy of a 3 page letter dated 3rd October 1989, address to Mr Pettigrew and bearing my name on the last page.
15. This document is a copy of my original letter for Heiner. This was the basis for my evidence for the Heiner Inquiry. This letter was a result of the meeting that I referred to in paragraph 9 of this statement. I think at that time Alan Pettigrew was the Director General or Acting Director General at the time. The letter went into an envelope and I think it was left in some collection place that I don't recall and then when I went for my interview with Heiner and Barbara Flynn from Court Services. I was also of the belief that this letter was shredded.
16. Heiner to me was about what is contained in the letter that I wrote and then shown by Detective Colless. It was an investigation of the management of Peter Coyne and his management. Even when I was being interviewed, I spoke about the management of JOYC, I did not speak about and I don't believe I was asked of any knowledge of any sexual assaults. I recall I was on shift at JOYC, so that I did not have to come in.
17. I remember it was at the conference room at JOYC. I went in and Barbara Flynn introduced herself and introduced Noel Heiner, they recorded the conversation and I recall she said; she had read my letter and that it must have been very frustrating for me and asked me to elaborate on some of that. I believe that she had the letter and Mr Heiner asked me questions. There were no other persons in the conference room apart from Mr Heiner, Barbara Flynn and myself.
18. I remember that we were all sitting around the table just like when I spoke to Detective Colless. I think the interview lasted for about half-an-hour. I spoke about my feelings about what was happening at the time, elaborated on matters that were written in my letter. I was not really asked about anything else.
19. I did not give evidence to Mr Heiner about sexual abuse at JOYC, nor did he ask me questions about sexual abuse at Heiner.

Signature of Witness:



Signature of Officer:



20. I believe that other workers from JOYC gave evidence to Heiner including Trevor Cox and Fred Feige. I also believe that Rudel Pekelharing would have given evidence at the Inquiry. I believe that Trevor Cox and Rudy Pekelharing had knowledge of the Annette Harding matter and were in a position to give evidence of this. I was not aware of the Harding matter when the Heiner Inquiry was going on.
21. I did not attend the Ford inquiry, nor did I give any evidence, statements or submissions to the Ford Inquiry.
22. I have not given any evidence or submit any statements or submissions to any parliamentary inquiries.
23. I have never been interviewed by any other persons, police or media in relation to the Inquiry at JOYC.
24. While I was employed at JOYC I was aware of an incident which was an outing to Moogra Dam and there was a young female resident called Shelly Neal and after the outing it was reported that she alleged that a youth worker, I think his name was [REDACTED], had sexually assaulted her.
25. I also recall that there was an incident out of Peter Coyne's time under Martin Grandellis. There was a youth worker named [REDACTED] and he was told to resign after there was a letter found that he wrote to one of the young boy residents. It was intercepted by a youth worker, Helen Neville. This letter, which I did not see, to my understanding, was of a sexual nature.
26. It was my understanding that Incident reports were always part of the management of reporting but I don't think that they went anywhere under Peter Coyne. I think at that time senior youth workers used to make a call as to whether incidents needed to be reported or not. I believe that eventually it did change due to the importance of reporting and accountability of incidents involving residents.

Signature of Witness:



Signature of Officer:



27. On the 19 September 2012, I was shown a list of staff, by Detective Colless, who were employed at JOYC around the time of my employment. I was able to identify most of the staff on the list as people I worked with or knew of working there and others who I did not know.

28. On the 19 September 2012, I was shown a photocopy of a hand written document dated 3rd October 1989 signed 'Very Concerned'. I am not the author of this document, nor am I able to recognise the handwriting on the document.

Sabina Konicanin

Declaration

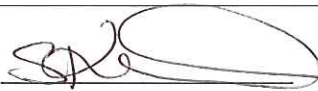
This written statement by me dated 19 September 2012 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

 Signature

Signed at Brisbane this 15 day of October 2012.

Witnessed:  Signature

Name A. Colless Rank D/Sgt Reg. No. 9632

Signature of Witness:  Signature of Officer: _____